

2016 SSB Mid-year Executive Council Meeting  
Editor's Report – 6 January 2017  
Thomas Near

**I. Submissions and Decisions: 2016**

**Number of Original Submissions in 2016**

**242 (199 regular manuscripts, 36 Point of View manuscripts, 7 Software for Systematics and Evolution manuscripts; includes resubmissions, but does not include book reviews)**

This is a decrease of 62 (~20%) compared to 2015, and is the first decrease following incremental increases from 2012 to 2015.

Of the 206 decisions that I made on original manuscripts in 2016, I rejected 82 (~40%) as “not appropriate for journal”. This is much than last year’s percentage (26%). As is usually the case, many of these papers were simply inappropriate for the journal (i.e., they focused on topics in medicine, genomics or molecular evolution without a systematics component, or were really “systems biology”), though a few were phylogenetic studies that were simply not of broad interest. Associate editors weighed in on a number of these “not appropriate for journal” editorial decisions. The main goal of editorial rejection is to reduce the burden on the AEs, Editorial Board members, and reviewers.

## **Initial decisions made by me in 2016: 206**

Accept: 1

Accept pending receipt of final changes: 1

Accept pending minor revisions: 23 (11%; 11% in 2015; 6% in 2014; 9% in 2013; 14% in 2012; 17% in 2011; 11% in 2010)

Accept pending major revisions: 31 (14.8%; 17% in 2015; 15% in 2014; 18% in 2013; 11% in 2012; 10% in 2011; 20% in 2010)

Reject, encourage/permit resubmission: 25 (12.1; 27% in 2015; 23% in 2014; 23% in 2013; 28% in 2012; 25% in 2011; 24% in 2010)

Reject: 38 (18.4%; 24% in 2015; 27% in 2014; 22% in 2013; 21% in 2012; 19% in 2011; 20% in 2010)

Not Appropriate: 82 (39.8%; 21% in 2015; 26% in 2014; 22% in 2013; 26% in 2012; 28% in 2011; 24% in 2010)

Overall acceptance rate: 27% (29% in 2015; 24% in 2014; 33% in 2013, 25% in 2012; 27% in 2011; 31% in 2010)

Overall rejection rate (including reject/resubmit): 73% (71% in 2015; 76% in 2014, 67% in 2013, 75% in 2012; 73% in 2011; 69% in 2010; 66% in 2009)

## **II. Manuscript Handling**

Please refer to the Publisher's and Virtual Editorial Office report for details on how OUP handles accepted manuscripts, data on manuscript submissions, turnaround time, etc. In short, accepted manuscripts are made available via the journal web site's "Advance Access" section in less than a week once the authors complete the copyright form.

In 2016 the average time from submission to first decision, not including "not appropriate for journal" was 79.6 days.

## **III. OUP**

Jennifer Boyd continues to operate as Publisher for our journal; she appears to be permanently ensconced in this role, and she has done a wonderful job.

#### **IV. AE news and work loads**

There were 42 Associate Editors on the roster in 2016. As Editor-Elect, I recruited X new AEs; Matt Friedman, Matthew Hahn, Ken Halanych, Brian Moore, Richard Ree, Jeanne Serb, Leo Smith, and Jeffry Townsend. Karl Kjer, Lars Jermiin, and Tiffani Williams have stepped down as AEs. I am actively trying to recruit additional AEs in several areas of systematics and phylogenetics.