

Perspectives on Politics

Policy Guidelines

Perspectives on Politics aspires to be engaging, illuminating, provocative, and broad based; it seeks to build bridges across the discipline of political science and to reach out to readers beyond the discipline—to fellow social scientists, to people directly engaged in politics, law or policy-making, and to those who are simply interested in politics. Its articles should be useful for students, specialists, non-specialists, practitioners, and kibitzers. *Perspectives* seeks to be experimental in content and format while retaining the highest standards of scholarly excellence. The editors invite suggestions for articles, symposia, review essays, commentary, and dialogues, as well as other ideas, from political scientists or anyone else concerned with the use of research and careful thinking to address crucial issues and values in the realms of power and politics.

These guidelines include information on the following:

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Contact Information

Submit a paper to Perspectives on Politics: <http://www.editorialmanager.com/pop>

Contact us: popsb@mail.rochester.edu

Perspectives on Politics
Department of Political Science
University of Rochester
Harkness Hall
Rochester, NY 14627

Tel. (585) 275-3225

Fax (585) 271-1616

Philosophy

Perspectives on Politics is a general journal of political science that seeks to provide political insight on important problems. The papers we publish emerge from rigorous, broad-based research and integrative thought. The editors anticipate authors and readers primarily comprising political scientists, but also including journalists, policy analysts, public officials and their staff, and other social scientists. Our authors aim to clarify for their readers the political significance of accumulated research regarding a particular area of the world, an important policy problem, a deep normative conflict, or a significant institution or process; they may also demonstrate the insights that accrue from viewing politics from a distinctive viewpoint, method, or type of evidence.

Articles in *Perspectives on Politics* should encourage members of different subfields of political science to speak to one another--and with knowledgeable people outside the discipline--on issues of common interest. To do that, they must be conceived differently from most articles in political science journals. Those typically address the author's peers in a specialized area and thus can presume that readers use the same tools and terminology and know the general context and significance of the author's query. By contrast, in *Perspectives* each article must be meaningful for people with much general knowledge of politics but often with scant specific knowledge of the issue at hand.

Contributors may take a variety of approaches, illustrated by but not limited to the following possibilities:

- Explaining what central political issues are at stake in a given topic of research (such as classical Greek philosophy, the development of an independent judiciary, the nature of politics in a particular country or region, campaign finance reform, or state involvement in international trade). An article in this vein should show why those issues matter to a wide audience and how the reader should understand the issues in light of particular evidence, history, frameworks, or values. It will probably also explain what problems remain to be studied or cannot be resolved. Such a piece may offer a distinct, even contentious (but well-defended) stance rather than a neutral or carefully balanced judiciousness, so long as it fairly articulates opposing viewpoints. Alternatively, it could offer a broad summary of an emerging research subfield or bring together disparate sets of literature that are mutually illuminating. Several articles that represent varied viewpoints, types of evidence, epistemological frameworks, or conclusions and recommendations could be combined into a symposium or other type of structured exchange; we invite proposals for these.
- Showing what political science can offer to help people understand a crucial political event or tendency (such as the rise of religiously-inspired political terrorism, illegal immigration from poor to wealthy nations, or the demand for democratic elections). What does the academic study of politics and power teach us that journalists, political actors, or insightful observers cannot? Where appropriate, authors are encouraged to offer recommendations for political action, moral judgment, or policy choices as a way of demonstrating the distinctive contributions of the discipline of political science to the problem at hand.
- Showing how a multiplicity of individual research projects in a given area, once suitably organized and connected, adds up to a major shift in our understanding of some important aspect of politics. Artfully crafted and thematically oriented review essays of major books and articles are the most obvious and appropriate way of accomplishing this task. Authors could

also review Web sites, political speeches, general exam reading lists, collections of syllabi, novels or plays, museum exhibitions, pieces of campaign literature, legal decisions, legislative debates, or any other phenomenon that enables political scientists to reconfigure settled understandings and focus on new questions or arguments.

