The Georgetown-anchored team assumed full responsibility for the journal on 1 January 2014. This followed a transitional period between 1 October 2013 and 1 January 2014. The current Georgetown team handled new submissions from 1 October 2013, while the Indiana team handled revised manuscripts until 1 January 2014.

This report covers the period from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014. Unless otherwise noted, reported figures deal with original manuscripts submitted during this 'journal year'.

- ISQ received 478 first-time (original) submissions from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014. This number has remained basically unchanged since the 2011-2012 journal year.
- ISQ received 449 research articles, 18 research notes, 1 response to a published piece, and 10 theory notes.
- ISQ accepted 44 manuscripts during the 2013-2014 journal year – suggesting an approximate acceptance rate of 8.9%. The Georgetown-anchored team accepted 19 of these, 9 of which were manuscripts previously given revise-and-resubmit decisions by the Indiana team.
- Of these 44 manuscripts, 3 were solo-authored by female scholars (6.8%), 14 by male authors (31.8%), 14 co-authored by at least one female scholar (31.8%), and 13 co-authored exclusively by male scholars (29.5%).
- Of original manuscripts submitted in the 2013-2014 period - with decisions by 15 November 2014 - we conditionally accepted 1 (.2%), revise-and-resubmitted 65 (13.9%), rejected 184 (39.3%), and desk rejected 216 (46.2%).
- Our mean turnaround time for all manuscripts was 33.2 days. Our mean turnaround time for first-time decisions, excluding desk rejections, was 55.5 days.
- Of original submissions in 2013-2014, 68% of manuscripts had only male authors and 21.1% only female authors. The remainder was mixed.
- Of the 9 original manuscripts accepted–so far–from this pool, none were solo-authored by female scholars, 2 were solo-authored by male authors (22.2%), 4 were co-authored by male scholars (44.4%), and 3 were had at least one female co-author (33.3%).
- For latest decisions on manuscripts submitted after 1 October 2013 and decided by 30 September 2014, there is no significant variation for decisions on manuscripts by sex.

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1 The overlap in the editorial teams created two distinctive frames of reference, one dealing with the overall status of the journal for the 2013-2014 period, the other with patterns specific to the new Georgetown team. We try to report information relevant to both frames of reference. Moreover, as the period covered in this annual report lasts from 1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014, we downloaded and processed data immediately after 30 September 2014. This cutoff point omits relevant information about, for example, the disposition of manuscripts submitted during that timeframe but still awaiting a decision. In some cases, therefore, we provide updated information for after the reporting period that deal with past manuscripts. However, a lot of the more granular information requires in-depth statistical analysis. In these cases, we used data acquired prior to the 1 October 2014 cutoff.

2 We can only calculate true acceptance rates once all submissions–and subsequent revisions–have reached a final decision. This process may take more than a year.
1. Manuscript Flow

During the 2013-2014 period, ISQ processed 478 first-time submissions. As seen in Figure 1, this means that submission rates remain basically unchanged for the last three years. Figures for 2010 begin in January of that year—when the prior team transitioned to ScholarOne—and therefore cover only 75% of the reporting year. ISQ also received three proposals for special sections, none of which ultimately moved beyond the ad hoc committees constituted to consider them.

For Figure 1, we combined available historical data on original submissions with data in ScholarOne. Here we faced problems. Past reports only consistently provide numbers for total submissions—including both original and revised manuscripts.

We consider this a good measure of the workload faced by an editorial team, but not of scholarly interest in ISQ. These data also vary with the editorial teams’ willingness to revise-and-resubmit manuscripts. The more revise-and-resubmit decisions, the greater the number of total manuscripts submitted. For example, because of the way we use conditional acceptances, a count of total manuscripts would artificially inflate our submission numbers. Moreover, different teams used different methodologies for counting submissions. And the time periods covered by annual reports varied until relatively recently.

![Figure 1: Number of original manuscripts submitted](image)

In the absence of raw data—some of which has been lost over time—we can do little to overcome many of these concerns. However, limiting our purview to original submissions washes out some of the variation. Thus, we estimated the 2009-2010 totals. We simply averaged the 2009-2010 estimate with 2007-2008 to create a data point for 2008-2009. Despite uncertainties, we can be relatively certain that original submissions have increased 210% since 2004 and close to 400% since 2001.

Original submissions for 2013-2014 included 447 research articles (94%), 18 research notes (3.7%), 1 response to a published article (0.2%), and 10 theory notes (2%). Of first-time submissions between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2014, 12 remained in progress, 1 received an initial conditional acceptance (0.2%), 184 received initial

---

3 For instance, whether revisions for a conditional accept constitute a discrete submission, or what comprises ‘handling’ a manuscript for the purposes of counting it in a journal year.

