

# **SOME GUIDELINES CONCERNING STYLE AND PRESENTATION IN MANUSCRIPTS SUBMITTED TO *THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS***

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The purpose of this document is to alert manuscript authors to some problematic aspects of usage, style and presentation. This is definitely not intended to be a comprehensive style guide! Instead, the document merely covers some troublesome details and/or common errors that have appeared in manuscripts recently submitted to *The Journal of Politics*. For complete and authoritative treatments of manuscript style, please see the APSA's *Style Manual for Political Science (Revised Edition 2001)* or *The Chicago Manual of Style (Fourteenth Edition)*.

## **I. Usage**

1. Do not use "impact" as a verb. Instead, use appropriate terms like "affect" or "influence."
2. Do not use "oftentimes." The correct term is "often."
3. Avoid contractions. So, for example, say "it is" rather than "it's".
4. The prefix "multi" should not be followed by a hyphen. So, for example, the correct term is "multidimensional," not "multi-dimensional."

## **II. General Manuscript Appearance and Structure**

1. The major parts of the paper should appear in the following order:
  - C Title page
  - C Abstract
  - C Text
  - C Appendices (if necessary)
  - C Endnotes (if necessary)
  - C References
  - C Tables (if necessary)
  - C Figures (if necessary)
2. Each of the preceding major parts of the paper should begin on a new page (including each table and figure).
3. Make sure that pages are numbered!
4. Electronic submissions are preferred because they facilitate manuscript processing. However, if hard copies are submitted, please make sure that all pages are stapled securely together.
5. New paragraphs in text should be indicated by indenting the first line. Do not add extra spaces between paragraphs (except, perhaps, between the end of a paragraph and a section heading).
6. The Abstract, text, and any Appendixes should be double-spaced. Notes and references can be single-spaced (with at least one space between adjacent entries) in submitted manuscripts. However, if accepted, they will need to be double-spaced and the overall length of the manuscript may need to be adjusted accordingly (in order to maintain the *JOP* page limits).

7. Please use standard fonts. It is best to use a serif typeface for body text (e.g., Times Roman) and a clear sans serif font (e.g., Arial) for titles and headings. Avoid unusual fonts that may not be available to the *JOP* Editor, referees, or the publisher.
8. Page length calculations for manuscripts submitted to the *JOP* are based on 12-point font size. Authors can use 10- or 11-point fonts, but the overall length of the manuscript may need to be adjusted accordingly. If accepted for publication, the final copy of the manuscript must be provided in 12-point font.
9. Please double-check PDF files before submission in order to avoid strange page breaks, widows and orphans (i.e. the first or last line of a paragraph at the end or the beginning of a page, respectively), and “hanging” section headings at the end of a page.

### **III. Sections and Section Headings**

1. Do not number (or letter) the section headings. Instead, section headings should be short, descriptive terms or phrases.
2. Section headings should never be longer than a single line of text (and, usually, much shorter than a complete line).
3. Do not use a section heading at the beginning of the text. Specifically, do not put “Introduction” (or anything similar) at the top of the first page.
4. Do not use “double” headings— that is, a section heading, followed immediately by a subsection heading.
5. Do not use too many section levels. For virtually all manuscripts, main section headings and subsection headings should be sufficient to divide the text into segments that are manageable for readers.

### **IV. The Abstract**

1. The Abstract should appear on a separate page of its own, after the title page and before the first page of text.
2. The Abstract should be a single paragraph. It should be as concise as possible— no more than 150 words at most. Ideally, the Abstract should be 100 words or less.
3. The Abstract should not contain formal citations to other work.

### **V. Notes and References**

1. *The Journal of Politics* uses the “scientific” citation style. References to other works should be placed, within parentheses, at the appropriate locations within the text. Each citation should consist of the author’s last name, followed by the year in which the work appeared in print (i.e., either publication year, or the year in which a paper was presented at a conference, etc.).
2. Adjacent or multiple citations should be placed into a single set of parentheses, separated by semicolons. For example, “(Smith 2001; Jones 2002)” and not “(Smith 2001) (Jones 2002)”.
3. Authors can use either footnotes or endnotes in submitted manuscripts (although, if a paper is accepted for publication, footnotes will have to be converted to endnotes for the publisher). In either case, notes should be used sparingly. They should be as brief as possible, and they should contain

supplemental information regarding material presented in the text. Notes should never include tables or figures.

4. Ideally, all notes and references should be double-spaced; we assume that this is the case when specifying preferred manuscript length. If notes and/or references are single-spaced, then the overall length of the manuscript may need to be adjusted, accordingly.
5. Notes should be indicated by superscript numerals placed at appropriate locations within the text. Do not use letters or Roman numerals for notes.
6. Any acknowledgments, expressions of gratitude, and/or statements of financial support should be placed in an unnumbered note at the bottom of the title page. This information should be removed from any anonymous versions of the manuscript, to be sent out to referees.
7. The section heading for the list of works cited should be “References” or “List of References,” not “Bibliography.”
8. References should not be numbered.
9. References should contain each author’s full name, as it is given in the publication being cited. In other words, do not use first and middle initials only (unless the name is listed that way in the cited work).

## **VI. Presenting Statistical or Technical Information**

1. Short variable name acronyms (such as the eight-character-or-less names required by some statistical software packages) should be avoided. They definitely should not be used in the text and, in most cases, it is not too difficult to keep them out of tables/figures as well.
2. In the overwhelming majority of cases, the correct term is “multiple regression” and *not* “multivariate regression.” The former term refers to a model with a single dependent variable and more than one independent variable. The latter refers to a model with several dependent variables as well as independent variables.
3. When the variables or coefficients in a model are standardized to compare effects across variables measured in different units, the correct term is “standardized coefficients” not “betas” or “standardized betas.” In statistical nomenclature, Greek letters (like beta) are usually reserved to indicate population parameters.
4. Tables containing coefficient estimates should include standard errors rather than  $z$  or  $t$  scores.
5. Do not use varying numbers of asterisks to indicate different levels of statistical significance. Either pick a single significance level and use it throughout the manuscript, or report observed probability values so readers can assess the degree of statistical significance on their own.
6. Report all coefficients in a model. In other words, do not list only the significant coefficients from a regression model, loadings that are substantially different from zero in a factor analysis, and so on.
7. A separate table of summary statistics for the individual variables employed in an empirical analysis should not be included in a manuscript, unless the values are relevant to the analysis in some explicit way. While this kind of information is often interesting, page constraints usually preclude its publication. Instead, authors are encouraged to make supplemental information available on a web site, or to interested readers upon request.
8. If at all possible, tables and figures should not be longer than a single page (with possible exceptions for relatively complex, multipaneled figures).