

Report of the Editor

American Economic Journal: Economic Policy

The *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, or *AEJ Policy* for short, began accepting manuscripts in mid-July 2007. As stated in the call for papers posted on the journal's Web site:

AEJ Policy will publish papers covering a range of topics, the common theme being the role of economic policy in economic outcomes. Subject areas will include public economics; urban and regional economics; public policy aspects of health, education, welfare, and political institutions; law and economics; economic regulation; and environmental and natural resource economics.

The journal published its first issue in February 2009. The journal will publish two issues in 2009, the second to appear in August, and then will move to a schedule of four issues per year beginning with the February 2010 issue.

Editorial Procedures

AEJ Policy is a peer-reviewed journal, following the same double-blind procedure that has been used for several years by the *American Economic Review*. The submission fee is \$100 for AEA members and \$200 for nonmembers. The journal reserves the right to reject some papers on the basis of an initial screening by the editors (in which case submission fees are returned to authors). Unlike the *AER*, *AEJ Policy* will not have separate sections of longer and shorter papers. Along with the other new journals, we have adopted a liberal republication policy, granting authors of published papers the right to republication in any work in any form, including digital repositories. We follow the *AER*'s policy with respect to the posting of information, requiring that authors of accepted papers that employ data in econometric exercises, simulation models, or experiments agree to post their data and programs on the journal Web site unless an exemption for proprietary data is requested and granted.

Submissions to the journal must be made electronically, via the journal Web site, www.aeaweb.org/aej-policy/, using editorial software set up for the journal by Manuscript Central, the same software platform being used by the other new journals and by the *AER*. All subsequent editorial correspondence with referees and authors is also being done electronically, including the provision of ultimate decision letters and referee reports to authors.

One novel element of the journal's operation is coordination of the review process with the *AER*, following a common procedure worked out in consultation with the Editors of the other new journals and the *AER*. When submitting their papers via the *AEJ Policy* Web site, authors of manuscripts previously reviewed by the *AER* may request that, subject to the referees' agreement, the full correspondence files of the *AER* referees (including referee reports and cover letters) be shared with the editors of *AEJ Policy*, who will have the discretion to make a decision based on these reports or to request additional reports. This process of transferring information from the *AER* has been utilized extensively and has worked very smoothly.

The Editor assigns each manuscript either to himself or to the Coeditor, and all subsequent responsibility for handling the manuscript, including the decision of whether to reject summarily, the choice of referees, and the ultimate disposition of the paper, rests with the person to whom the paper has been assigned. The journal has adopted a policy to avoid conflicts of interest that papers by department colleagues, current students, or coauthors will be assigned to the other member of the senior editorial team. It is also anticipated that other members of the Board of Editors may, on occasion, be asked to assume responsibility for papers, but this procedure has not been followed for any submissions to date.

Editorial Staff

The journal's Coeditor, Hilary Hoynes of the University of California, Davis, was appointed by

the AEA Executive Committee at its April 2007 meeting to a term starting May 1, 2007, and ending December 31, 2010. The 21 members of the *AEJ Policy* Board of Editors are James Banks, Rebecca Blank, Severin Borenstein, Julie Cullen, Mihir Desai, Mark Duggan, Robert Feenstra, Kristin Forbes, Austan Goolsbee, Michael Greenstone, Jonathan Gruber, Louis Kaplow, Michael Keen, Christopher Knittel, Wojciech Kopczuk, Jeffrey Liebman, Brigitte Madrian, Thomas Nechyba, John Quigley, Gérard Roland, and Jonathan Skinner.

Board members provide valuable advice concerning journal policy, aid in the identification of suitable referees, serve as referees themselves, and may be asked, on occasion, to assume additional editorial responsibilities. Additional members may be added to the Board as the distribution of submissions by field indicates missing areas of expertise.

Editorial Data

As of October 31, 2008, after approximately 15½ months of accepting submissions, the journal had received 233 submissions, 4 of which were withdrawn. Of the remaining original submissions, 73 (32 percent) were summarily rejected, including a small number of papers that were deemed to be on topics outside the journal's purview. Eighty-four additional papers were rejected after the normal refereeing process, 35 received an invitation to revise and resubmit (of which 14 had been accepted by October 31, 2008), and the remaining 37 papers are still in the initial review process.

During the period November 1, 2007–October 31, 2008, the average number of days from submission to first decision was 58. Among papers accepted, the average time from initial submission to acceptance was 225 days. Thirty (13 percent) of the 229 papers submitted thus far were papers that had previously been reviewed by the *AER* and for which the authors requested a transfer of the full *AER* editorial correspondence from their original submission.

Office Staff and Other Assistants

The main editorial office for AEA journals, including *AEJ Policy*, is in Pittsburgh. I would like to thank Michelle DeBlasi, Managing Editor of *AEJ Policy*, for her efforts in getting the journal up and running. Aside from the considerable demands of organizing a new journal, we confronted the additional challenge of a simultaneous launch of a new software platform over a very short period of time for this journal, the other new journals, and the *AER*. The journal's operations and the journal Web site have proceeded well since initial launch, and Michelle bears a large responsibility for this success. The journal's editorial assistant, Amanda James, has also made an excellent contribution to the journal's operations.

Finally, I extend my deep appreciation to those who have refereed for this new journal in its opening months. Their willingness to provide timely and informative reports for yet another journal is a satisfying demonstration of professional commitment.

ALAN J. AUERBACH, *Editor*