- Reflecting on conceptual developments within political science in order to show how the study of politics and power has changed, whether for better or worse. Authors may trace the development (or distortion) of a crucial concept or theory, perhaps across several generations of scholars; examples include theories of racial formation, pluralism, modernization, political economy, political culture, or justice. Senior authors might reflect on their earlier work, noting what they would have written differently had they known then what they know now. Younger scholars can discuss the relevance of "classic" works to their current scholarship.
- Reflecting on conceptual links and divergences across space rather than across time. How is an idea such as rights, gender, democracy, the market, or security used differently in different countries, political parties, epistemological frameworks, or social science disciplines? Why do these different usages matter for our understanding of politics?
- Taking on perennial unanswerable (or at least unanswered) questions about power and politics, and showing how political scientists can contribute to at least partial answers. How can political scientists make sense of sin and evil, or virtue and inspiration? Why did communism fall in most nations of the world and at a particular moment? What are the political implications of the huge movements of persons and capital around the world? Why do states repress or make war on people within their own borders? Why is capitalism closely associated with democracy? (This is, of course, a small sampling of potential topics.)
- Reflecting on how the knowledge generated by political scientists affects and is affected by academic and political infrastructures. Studies of libraries, foundations, university and college departments, or teaching priorities may shed light on how and why the study of some political phenomena has flourished or withered, or why some methods of analysis grow or disappear; they should also show how this affects our understanding of politics and power. A related question considers how knowledge produced by political scientists is used, or misused, by people outside the discipline and what types of knowledge policy makers, journalists, social scientists in related disciplines, and political activists wish academics would produce.

In short, what unites articles in *Perspectives on Politics* is that all political scientists and many public actors can learn from them. Nonspecialists will become aware of the most important research in a subfield and the most intriguing questions it opens up. For specialists, articles should lead to new questions about their ongoing research and teaching, new ideas about how to proceed, and new connections with other areas of the discipline or other disciplines. Scholars in related disciplines will see how they can use research on politics and power in their own work, and how they can contribute to our agendas. Political and policy actors will find their positions and proposals supported, challenged, and changed by evidence emerging from broad-based research; they too are welcomed as contributors. All of us will learn more about why and how the discipline of political science matters.

Article Types

Perspectives publishes several types of articles, organized into distinct sections.

In the "Articles" section, authors generally follow the traditional model of an academic journal by using the results of research or analysis to address a political problem or phenomenon, with a focus that is broader than the usual report on an individual research agenda. These articles can be as long as 10,000 words (approximately 13 journal pages).

In the "Perspectives" section, authors may offer short, sharp commentaries on a political phenomenon or policy problem; engage in dialogues or debates to highlight methodological or substantive disagreements; or provide insights into or evaluation of other works of interest to political scientists. "Perspectives" typically range from 4,000–5,500 words (5–7 journal pages).

In the "Review Essays" section, authors may review a small set of books, articles, or other "texts" in order to show how these materials illuminate a larger conceptual, political, or normative concern. Review Essays vary in length, averaging about 8,000 words (10 journal pages). While Review Essays sometimes originate in proposals submitted to the main Editorial Office, many result from invitations that our Book Review Editor extends to specific authors. In either case, the Editor and Book Review Editor collaborate in the editorial process for Review Essays.

Perspectives also publishes a variety of Symposia, Dialogues, Commentaries. The Editor will consider innovative proposals for any of these formats.

While the "Book Review" section is fully a part of *Perspectives*, and while the Review Editor collaborates closely with the Editor, the Review editorial office is a distinct operation. The Review publishes single, double, and triple book reviews (typically 1,000, 1,500, and 2,000 words respectively). It also publishes symposia, critical exchanges, and review essays. The Review section does not accept unsolicited reviews nor does it accept requests to review particular books. All pieces published in the Review are commissioned and edited by the Review Editor. All pieces must be well written and clearly argued. But unlike the *Perspectives* main section, the Review does not employ a peer review process.

