

Notes from the Editors: Review Transfers

In this note, we discuss a new initiative at the *American Political Science Review* designed to enhance efficiency in the peer review process. It involves a collaboration among journals to share reviews for submissions that are sent out for external review but ultimately rejected.

Reviewers for the Journal should be aware that their review may be forwarded to another journal—if and only if that journal, and any subsequent journals, follow double-anonymous protocols. We realize that this may alter the way in which reviews are written, as their use might not be limited to a single journal.

We believe that the benefits of review transfers are immense if there is take-up on the part of authors and journals. Authors will be assured an expedited review at their second destination, journal editors will need to recruit fewer reviewers, and reviewers will have fewer requests to respond to. Naturally, there are many details to work out. In subsequent sections we describe how the process will work at the *APSR* (leaving open the possibility of future changes to the protocol).

Transfer Out

When a paper is rejected by the *APSR* with reviews, the corresponding author will be notified in the rejection letter that they have the option to transfer their manuscript and reviews to another journal within 4 weeks of their rejection. This policy is implemented as follows:

1. The author is notified in the rejection letter about this option.
2. If the author wishes to take this step, they ask the managing editor to initiate a transfer to another participating journal.
3. We send the anonymized manuscript and the anonymized reviews to the new journal, which participates in the initiative.
4. If the recipient journal's editor wishes to know the identities of the reviewers, they contact the journal via its email (aspr@apsanet.org) and request that information.

Journals currently participating in this practice are listed on the *APSR* webpage. The list will be updated to reflect the changes in participating journals. Authors should consult with the new journal submission guidelines prior to initiating this transfer to understand their policies. Journals may ask you to submit a cover letter

detailing any changes you have made or would propose to make if they review your manuscript.

Transfer In

When a paper is rejected by another journal with reviews, we will accept a transfer of the anonymous manuscript and identified reviews to the *APSR* to assist in our review process. We will accept reviews only from journals that allow the transfer of reviews from the *APSR* and where manuscripts are reviewed anonymously by external reviewers.

To initiate such a transfer:

1. The author completes a normal new submission to the *APSR*. In the note to editor box in the submission system, the author should explain that they are requesting a transfer of reviews from another journal and specify the name of the journal. The paper must have been rejected fewer than 4 weeks ago by the other journal.
2. The author is encouraged to submit a cover letter detailing any changes they have made, or would propose to make, if the manuscript were to be reviewed at the *APSR*.
3. Simultaneously, the author requests from another journal that their manuscript and reviews be transferred to the *APSR* by having them sent by the other journal to apsr@apsanet.org. All reviews must be sent. The author should inform the transferring journal of their manuscript ID at the *APSR* to help us in linking the old reviews to the new submission.
4. If reviewer identities are not included in this initial correspondence from the other journal, upon receipt of this email, the *APSR* managing editor will request the reviewer identities.
5. This information, with any attachments, will be forwarded to the lead editors and subsequently to the handling editor.
6. The reviews and any cover letter will be consulted in making an initial decision about its disposition. As with any other submission, a paper can be desk rejected, sent out for review, or offered a “reject and resubmit.” If a paper is sent out for review, a prior reviewer may be consulted again if the editor believes it would be helpful, particularly if a manuscript has been revised since initial submission. The editor is under no obligation to rely on these external reviews or to ask for additional comments from any prior reviewers.