

Report of the Editors—2016

Co-Editors: Yi-Hau Chen (Retired in 2016)
Michael J. Daniels (1 January 2015–31 December 2017)
Malka Gorfine (1 January 2017–31 December 2019)
Stijn Vansteelandt (1 January 2016–31 December 2018)
Executive Editor: Marie Davidian (1 January 2006–31 December 2017)

Biometrics is a journal of the International Biometric Society (IBS). The journal is a top scholarly publication reporting work promoting the use of statistical and mathematical theory and methods in the biosciences. *Biometrics* authors are among the most respected authorities in the statistics 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; online content is accessible at <http://wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/biom>.

Editorial Board

Co-Editor Yi-Hau Chen completed his three-year term as Co-Editor on 31 December 2016. We thank Yi-Hau for outstanding, dedicated service to the journal. We welcome Yi-Hau's successor, Malka Gorfine of Tel-Aviv University, whose three-year term began on 1 January 2017.

There are currently 88 Associate Editors on the *Biometrics* Editorial Board, with expertise traversing a broad range of methodological and application areas. In 2016, 19 Associate Editors retired or resigned, and 11 new Associate Editors joined the Board; we are saddened that one of these, Daniel Sargent of the Mayo Clinic, passed away unexpectedly in September 2016. 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 2016 are listed in the December 2016 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 Mike Daniels

was Liaison Editor in 2016 and is succeeded by Co-Editor Stijn Vansteelandt in this role.

Submission and Acceptance Statistics

In 2016, 617 new manuscripts were submitted to the Biometric Methodology and Biometric Practice sections, a considerable increase over the 591 received in 2015. Of the 617 submissions in 2016, 453 were to Biometric Methodology (73.4%), compared to 395 (66.8%) in 2015, 396 (66.7%) in 2014, and 363 (65.9%) in 2013. Thus, a greater proportion of submissions were to Methodology in 2016 relative to the rate of roughly two-thirds in the previous few years. Likewise, this represents a decrease in the proportion of submissions to Biometric Practice.

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

The 617 new manuscript submissions came from 41 countries/districts. The greatest proportion of submissions was from the USA (56.6%); followed by P. R. China (6.2%), Canada (4.7%), the United Kingdom (4.4%), Japan (2.8%), Italy (2.6%), and Brazil (2.1%). Each of the remaining countries/districts contributed less than 2.0% of the total new submissions. Table 1 shows the distribution of 2016 new manuscript submissions by geographic region.

Table 2 shows the first review status and the current review status (as of January 2, 2017, the date on which this report was prepared) of 2015 and 2016 new manuscript submissions, respectively. In 2016, the Co-Editors rejected about 36% of new manuscripts without external review. The overall acceptance rate for 2015 was about 22%.

Of the two Reader Reaction papers submitted in 2016, one was rejected and one is still under review. The one Letter to the Editors received in 2016 was rejected.

In 2016, *Biometrics* published 81 papers in the Biometric Methodology Section and 53 Biometric Practice papers. Thus, of the 134 articles published in the Methodology or Practice Sections, 60.4% were in Biometric Methodology, compared to 62.6% in 2015 and 65.3% in 2014.

Review Times

In 2016, *Biometrics* continued its tradition of providing high-quality, timely reviews. Our review times are among the best in the statistics profession, and we are indebted to our

Table 1

Distribution of 2016 new manuscript submissions ($n = 617$) by geographical region

Region	Frequency	Percent
Africa	3	0.49
Asia	94	15.24
Europe	107	17.34
Latin America and the Caribbean	19	3.08
North America	378	61.26
Oceania	16	2.59

Associate Editors and referees for their dedication to swift and constructive reviews. Table 3 shows major percentiles of review times for first submissions and for first revisions for 2015 and 2016, 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 2016 for all first submissions was 1.3 months, a reduction from 1.7 in 2015; and the 75th and 95th percentiles were 2.4 and 3.7 months, respectively, comparable to those in 2015. The median time to first review for all revisions in 2016 was 1.9 months, and the 75th and 95th percentiles were 2.5 and 3.3 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 2016. Kaplan-Meier survival curves based on the 2016 data are presented in Figure 1 and show the comparison with the 2015 figures.

Backlog

Backlog is defined as the time between acceptance and appearance of an article in the *print* version of the journal. The

Table 2

Review status of new submissions in 2015 and 2016

Year	Status	First review		Current*	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
2015 ($n = 591$)	Rejected w/o external reviews	172	29.1	172	29.1
	Rejected w/ external reviews	261	44.2	268	45.4
	Revision allowed at own risk	102	17.2	12	2.0
	Revision invited	56	9.5	9	1.5
	Accepted	0	0.0	127	21.5
	First submission under review	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Revision under review	–	–	3	0.5
2016 ($n = 617$)	Rejected w/o external reviews	219	35.5	219	35.5
	Rejected w/ external reviews	185	30.0	187	30.3
	Revision allowed at own risk	72	11.6	39	6.3
	Revision invited	61	9.9	37	6.0
	Accepted	0	0.0	25	4.0
	First submission under review	80	13.0	80	13.0
	Revision under review	–	–	30	4.9

*As of January 2, 2017, the date on which this report was prepared.