Style and Format

Perspectives articles must aim simultaneously to appeal to non-specialists and to convey distinctive insights to specialists. An article will typically begin with a few paragraphs introducing the topic, its importance, and the gist of the central argument. Alternatively, the author may set up a fascinating puzzle or raise a stimulating question, and invite the reader to follow a line of argument to a resolution revealed only at the end. In either case, at crucial points of transition the author should recapitulate and foreshadow; the conclusion should make crystal clear just what readers have learned.

Articles must be well written, tightly organized, and lively. Avoid jargon when possible. Since *Perspectives* aims to maximize readership and appreciation of each article, please take great pains to use the simplest and most straightforward method of exposition possible in making an argument (authors will be able to provide on-line links to more detailed or technical material). Specialized vocabularies and equations are appropriate if explained in the text and essential to a topic or argument. *Perspectives* especially welcomes illustrations, charts, and other visual material that help to convey important points. We encourage authors to pay special attention to visual elements in their submissions.

Submissions should include an inviting title, an engaging lead paragraph, a clear statement of purpose and content, and a sharp conclusion. Additionally, they should provide an approximate word count at the beginning of the document, number all text pages consecutively, number charts or illustrations separately, and put each chart or illustration on a separate page.

Please keep all endnotes, references, and appendices to an absolute minimum. These should be essential rather than decorative or defensive. Notes and references should be double-spaced at the end of the article, not cited parenthetically within the text. References in *Perspectives* articles are limited to works cited. Bibliographic endnotes are abbreviated as "Smith 2002, 49-56" and are interspersed with informational endnotes.

Please refer to a recent issue of *Perspectives* to determine how we customarily present articles.

Submission and Review

Perspectives on Politics uses several channels to generate and develop articles. The editor and associate editors solicit some. Potential contributors also may submit a fully developed manuscript. Regardless of how a submission originates, everything we publish undergoes a standard review process. The first step in this process is an in-house assessment by Editorial staff aimed at determining whether the submission is of sufficient quality or an appropriate fit for the journal. This assessment is governed by a standard set of criteria that we apply to discuss each submission. At this juncture our aim is to determine whether or not we will send the manuscript out to referees. In most cases, authors can expect to receive word one way or the other within a few weeks. Those submissions that clear this hurdle then undergo a standard double-blind referee process. Based on referee reports the Editor will then decide to reject a submission, accept it, or offer the author(s) the opportunity to revise and resubmit their manuscript.

Perspectives does not consider papers that are currently under review at other journals or that duplicate or overlap with parts of larger manuscripts submitted to other publishers (including publishers of both books and periodicals). Submission of manuscripts substantially similar to those submitted or published elsewhere, or to part of a book or other larger work, is also strongly discouraged. If you have any questions about whether these policies apply in your particular case, you should discuss any such publications related to a submission in a cover letter to the Editors or as part of the author comments section of the online submission process. You should also notify the Editors of any related submissions to other publishers, whether for book or periodical publication, that occur while a manuscript is under review at *Perspectives* and which would fall within the scope of this policy. The Editors may request copies of related publications.

You will be required to upload a minimum of three separate files:

- a separate title page that includes the full manuscript title, plus names and contact information (mailing address, telephone, fax, e-mail address) for all credited authors in the order their names should appear, as well as each authors' academic rank and institutional affiliation. You may also include any acknowledgements or other author notes about the development of the paper (e.g., previous presentations of the research) as part of this separate title page. In the case of multiple authors, indicate which should receive correspondence.
- a 200-word abstract for the submission
- an anonymous digital file of your paper. This file should not include any information that identifies the authors, or any other collaborators in the work (including anyone responsible for creating tables or figures, if they are also an author/collaborator). It should not thank colleagues in notes or elsewhere in

the body of the paper or mention institution names, web page addresses, or other potentially identifying information.

