Report of the Editors—2015

Co-Editors: **Yi-Hau Chen (1 January 2014–31 December 2016)**
Michael J. Daniels (1 January 2015–31 December 2017)
Jeanine Houwing-Duistermaat (retired in 2015)
Stijn Vansteelandt (1 January 2016–31 December 2018)
Executive Editor: **Marie Davidian (1 January 2006–31 December 2017)**

Biometrics, a journal of the International Biometric Society (IBS), is a top scholarly publication reporting work promoting the use of statistical and mathematical theory and methods in the biosciences. Authors of *Biometrics* articles are among the foremost researchers in the statistical profession. Information about the journal, including detailed instructions for authors, new developments, and review-time statistics (updated monthly) are available at the journal website, `http://www.biometrics.tibs.org/`. The newsletter of the IBS, the *Biometric Bulletin*, features a column in each issue reporting on news related to *Biometrics*. The journal is published by Wiley-Blackwell; online content is accessible at `http://wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/biom`.

Editorial Board

Co-Editor Jeanine Houwing-Duistermaat completed her 3-year term as Co-Editor on 31 December 2015. We thank Jeanine for her dedicated and outstanding service to the journal. We welcome Jeanine's successor, Stijn Vansteelandt of Ghent University, whose 3-year term began on 1 January 2016.

There are currently 97 Associate Editors on the *Biometrics* Editorial Board, with expertise spanning a diverse range of methodological and application areas. In 2015, 12 Associate Editors retired or resigned, and 15 new Associate Editors joined the Board. We thank all of our current and former Associate Editors for their excellent service. We also thank the numerous referees who have volunteered their time and expertise to our peer review process. The names of all referees serving during 2015 are listed in the December 2015 issue.

Our outstanding Editorial Manager, Ms. Ann Hanhart, has served *Biometrics* since the late 1990s with unparalleled skill, organization, and dedication. We are extremely grateful for Ms. Hanhart's invaluable contributions to the journal, without which *Biometrics* would not be the successful publication it is today. We also recognize Ms. Fran Smith, Ms. Hanhart's Editorial Assistant, who works with Ms. Hanhart on day-to-day journal processes.

The position of Liaison Editor is an internal, rotating position held by one of the Co-Editors, carrying responsibilities for handling day-to-day manuscript processing issues and for taking the lead on scientific initiatives. Co-Editor Yi-Hau Chen was Liaison Editor in 2015 and is succeeded by Co-Editor Mike Daniels in this role.

Submission and Acceptance Statistics

In 2015, 591 new manuscripts were submitted to the Biometric Methodology and Biometric Practice sections, about the same as the 594 received in 2014. Of the 591 submissions in 2015, 395 were to Biometric Methodology (66.8%), compared to the 396 (66.7%) in 2014 and 363 (65.9%) in 2013. Thus, in the last few years, submissions to Methodology have been roughly two-thirds of the total, with submissions to Practice roughly one-third of the total. This represents an increase in the proportion of submissions to Biometric Practice relative to the period 2008–2012, when Practice submissions were 25–31% of the total.

The journal also received four new submissions of Reader Reaction articles and one Letter to the Editors.

The 591 new manuscript submissions came from 41 countries/districts. The greatest proportion of submissions was from the USA (57.2%); followed by P. R. China and the United Kingdom, each with (4.6%), Canada (4.1%); France (2.7%); Italy and Japan, each with (2.2%); and Australia (2.0%). Each of the remaining countries/districts contributed less than 2.0% of the total new submissions. Table 1 shows the distribution of 2015 new manuscript submissions by geographic region.

Table 2 shows the first review status and the current review status (as of January 5, 2016, the date on which this report was prepared) of 2014 and 2015 new manuscript submissions, respectively. In 2015, about 28% of new manuscripts were rejected by the Co-Editors without external review. The overall acceptance rate for 2014 was about 23%.

Of the four Reader Reaction papers submitted in 2015, one was accepted, two were rejected, and one is still under review. The one Letter to the Editors received in 2015 was accepted.

In 2015, *Biometrics* published 72 papers in the Biometric Methodology Section, two of which were Discussion papers, and 43 Biometric Practice papers. Thus, of the 115 articles published in the Methodology or Practice Sections, 62.6% were in Biometric Methodology, compared to 65.3% in 2014 and 66.7% in 2013.