4 In subsequent years an average of 25% of submission occurred during this time, so it would seem reasonable to infer 364 manuscripts for 1 October 2009 to 30 September 2010. However, it is possible that the offline-online approach used by Indiana may lead us to undercount the number of new submissions during that period. It certainly suggests an undercount of the number of total submissions (original and revised manuscripts).
rejections (38.5%), 216 received initial desk rejections (45%), 65 received initial revise-and-resubmit decisions (13.6%), and 6 were withdrawn (1.3%). Note that these numbers were current as of 18 November 2014.

If we exclude decisions made after the close of the reporting period and focus on the latest decision status for 2013-2014 original manuscripts, then 43 were in process (9%), 36 were at the revise-and-resubmit stage (8%), 213 were rejected without review/desk rejected (45%), 3 were conditionally accepted (1%), and 10 were accepted (2%). Figure 2 shows the percentage breakdown of these decisions. In terms of manuscript submission type, ISQ accepted 9 research articles and 1 research note initially submitted during the journal year. Table 1 provides the disposition of manuscripts by percentages (as of 30 September 2014).

Table 1: Percentage Breakdowns of Types of Submissions and Final Decisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Accept</th>
<th>Conditional Accept</th>
<th>Reject</th>
<th>Desk Reject</th>
<th>R&amp;R</th>
<th>Awaiting Decision</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original Article</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no.)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Note</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no.)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to Published</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no.)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory Note</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no.)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We lack adequate data to specify a rate of conversion from revise-and-resubmit decisions to acceptances, but from 1 January 2014 to 15 November 2014, the current team accepted 24 (77.4%) out of 31 revised manuscripts with final decisions, and rejected 7 (22.6%).

Regardless of unavailable data, ISQ accepted 44 manuscripts during the period covered by the report (1 October 2013 to 30 September 2014). The Indiana team accepted 35 of these during the 1 October to 31 December 2013 timeframe. The Georgetown-anchored team accepted 19 manuscripts from 1 January 2014 to 30 September 2014, 9 of which were ‘carryover’ revise-and-resubmits from the previous team.

The current editorial team’s commitment to increase the desk rejection rate continues to generate controversy. Figure 3 shows all initial decisions logged in ScholarOne from 2010-2014, broken down by the timeframe for...

5The Georgetown-anchored team subsequently accepted another 5 manuscripts, all of which were initially submitted after 1 October 2013.
Readers may find the comparative trend for rejections and desk rejections of interest. While the desk-rejection rate increased from 33.1% to 45.8%, the rejection-after-review rate fell from 52.4% to 39%. The total first-round rejection rate remained pretty consistent from 2010-2011 onward: 85.2% (2010-2011), 87.9% (2011-2012), 85.7% (2012-2013), and 84.8% (2013-2014).

![Figure 3: Distribution of Decisions for All Original Manuscripts Submitted During 'Journal Year'](image)

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Rejections (Total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Turnaround Time

Recent *ISQ* reports provided average turnaround time—the length of time between receipt of a manuscript and the transmission of a decision letter—for all manuscripts. We add 2013-2014 (33.2 days) to those data in Figure 4. However, our increased desk-rejection rate artificially improves *ISQ*'s relative performance for 2013-2014. The current team’s use of "conditional accepts" for style-and-presentation changes also artificially reduces turnaround time.

![Figure 4: Average Number of Days from Submission to Decision](image)

A more reliable approach for comparing turnaround time involves disaggregating time-to-decision length by decision type and manuscript status. The average turnaround time for desk rejections in 2013-2014 was a rela-

---

6 For purposes of additional comparison, it might prove appropriate to total "minor revisions" and "revise and resubmit" manuscripts prior to 2013-2014, as the current team reserves conditional acceptances almost exclusively for articles requiring only style-and-presentation changes.

7 2013-2014 totals add up to less than 100% due to the existence of manuscripts submitted on or before September 30, 2014 that still lack decisions as of November 15, 2014.
tively fast 7.75 days. Manuscripts sent out for review took an average of 55.5 days. Revise-and-resubmit decisions averaged the longest, at 57.2 days; rejections averaged a bit less time, at 54.5 days.

We provide boxplots for turnaround time. Figure 5 shows turnaround time for a) all manuscripts, b) desk rejections, c) revise-and-resubmit decisions on first-time submissions, and d) submissions sent for review that ultimately got rejected.