Although we strive to keep the review process as short as is possible, and to keep authors informed as to where their submissions stand in the process, our procedures often mean that our time to decision is somewhat longer than is the case with other journals. This is especially true in the case of symposia, and other collaborative forms of publication that require us to solicit relatively large numbers of referees.

Authors who wish to submit manuscripts for consideration at *Perspectives on Politics* must register with Editorial Manager[®], our online manuscript processing system. First-time users should register and create their profile at www.editorialmanager.com/pop. Returning users may log in and continue using their existing profile, and may update their user information at any time.

When submitting manuscripts to *Perspectives on Politics* using Editorial Manager, be aware of the following file type restrictions: Do not submit files using Microsoft[®] Word 2007 documents (.DOCX extension). Please use an earlier version of Microsoft[®] Word. Do not submit files as .PDF documents. The Editorial Manager system will build a .PDF document from the files you submit, which will ensure anonymity.

If you have questions or concerns about our procedures please contact the Managing Editor at popsup@mail.rochester.edu.

Conflict of Interest Policy

1. Editors will not publish an article or review essay in *Perspectives*, either as author or as coauthor, during the time that they serve on the journal's editorial board. However, they may be called upon to do other kinds of writing for *Perspectives*, such as introductions for symposia.
2. Editors will not assume chief responsibility for editing/developing articles or review essays submitted by their departmental colleagues or students. This goes for both (or all) departments if editors hold joint appointments. They may offer comments on articles by their colleagues/students; they may also solicit articles from colleagues/students or encourage colleagues/students to send manuscripts to another editor. Editors will not be primary decision-makers when it comes to accepting or rejecting manuscripts submitted by their colleagues or students.
3. Editors will not solicit review essays about books or articles that were written by their departmental colleagues or students, and they will not be primary decision-makers when it comes to accepting or rejecting such essays. They may offer comments on such essays in draft form; they also may suggest to another editor review essay ideas that include books or articles by colleagues or students.
4. Rules #2 and #3 also hold for former students who obtained their Ph.D. five or fewer years from the date of a proposal or submission.
5. Rules #2 and #3 also hold for anyone who has worked as a coauthor with an editor within five years of a proposal or submission.
6. Although all recommendations by external reviewers and associate editors will carry a good deal of weight, the editor-in-chief has final say as to which manuscripts are accepted for publication.

Proposed and confirmed by the editors, May 2002

Perspectives on Politics **Instructions for Reviewers**

If you are unfamiliar with *Perspectives on Politics* it might be helpful to review some of the documents regarding Submissions and the Editorial Process, accessible at the [Perspectives homepage](#).

We use the familiar double-blind review process. That means we do not reveal to the author(s) the identity of referees. Likewise we do not reveal to you the identity of the author(s) of this manuscript. (You are not automatically disbarred from the review process if you believe you do know the identity of the author(s). If that is the case, please let us know.) This arrangement is intended to facilitate frank, independent assessment of all submissions. We hope you will provide your full and candid judgment of the manuscript.

- Can the manuscript be published as is, or with only cosmetic changes?
- Can the manuscript be published with only minor revisions? If so, what changes are necessary?
- Does the manuscript require significant changes in order to clear the threshold of publication? Again, what changes are necessary?
- Should the manuscript be rejected? If so, what are the primary reasons for your judgment?

Because we aspire to reach a broad audience, we are especially concerned with the argumentative structure—both stylistic and substantive—of the papers we publish. With that in mind, here are some specific questions to help guide you as you assess this manuscript.

- Is the empirical evidence on which the argument builds sound?
Are there sorts of evidence that might make the argument stronger or, conversely, that you feel will weaken it?
- Is the interpretation of any empirical evidence that is provided plausible?
Are there competing interpretations that the authors overlook?
- Does the manuscript fairly present and address relevant counter-arguments?
Are there plausible counter-arguments that it overlooks?
- Is the argument presented clearly?
Can you suggest ways to improve the writing and visual elements (i.e., graphs, tables, etc.)?
Are there technical aspects of the argument that might be moved to appendices?
Does the manuscript rely too heavily on arcane terminology or jargon?

