

Jeffrey Gautier's timeline and notes (updated with any changes)

(If this is going to newer people, Dr. Gautier was the single editor for SPT before Zach and Joan took over in 2018.)

Jeffrey left us templates for everything: Acceptance and Rejection letters, Book and Plenary invites, follow-up with referees, invitations to submit, etc., which we will happily share with the new editors. Zach and I will share the template we have for keeping track of reviewers/acceptances/revised papers, etc.

I. SPT Timeline

If all is on time, the work begins with the CFP at the International Conference in July, and ends with everything being turned in to PDC on March 1. The dates below are based on the ideal case. Covid certainly threw a loop into our goals. (We have been happy if we've got everything in before July.) The mid-November deadline for papers is (ideally) to allow enough time to read the papers, find referees, get the referees to agree to review, get the comments back from the referees, decide which papers will be accepted, send accepted papers back to the authors for revisions, read the revised papers, then send them in to PDC. The main holdup is finding referees and getting reports back. Decisions on acceptances and rejections require that all the reports be in, so even one or two delays can set things back.

1. At ISP (mid-July): Prepare CFP to be emailed to participants of the conference (connect with Program Committee for list or for their help emailing). Make announcement that SPT will be seeking submissions from those presenting papers. Send out CFP to additional websites, since we now also accept papers that were not given at the annual conference: including APA website, SPEP website, PhilEvents website, Association for Political Theory facebook page, Philo-L listserv, SWIP listserv, FEAST listserv, Philosoph listserv

2. Within two weeks of the end the conference (by early August): Get e-mail list of presenters at the ISP from the program committee and e-mail CFP to the presenters. Send out separate invitations to submit to the plenary speakers, Book Award panel, and (if relevant) the outgoing NASSP president (who gives an address at the conference).

3. About a month from deadline (mid-October) send a reminder that the deadline is approaching. We have frequently extended the deadline to mid-December if we'd like to see more papers to keep our acceptance rate around 33%.

4. About a week after the deadline (by early December or January): Start reading the papers with an eye for who might be suitable referees. We regularly accept late papers within a week or two of the deadline but that's up to the new editors.

Notes: *Finding referees and following up on them to report is by far the single most time-consuming task, so start as soon as possible. Here are some good candidates*

for referees: a scholar cited in the paper (if there are any living people who are not too famous—generally the less well known and promoted one is, the more likely they are to get a referee report in); previous authors from SPT—especially from the last few years if any have competencies in the area of the paper; NASSP members with expertise in the area; outside referees (PhilPapers is a good source especially for more obscure areas, because one can search for papers-authors with a search for key words). Send a request and give the referee a week to respond, then ask again. If still no reply, look for another referee (annoyingly, some referees will not reply and send report anyway, or accept the request after you've given up and moved on). In the letter, ask for other possible referees if the respondent can't/won't do it (that's in the template)—usually they will recommend someone. Send a reminder to referees who have agreed to report but missed the deadline a reminder about a week after the missed deadline.

Find an efficient way to keep notes on those to whom the papers have been sent (we offer a template, but new editors may have other preferences), whether they've agreed to referee, and whether they've actually sent back a report. It's easy to get confused because of all the back-and-forth correspondence. Give referees about 4 weeks for a report (we ask only for a brief report, but often get much more). This process tends to get strung out because of various delays in finding referees and/or getting the reports back, as well as conflicts with other work we all have to do. You could start seeking referees as the papers come in, but most will come in at or very near the deadline anyway, and it might be better to see everything first so that you have a decent idea of how many people you'll need with a specific AOC. But that's a personal preference.

5. Sort which papers will be accepted and rejected and notify authors of accepted papers that you will need revisions; make sure the invited papers and Book Award papers are in (January-February)

Notes: The easy ones are those that both referees agree to accept with little or no revision, and those that both recommend rejection. Most are not that easy, because referees are on the fence or (surprisingly often) one report is gushing with praise while the other recommends rejection. Although the primary criterion will be the quality of the paper, also take into consideration whether the paper addresses the theme of the conference for papers that are on the bubble (which may be most of them). Because the volume will be titled with the conference theme, it's good to have some representation.

6. Finish sending revised, invited, and Book Award papers to PDC (by March 1)

Notes: In fact you should send the papers to PDC as soon as you have them in a finalized form. Papers can be posted online as Online First publications before the volume is complete.

In addition to papers you will need to write a brief Introduction to the volume, a table of contents, and notes on contributors. Request a brief bio for the last when you send back papers for revision.

7. Read and send back proofs (ideally April/May)

II. Additional notes

SPT has run around 200-230 pages in recent years. That has worked out to about 2 longer plenary papers, 7 or 8 reviewed articles, and the Book Award section. We don't always get papers from all the plenary speakers, in which case more space is open for other papers. In some cases the plenary speakers haven't actually written a paper. As indicated on the timeline, we ask for the paper shortly after the ISP conference and if we don't hear back, try again. Sometimes, the authors agreed to a deadline, but then couldn't meet it. Occasionally, we get the papers promptly.

As we get manuscripts in, we assign them numbers (according to Jeff's original system) and use that in the subject line of correspondence with authors (and to try to get the authors to do it too!). We use the volume # followed by 2 digits (e.g., the first manuscript received would be 39-01). This helps to keep anonymous papers organized as they go out to referees.

We have in recent years expanded *SPT* to consider non-conference-originating papers that are either a) on that volume's theme or b) responses to articles previously published in *SPT*. The aim of this was to encourage more submissions and to reinforce that *SPT* is not merely a conference proceedings. We get only a few of these papers each year. We typically circulate a call for papers for these types of submissions around the same time that we circulate the call for conference papers, with roughly the same submission deadline. Anonymous peer-review process is the same for these papers as for the others.

Keep a list of referees from the previous volume. Try to avoid asking the same people to review in successive years.

Our deep thanks to Jeff Gauthier's attention to detail and process. It made our job exponentially easier!

Good luck to the new editors!

Zach and Joan