Figure 5: Turnaround time by final decision

3. Author Demographics

The breakdown of 2013-2014 original submissions by sex appears in Figure 6. 101 submissions had all female authors (21.1%) and 325 (68%) had all male authors.

Figure 6: Submissions by author sex
Figure 7 provides the breakdown for the sex of authors by latest decision (as of 30 September 2013). Author sex has no statistically significant relationship with these outcomes, but this may be due to the small number of observations in some of the categories.

Tables 2 and 3 present information on the country of origin and institutional position of the submitting author, respectively.

### Table 2: Submissions by Country of Submitting Author

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>no.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>no.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>no.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>Korea, Republic of China</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>Aland Islands</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Iran, Islamic Republic of</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: Submitting Author Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate student</th>
<th>Tenured faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>353</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Submissions: A More Granular View

Table 4 breaks down manuscripts by self-reported substantive areas of research. Table 5 shows the distribution of manuscripts by aggregating self-reported methods baskets. Note that "no methods specified" means none was
reported by the submitting author.

Table 4: Submissions by substantive issue area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Area</th>
<th>Submissions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Security</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Relations Theory</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Political Economy</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Politics</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Organizations</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Sociology</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Psychology</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy of Science</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Multiple issue areas allowed

Table 5: Submissions by self-reported methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No methods specified</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qual</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qual+Formal</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stats</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stats+Formal</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stats+Qual</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stats+Qual+Formal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 provides information about the fate of single-authored and co-authored manuscripts. Table 7 presents the results of a simple bivariate logit estimating the odds of acceptance for single- versus co-authored submissions. The independent variable is coded as 1 for manuscripts with one author and 0 for co-authored manuscripts. Co-authored manuscripts are about three times more likely to be accepted.

Table 6: Decisions on single- and co-authored manuscripts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Decision</th>
<th>Co-authored</th>
<th>Single-authored</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desk Reject</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>37.00%</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reject After Review</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>53.00%</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;R</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>7.60%</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Logit model estimating relative odds of acceptance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010-2014</th>
<th>2013-2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-author</td>
<td>0.32***</td>
<td>0.15***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>(0.1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.2***</td>
<td>0.08***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>2040</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pseudo R²</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.088</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard errors in parentheses

* p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01

5. Reviewer Information

One of the Georgetown-anchored team’s initiatives involves building granular data on the peer-review process. We asked a variety of demographic questions as part of ScholarOne’s user-account profiles. Unfortunately, response rates are low, particularly for users with pre-existing accounts or users who declined invitations to review. We therefore hand-coded the sex of all active users (reviewers and authors) in the 2013-2014 period, leaving in place existing answers for those who filled out this part of the demographic battery. This not only allowed us to derive the data in Figure 7, but also provided some insight into the possible role of reviewer sex in the peer-review process.
Table 8: Reviewers’ sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>no.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>792</td>
<td>69.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Responses to Request to Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>no.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>68.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>31.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Response to request by reviewer sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>212 (69.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>107 (30.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>319 (33.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During 2013-2014, 792 (69.3%) of ISQ’s reviewers were male, while 351 (30.7%) were female. Given data limitations, our information on willingness to accept reviewer invitations remains incomplete. However, for coded user accounts we find that 69% of men and 66% of women accepted invitations to review.

In the future, we would like to provide meaningful information on other characteristics for reviewers. Here we provide—subject to aforementioned limitations—information on self-reported methodological competencies for referees as percentages for manuscripts coded according to author-reported methodologies. Figure 8 shows referees by “statistics” competencies and Figure 9 by "game theory" competencies. For all histograms, the percentage reporting “no” is shown at the left and those reporting “yes” shown at the right. We are reasonably confident that the unexpected findings (for formal/game theory competencies in Figure 9) reflect missing data in user accounts. Almost all game-theoretic manuscripts were shepherded by editors with formal theory skills; all had a requirement to prioritize referees with strong backgrounds in formal theory.

Figure 8: Reviewer statistics competencies, manuscripts using:
6. ISQ Online

The new ISQ Online website went "live" on 21 March 2014 as a "soft launch" or "public beta." The site was assembled by Mike Ryckman of ISA headquarters. He worked closely with the American University web editorial team of Patrick Thaddeus Jackson and Joseph Young. Key features of the new site include (1) online-exclusive content in the form of "Symposia" discussing published ISQ articles, (2) "link roundup" posts–composed by our graduate student managing web editors deRaismes Combes, Efe Sevin, and Jerisa Upton–that collect relevant international studies content from around the web, (3) an "Editor’s Blog" where the ISQ editor communicates with the broad journal readership, and (4) individual posts for each published article with direct links to their full-length versions. Added to these features are an easily-accessible list of articles in the current issue, an archive feature allowing users to find older ISQ articles, and access to replication data and the system for submitting manuscripts for review.