Table 1
Distribution of 2015 new manuscript submissions ($n = 591$) by geographical region

Region	Frequency	Percent
Africa	7	1.18
Asia	89	15.06
Europe	105	17.77
Latin America and the Caribbean	10	1.69
North America	362	61.25
Oceania	18	23.05

Review Times

In 2015, *Biometrics* continued its tradition of providing swift, high-quality reviews. Our review times are among the best in the statistics profession, and we are indebted to our Associate Editors and referees for their dedication to timely and constructive reviews. Table 3 shows major percentiles of review times for first submissions and for first revisions for 2014 and 2015, where review time is defined as the time period between the date when a manuscript was received by the journal and the date when a letter and reports were sent to the author(s). Results are presented for all submissions and for manuscripts that were sent out for external review by the Co-Editor, where manuscripts of the latter type exclude those rejected or accepted by the Co-Editors without being sent to an Associate Editor. Each line of the table is derived from Kaplan–Meier estimates of survival curves for time to review, treating manuscripts for which reviews are pending as noninformatively censored.

From the table, the median review time in 2015 for all first submissions was 1.7 months, a considerable reduction from 2.3 in 2014; and the 75th and 95th percentiles were 2.7 and 3.5 months, respectively, slightly less than those in 2014. The median time to first review for all revisions in 2015 was 2.1 months, and the 75th and 95th percentiles were 2.5 and 3.4 months, about the same as in the previous year. No paper experienced a review time of any kind of 6.0 months or more in 2015. Kaplan–Meier survival curves based on the 2015 data are presented in Figure 1 and show the comparison with the 2014 figures.

Backlog

Backlog is defined as the time between acceptance and appearance of an article in the *print* version of the journal. The *Biometrics* backlog has remained steady at 6–8 months since mid-2014. Papers published in 2015 were thus in print 6–8 months after acceptance. For those to be published in 2016, the backlog continues to be 6–8 months. Thus, for example, at the time of this writing, a paper accepted in October, November, or December of 2015 will appear in the June 2016 issue.

The Early View feature provided by our publisher ensures that accepted papers are published electronically in their final, typeset form within 8 weeks of being sent to the publisher (provided authors return proofs within 48 hours) at the *Biometrics* website at Wiley Online Library (`http://wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/biom`) and are assigned a digital object identifier (DOI) so that they can be cited formally. Information on how to cite Early View articles using the DOI number can be found at the journal website (`http://www.biometrics.tibs.org/`) under the `Information for Authors` link.

Biometrics Move to ScholarOne

Biometrics has been one of very few statistics journals not using an Electronic Editorial Office (EEO) system such as ScholarOne Manuscripts to manage manuscript submission and review functions. This is in part due to the preference of many authors and members of the Editorial Board and the more friendly web-based system for the Co-Editors developed by the *Biometrics* Editorial Manager, Ms. Hanhart.

Table 2
Review status of new submissions in 2014 and 2015

		First review		Current[a]	
Year	Status	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
2014	Rejected w/o external reviews	73	12.3	73	12.3
($n = 594$)	Rejected w/ external reviews	344	57.9	349	58.5
	Revision allowed at own risk	96	16.2	20	3.4
	Revision invited	81	13.6	12	2.0
	Accepted	0	0.0	135	22.7
	First submission under review	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Revision under review	–	–	5	0.8
2015	Rejected w/o external reviews	164	27.8	164	27.8
($n = 591$)	Rejected w/ external reviews	220	37.2	221	37.4
	Revision allowed at own risk	81	13.7	45	7.6
	Revision invited	46	7.8	26	4.4
	Accepted	0	0.0	35	5.9
	First submission under review	80	13.5	80	13.5
	Revision under review	–	–	20	3.4

[a]As of January 5, 2016, the date on which this report was prepared.