- Does the author properly situate her argument in relevant literatures?
Is the paper properly documented?
Does it rely too heavily or not heavily enough on footnotes?

Perspectives on Politics **Instructions for Authors**

Authors wishing to submit their manuscripts to *Perspectives on Politics* must register with Editorial Manager[®], an online submission and review system.

First time users should register and create their profile at www.editorialmanager.com/pop. You will be able to use the same login information to access any of the APSA journals. Returning users may log in and continue using their existing profile, and may edit their information at any time.

The system has links for **Author Help**, an **Author Tutorial**, and **Frequently Asked Questions** to assist successful submission of your manuscript.

File Type Restrictions

When submitting to *Perspectives* using Editorial Manager, do not send Microsoft[®] Office Word 2007 documents (.DOCX extension). Please use an earlier version for your submission. System compatibility with Word 2007 is not yet assured.

Please do not submit your paper as a .PDF document. The Editorial Manager system will build a .PDF document from the files you submit, which will ensure its anonymity.

Submitting a Manuscript

You will be guided through the submission process and prompted to provide information about your submission. A checklist at the left of the screen indicates the steps in the submission process.

You will need to provide particular and background information about your submission. Often, this information can be cut and pasted from an existing document into the comment boxes provided online, such as when providing the manuscript's abstract.

Specific Procedures

Keywords and classifications describe the content of your manuscript. The **keywords** should designate which subfield(s) of political science your work falls into, as well as any particular aspects of your submission. The **classifications** indicate areas of research specialization. These terms are standard among the American Political Science Association and its journals. Once you have made the classification selections, choose the **Next** button to continue.

You will provide further required details on the **Additional Information** page. When answering the question about a paper's anonymity, consider the following:

- Do your names appear on the title page or in the header or footer areas? If so, remove them before submitting the paper.
- Does the paper refer to your previous work in the text of the manuscript using phrases such as “in my earlier work (Smith 2004),” or “in our 2003 article on xxxx,⁷ we... ”? Such self-references do not comply with the double-blind review structure of *Perspectives*.
- Have acknowledgements been included with the version submitted for review that indicate specific grant numbers, your conference presentations, or other easily recognized background details that would reveal your identity to the reviewers?

Any of these occurrences will trigger your submission being returned before it can be evaluated.

You can provide the *Perspectives* Editor with your cover letter text or other background information on your submission using the **Enter Comments** page. The text can be copied and pasted into the comment box, or remarks can be typed there directly.

You also have the opportunity to specify reviewers whom you suggest or oppose. The **Suggest Reviewers** page can be filled in naming those who possess the particular background to assess the submission. The **Oppose Reviewers** page can be used to point out those who are known to have already seen the paper or who might otherwise be too close to you, such as your dissertation advisor. Choose the **Next** button to bypass suggesting or opposing potential reviewers.

Use the **Attach Files** page to furnish the submission itself. The title page, abstract and a third-person brief author biography must be sent as separate files, while any tables, figures, or appendix material may be included in your manuscript file, though these too may be attached as separate files. Select the order in which you wish the manuscript to be viewed; the system then creates an anonymous .PDF file of the entire submission.

You are required to view the resulting .PDF file. You will receive a system-generated letter informing you of this. Likewise, if the system encountered an error while building the .PDF, you will be sent a letter with this information. When continuing with the submission process as prompted, you might not see these letters until the process has been completed; there is no need to go back into the system if your submission was successfully completed.

Tracking a Submission

You can log in to the *Perspectives* Editorial Manager site to track each manuscript through the evaluation stages. The Author Main Menu lists the steps from submission to

a decision and provides links to view the submission's status. The system generates updates at various points in the review process and sends these to you using the e-mail address you have provided. You can contact the *Perspectives* Editor using the **Send E-mail** link associated with each submission.