Table 3

Summary statistics for manuscript review times in 2015 and 2016

Year	Submission Type	MS Type	n	Percentiles of review time in months					
				Min	25th	50th	75th	95th	Max
2015	First submission	All	591	0.0	0.5	1.7	2.7	3.7	6.2
		Reviewed externally	419	0.0	1.4	2.3	3.0	3.9	6.2
	First revision	All	182	0.0	1.3	2.0	2.5	3.5	5.3
		Reviewed externally	134	0.0	1.6	2.2	2.6	3.5	5.3
2016	First submission	All	617	0.0	0.2	1.3	2.4	3.7	5.5
		Reviewed externally	398	0.0	1.4	2.2	2.8	3.9	5.5
	First revision	All	146	0.0	1.4	1.9	2.5	3.3	5.2
		Reviewed externally	121	0.0	1.5	2.0	2.6	3.4	5.2

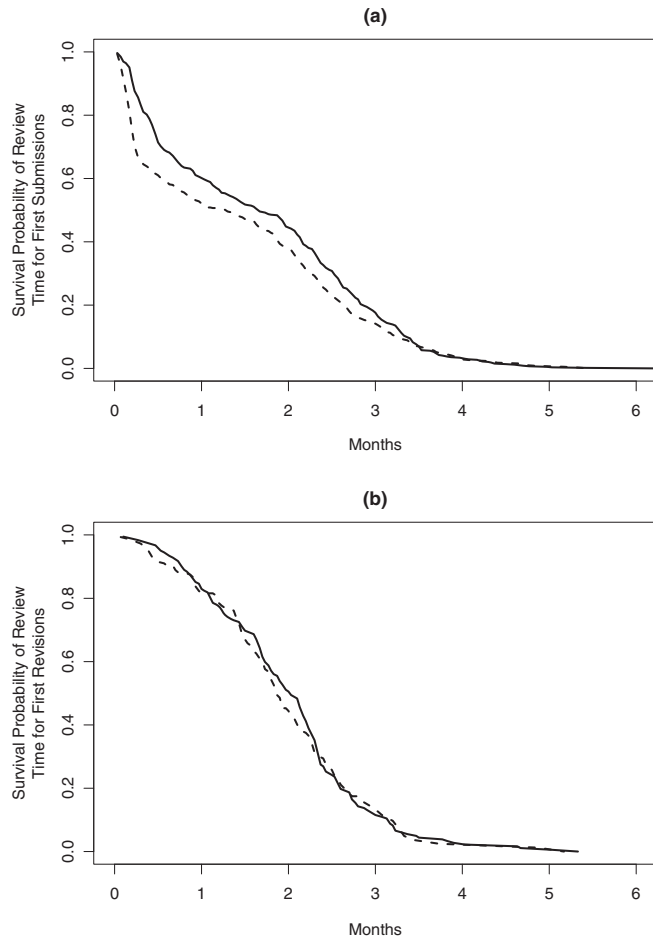


Figure 1. Kaplan-Meier survival curve estimates of the review times in months for (a) first submissions and (b) first revisions: 2015 – solid line; 2016 – dashed line.

Biometrics backlog remained steady at six to eight months in 2014-2015; however, at the end of 2015, the backlog began to increase, and in 2016 was nine to 12 months. Papers accepted in January and February of 2016 were published in the December 2016 issue; papers accepted in March 2016 or later appear in the current issue (March 2017; accepted in March-May) or will appear later in 2017.

The Early View feature provided by our publisher ensures that accepted papers are published electronically in their final, typeset form within eight 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 Sessions at Leading Statistical Conferences

A Biometrics Showcase Session was held at the IBC in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, 10 – 16 July 2016. As is convention, the session featured the winners of the Best Paper Published in *Biometrics* by an IBS Member Awards for 2014, “Bayesian nowcasting during the STEC O104:H4 outbreak in Germany,” by Michael Hohle* and Matthias an der Heide, in the December 2014 issue; and for 2015, “Handling missing data in matched case-control studies using multiple imputation,” by Shaun R. Seaman and Ruth H.Keogh*, in the December 2015 issue (presenting authors denoted by an asterisk).

Publishing Agreement

The IBS is finalizing a new, five-year publishing agreement with our publisher, Wiley, to produce the print and electronic versions of *Biometrics* through the end of 2021. Wiley will continue to provide the ScholarOne Manuscripts electronic editorial office system through which all *Biometrics* submissions are now processed.

Executive Editor Position

Marie Davidian’s term as Executive Editor concludes 31 December 2017 and is not renewable. A search committee to identify her successor has been formed and will be chaired by James Carpenter, immediate past Secretary/Treasurer of the IBS. Committee members include two representatives from the IBS Executive Board and two individuals selected by the IBS Editorial Advisory Committee, including a current Associate Editor and former Co-Editor. Ms. Hanhart and Marie Davidian serve as ex-officio, non-voting members.