Table 3
Summary statistics for manuscript review times in 2014 and 2015

				Percentiles of review time in months					
Year	Submission type	MS type	n	Min	25th	50th	75th	95th	Max
2014	First submission	All	594	0.0	1.1	2.3	2.9	3.7	6.0
		Reviewed externally	521	0.0	1.7	2.5	2.9	3.8	6.0
	First revision	All	146	0.0	1.8	2.3	2.6	3.3	3.8
		Reviewed externally	126	0.0	1.9	2.3	2.6	3.3	3.8
2015	First submission	All	591	0.0	0.5	1.7	2.7	3.5	5.0
		Reviewed externally	427	0.0	1.4	2.4	3.0	3.7	5.0
	First revision	All	182	0.0	1.3	2.1	2.5	3.4	5.3
		Reviewed externally	144	0.0	1.7	2.2	2.6	3.4	5.3

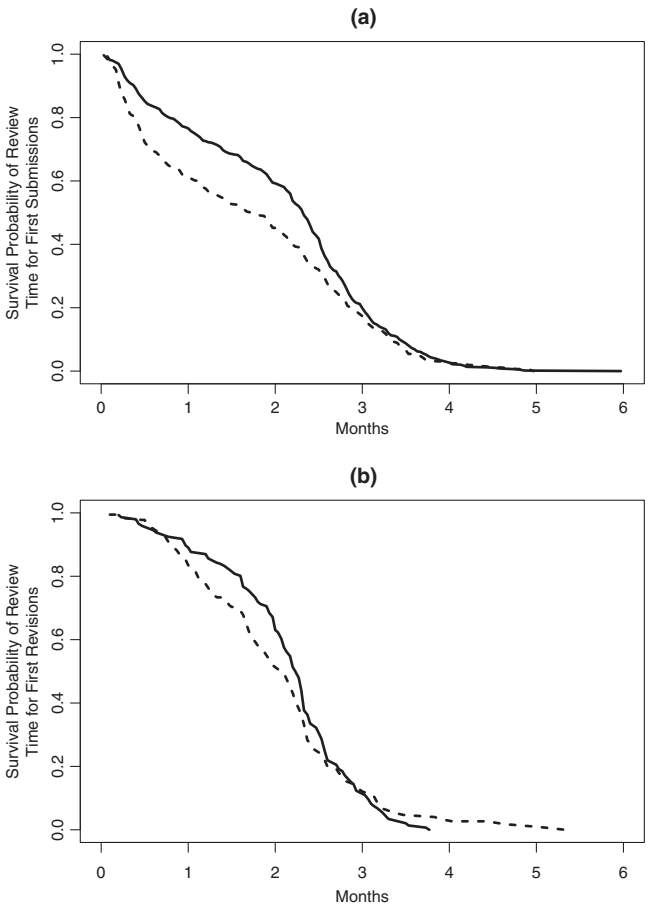

Figure 1. Kaplan–Meier survival curve estimates of the review times in months for (a) first submissions and (b) first revisions: 2014—solid line; 2015—dashed line.

The current publishing agreement with Wiley-Blackwell includes a provision that the publisher will provide a ScholarOne platform to *Biometrics* at no charge to the IBS. As the publisher has moved toward consolidating aspects of the journal production process within ScholarOne, it became evident that moving to that system would greatly simplify the flow of accepted manuscripts to the publisher. Moreover, most authors, referees, and AEs are now well-acquainted with ScholarOne and similar systems. The IBS Executive Board approved moving the editorial process to ScholarOne, in early Summer 2015. Ms. Hanhart and Executive Editor Marie Davidian worked with the publisher over Summer 2015 to customize the system to the journal workflow and to minimize burden on authors, referees, Associate Editors, and Co-Editors.

As of 1 October 2015, all new manuscript submissions to *Biometrics* are made through the journal's ScholarOne site at `https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/biom`. Authors and referees for these papers now use the ScholarOne portal to submit papers and associated materials, upload invited revisions, retrieve papers, and associated materials for review, and submit referee reports. Authors can check on the status of their submitted manuscripts by logging into the system. So far, the transition has proceeded smoothly, with users reporting only minor issues, which have been addressed with the publisher as they occur.

Biometrics Sessions at Leading Statistical Conferences

A Biometrics Showcase Session will be held at the IBC in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, 10–16 July 2016. As is convention, the session will feature the winners of the Best Paper Published in Biometrics by an IBS Member Awards for 2014 and 2015. The winners of these awards will be recognized at the Awards Ceremony during the meeting.