PS Spotlight: Guidelines for Proposals

PS: Political Science & Politics welcomes proposals for Spotlights.

A spotlight is a set of timely articles on a single topic or related topics. The spotlight content category is intended to provide an outlet for short and topical treatments of emerging issues of interest to the profession. We welcome Spotlight contributions on topics that originated as a roundtable at a conference, or a series of blog postings, or even informal discussions on social media.

“The Politics and Policy of Ebola” (48:1) is a good example of a spotlight, that was conceived, produced, and published within four months (though we cannot always promise this timeline). Spotlights can discuss original research, pedagogy and teaching, or issues in the profession, but the goal remains readable, accessible, and brief contributions.

Spotlight contributions should be approximately 750–1,000 words in length. They should limit their use of references, notes, and technical material. Spotlights will generally have 5-10 contributors, including an introductory essay and a concluding piece.

Achieving diversity and inclusion is a priority for the APSA. As part of this commitment, PS requests that scholars who propose a spotlight consider how they may contribute to this effort by recruiting participants with a diverse set of scholarly backgrounds, methodological perspectives, and from groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in political science. Proposals should include a description of efforts to recruit a broad and diverse team of contributors.

The Spotlight process can be fun and intellectually rewarding. However, due to editorial demands and time constraints, Spotlights require active engagement of the guest editors as well as commitment by Spotlight authors to act as “single blinded” reviewers. Each contribution will also be reviewed externally in the traditional double-blind peer review process. Due to their brevity, we see no reason that the review process cannot be completed within three weeks.

Proposals
Spotlight proposals should be sent to the editors of PS at ps@apsanet.org. Ideas for Spotlights can be sent along at any time, and we can discuss format and content with you.

Proposals should consist of the following elements:
1. The name and affiliation of the guest editor or editors
2. A one or two paragraph description of the topic of the Spotlight
3. A list of potential paper topics and authors with brief summaries
4. A description of efforts to include a broad and diverse set of contributors.
5. A timeline for completion

Please note that all articles submitted to *PS* must adhere to the general publication guidelines, and we expect spotlights to normally consist of 5 to 10 contributors, with each article approximately 750–1,000 words in length, inclusive of all tables, notes, and references.

**Guest Editor Responsibilities**

Guest editors help to evaluate submissions by providing subject matter expertise and manage peer review. All material in the journal is peer-reviewed, including Spotlights. In order to produce timely content, we expect that guest editors will be actively engaged in the review process. The timeline for review would be necessarily short, but not unreasonable given that each contribution is so brief.

**Guest Editor Rewards**

Guest editors are encouraged to write an introduction or conclusion as part of the Spotlight. Guest editors also benefit from having the opportunity to demonstrate ownership of an topic. Guest editors will be prominently mentioned in the table of contents.

**Editorial Manager**

All manuscripts must be submitted through Editorial Manager. This tool is critical for helping the managing editor work efficiently with the guests editor.

Thank you again for considering a Spotlight for *PS: Political Science & Politics*! We look forward to working with you.

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