The new website was designed as a placeholder until we were able to secure the services of a professional design firm. Having the initial site in place would allow the designers a basis from which to work. The previous ISQ journal page constituted a static affair. Our vision called for something more interactive and dynamic. In August 2014 we completed the process of reviewing proposals and entered into a contact with Friendly Design Company, a web-design firm located in Washington D.C. They created a new appearance for the ISQ website. They also implemented some of the search and comment features we desired. That design work is now complete, and we are in the final stages of getting the new pages operational on the ISA server. We anticipate "flipping the switch" and going live with the redesigned website before 2015.

Despite doing very little publicity, the new ISQ website has had over 21,559 page views since 1 August 2014, according to our Google Analytics tracker. According to internal statistics as of 17 November 2014, the most popular pieces of web-exclusive content include Cynthia Weber’s contribution to the "Third Debate" retrospective symposium (3,950 views), the introductory post for that symposium (3,843 views), an "Ask the Editors" post on desk rejections (3,208 views), and a post detailing ISQ articles relevant to the unfolding crisis in Ukraine (2,735 views). The internal counter does not measure discrete views, but enjoys the advantage of having been live for most of the lifespan of the new website.

In addition, the web editorial team created a Facebook page and a twitter handle (ISQblog) for the journal’s website. Again, despite very little publicity effort, the Facebook page has 294 followers and the twitter handle has 324. These numbers represent a base from which to build an audience. The strategy is to leverage the new site design, plus several Symposia that are in the final stages of completion, to graphically illustrate to the ISA membership and the wider word that ISQ Online—the name we have given to the ISQ website—is a valuable place for engaging professional content and intellectual discussion.
So far, no one has submitted unsolicited proposals for symposia or engagement with ISQ and ISQ Online content. We encourage readers to do so. The American University team remains hard at work editing and developing new symposia, as well as filling in gaps in replication files. Authors interested in either aspect should contact them directly.

7. External Metrics

When journals meet or exceed expectations, their editors trumpet their standing in Journal Citation Reports (JCR). When they fall short, editors downplay them. Before discussing metrics, we want to stress that we strongly oppose any effort to game ISQ’s rankings or otherwise adopt editorial policy for the purpose of improving ISQ’s position. ISQ should strive to best fulfill its mandate as a broad international studies publication as laid out by the ISA, regardless of whether or not doing so improves its position in specific metrics of journal quality, impact, and significance. ISQ’s impact factor lags behind expectations and its reputation-based rankings. In the 2011 TRIP survey (PDF), ISQ ranked second—behind International Organization—for the question of what journal publishes articles with the greatest influence in the field. In Google Scholar Metrics, it ranks fifth for h5-index and sixth for h5-median (as of November 5, 2014) for English-language “Diplomacy and International Relations” journals.

Figure 10: Journal Citation Report Rankings

8. Editorial Matters

The Georgetown-anchored team underwent personnel changes during its first year. Catherine Langlois joined the team as a Senior Editor. External commitments led Erik Gartzke to depart from his position among the Senior Editors; Giacomo Chiozza, formerly an Associate Editor, replaced him. On 1 January 2015, both Kathleen McNamara and Alexander Montgomery will step down from their positions as Senior Editors in light of other administrative commitments. The editorial team remains undecided about whether or not to replace them. Songying Fang will join the team as an Associate Editor in January 2015. We list the membership of the 2013-2014 team in Appendix A.

8Google: "h5-index is the h-index for articles published in the last 5 complete years. It is the largest number h such that h articles published in 2009-2013 have at least h citations each” and "h5-median for a publication is the median number of citations for the articles that make up its h5-index.” Note that the former metric clearly favors journals that publish a greater number of articles—such as ISQ.”
9. Issues and Challenges

9.1 Backlog

The Georgetown-anchored team inherited a backlog of roughly 83 articles. At the present publication rate, this takes us into the June 2015 issue. In addition, we have so far accepted nine articles revised-and-resubmitted under the prior team, and, as of 12 November 2014, an additional 15 articles. It follows that a piece accepted in mid-November should—assuming that the number of articles per volume remains constant—appear in the December 2015 issue.

