

JSYS General Guidelines for Article Submissions

The *JSYS* style sheet addresses detailed, technical requirements for submission. In addition, we urge potential authors to consider the following larger issues before they submit an article for consideration.

In brief, the organization and structure of a journal article differs fundamentally from that of a book and/or dissertation chapter or even from an article in an edited volume. The latter formats provide inherent structure that ideally both supports each individual chapter and to which each chapter contributes. A journal article, however, must be totally self-contained. To that end, authors should strive to make every word count and to be kind to their readers. Focus relentlessly on your main argument. Avoid superfluous information, marginalia, or tangents that detract from this focus or retard forward momentum. Several specific recommendations:

1) Although *JSYS* does not have a maximum word limit, in general, any submission will require substantial, specific justification to exceed 10,000 words.

2) *JSYS* requires an abstract. An abstract is a summary of the article's contents, and is the description we use when inviting external reviewers.

3) Like the abstract, your opening paragraph should contain a precis of the article (its premise and its conclusion). In addition, this first paragraph should also serve as an introduction and guide for those who might read the article. In general, the article should unfold from its opening paragraph. After reading the abstract and first paragraph, a reader should be able to determine 1) what the article is about, 2) what are its conclusions, 3) how do these conclusions relate to existing scholarship.

4) Footnotes are for documentation only. If something is not important enough to go in the main text, omit it. Footnotes are not the place for literature surveys or for informational bibliography that is likely well-known to *JSYS* readers. Do not rehearse in the footnotes debates from secondary scholarship unless the issue is directly relevant to a vital argument in the article.

5) In general, avoid direct translations of Chinese primary texts, unless there is some larger point that only a translation can convey. Most primary texts in political and the social sciences can be paraphrased with no loss of scholarly content or quality, as long as they are cited properly. Articles on literature, especially poetry are different, and often require that the text in question be presented both in Chinese and in English translation. Such translations usually require that allusions be explained. Explicate allusions directly in the main text's analytical narrative (preferred) or in footnotes; but not in both places.

We urge authors to consult recent issues of *JSYS* for examples.