Whether the backlog continues to shrink depends, in no small measure, on the conversion rate for revise-and-resubmitted manuscripts. Current data suggest that the Georgetown team’s final acceptance rate stands at around 8.9%; if that holds, the submission rate remains constant, and ISQ publishes 11 or more articles per issue, then the backlog will grow smaller over time.

9.2 Data Collection

Our ability to collect large-N data on the peer-review process remains dependent on users’ willingness to provide demographic information. We recognize that some users consider the questions onerous, intrusive, or both. Some users may not even be aware of their existence. We supply “decline to answer” options for all questions, and reaffirm our commitment to keeping answers confidential. We also want to highlight that this information plays no role in the editorial process. We hope more users will enter their data, so that it will be available both for internal assessments and, in anonymous form, for those interested in studying the peer-review process for international studies journals.

9.3 The Citation Gap

Recent findings of a "citation gap" for female scholars remain a matter of debate and concern. Conventional wisdom also holds that such a gap extends to other demographic categories. Our approach focuses on using the editorial process—and prompting reviewers—to highlight appropriate scholarship that deserves acknowledgment in ISQ articles. Nonetheless, we are concerned that we have let other editorial tasks crowd out this objective, and that our procedures have proven inadequate.

9.4 Encouraging Broader Intellectual Engagement

The Georgetown-anchored team made a commitment to encouraging cross-talk among different research communities. We remain concerned that our efforts have fallen short, for reasons similar to those that undermine our efforts to address "citation gap" concerns.

9.5 Diversity of Submissions

The data presented paint a bleak picture for both the number of submissions, and the fate of those submissions, originating outside of the “Global North.”

9.6 Journal Rank

In section 7, above, we discussed external journal metrics, including the JCR impact factor. Overall, we aim to produce a quality journal that represents the broad range of scholarship reflected in the ISA’s membership. But we would obviously prefer a higher impact factor. We hope that the full launch of the revamped website will enable us to better publicize and drive interest in the journal.

One point of interest in this context concerns the superficial relationship between ISQ’s impact factor and the number of articles published in the journal. Recall that the denominator of the impact factor is the number of citable items published in relevant volumes. Figure 11 displays the number of citable items against 2-year impact factor. Although the data are too rough, and variation too small, to come to any clear conclusions, it does suggest that the number of citable items might be depressing ISQ’s impact factor. Certainly, most of ISQ’s peer competitors publish far fewer articles per issue and year.
9.7 Desk Rejections

The Georgetown-anchored team’s conscious decision to increase the rate of desk rejections continues as a subject of controversy. While a rate of 45-46% is consistent with many of ISQ’s peers, the journal does have a special mission to reflect the interests of its membership. The question of whether or not the current rate best serves those interests remains open. We see three key questions. First, whether desk rejections interject unnecessary bias into the process. Would a better policy “blind” the authorship of manuscripts from editors, particularly prior to the desk-rejection stage? Second, whether the policy produces too many “false positives”: articles that should be given a shot at peer review but get screened out prior to that stage. Third, whether the policy produces too many “false negatives”: articles that should receive editorial rejections but instead go out for review.

Our own assessment is that the hurdles put in place for desk rejections produce more “false negatives” than “false positives.” But the question remains what additional steps ISQ can take to better calibrate its policies on this matter.

9.8 Theory Notes

In 2014, ISQ introduced a new category of articles, called “Theory Notes.” The journal received 10 submissions in this category. None of these submissions advanced to publication. This raises questions about the viability of Theory Notes. We have had preliminary discussions with members of the editorial board. For now, we are continuing with the category but considering whether to provide clearer specifications that will allow authors and reviewers to evaluate Theory Notes. Members of the editorial board also suggested that the length (word count) of these submissions should be expanded to match the length allowed for Research Notes. Both proposals remain under consideration.

10. Acknowledgements

The complete 2013-2014 masthead for ISQ appears in Appendix A. We want to particularly acknowledge our Managing Editors, Elizabeth Mercurio and Irena Sargsyan. In addition to thanking all those listed in Appendix A–and specifically the editorial board–we want to extend our special thanks to Mike Ryckman for his help with the online components of the journal, the rest of the ISA staff, the ISA publications committee, Wiley-Blackwell, and all those who submit to and review for ISQ. Georgetown University’s Department of Government, Mortara Center for International Studies, and the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service provide generous financial and in-kind support for the journal. American University provides essential financial and in-kind support for ISQ Online. Christian Cheung, Paul Musgrave, and Dani Nedal assisted with the production of this report.

We would also like to offer thanks and appreciation to the Indiana team for their excellent stewardship of
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