

Theory of Stochastic Processes

Publication Ethics and Peer Review Policy

This document sets out the standards and procedures applied by the journal Theory of Stochastic Processes (the “Journal”) for editorial decision-making, peer review, publication ethics, and post-publication record maintenance.

1. Editorial decision-making and responsibilities

All submitted manuscripts are initially considered by a member of the Editorial Board. The handling editor performs an initial assessment to determine whether the manuscript falls within the Journal’s scope and meets basic standards of presentation and scientific quality.

1.1 Final editorial responsibility

The Editor-in-Chief has overall responsibility for editorial oversight and makes the final decision on every manuscript. The Editor-in-Chief may delegate the day-to-day handling of a manuscript to a designated handling editor (a member of the Editorial Board). The handling editor manages the review process, considers the reviewers’ reports and any author revisions, and prepares a recommendation for the Editor-in-Chief. The final editorial decision is made by the Editor-in-Chief.

1.2 Fairness and non-discrimination

Editorial decisions are based on scientific merit, relevance to the Journal, and clarity of presentation. The Journal does not discriminate on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, political views, or institutional affiliation.

1.3 Confidentiality

Editors and Editorial Board members treat all submitted manuscripts as confidential documents. Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript must not be used in an editor’s own research without the express written consent of the authors.

1.4 Conflicts of interest for editors

Editors must avoid handling manuscripts in which they have a conflict of interest (for example, a close collaboration, a personal relationship, direct competition, or a financial interest). In such cases, the editor will recuse themselves and the manuscript will be reassigned to another editor.

2. Peer review policy

If a manuscript passes initial editorial assessment, it is sent for peer review to one or more independent anonymous experts selected among internationally recognized researchers in the field.

2.1 Type of peer review

The Journal normally applies single-blind peer review (reviewers remain anonymous to authors). At the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief or the handling editor, double-blind peer review may be applied when feasible (reviewers do not know the identity of the authors, and authors do not know the identity of reviewers).

2.2 Selection of reviewers

- Reviewers are selected for subject-matter expertise and ability to provide an objective assessment.

- Where possible, reviewers are chosen to avoid conflicts of interest (e.g., same institution, recent coauthorship, or close collaboration).
- The Journal may invite additional reviewers when a manuscript is interdisciplinary or when initial reviews raise substantial concerns.

2.3 Editorial decisions and timelines

The handling editor considers the reviewers' reports and any author response or revised manuscript and prepares a recommendation to accept, accept with minor revisions, revise and resubmit (major revisions), or reject. The Editor-in-Chief considers that recommendation and makes the final editorial decision. The Editorial Board may be consulted in complex cases but does not replace the Editor-in-Chief as the final decision-maker. The Journal aims to provide the corresponding author with a decision, including reviewer reports, typically within approximately two months; complex cases may require additional time.

2.4 Author response and revisions

- Authors should address reviewers' comments in a point-by-point response and submit a revised manuscript within the timeframe specified by the editor.
- Substantial revisions may be sent for re-review at the editor's discretion.

2.5 Appeals

Authors may appeal an editorial decision by sending a reasoned request to the Editor-in-Chief. Appeals are considered by the Editor-in-Chief and, where appropriate, by additional Editorial Board members who have no conflicts of interest with the manuscript. The decision after appeal is final.

3. Responsibilities of reviewers

- **Confidentiality:** Manuscripts received for review must be treated as confidential and not shared without editorial permission.
- **Objectivity:** Reviews should be conducted objectively and constructively; personal criticism of authors is inappropriate.
- **Competence and timeliness:** Reviewers should accept an invitation only if they have appropriate expertise and can deliver the review in a reasonable time.
- **Conflicts of interest:** Reviewers must disclose any potential conflicts of interest and decline to review when a conflict could impair objectivity.
- **Scholarly record:** Reviewers should identify relevant published work not cited by the authors and alert the editor to possible overlap with other publications or suspected misconduct.

4. Responsibilities of authors

4.1 Originality, prior publication, and simultaneous submission

Submission of a manuscript implies the authors' assurance that the work is original, has not been published previously, and is not under consideration elsewhere. Simultaneous submission to multiple journals is considered unethical and is grounds for rejection. Authors must appropriately cite and clearly distinguish any closely related prior or concurrent work, including conference versions, preprints, or extended abstracts.

4.2 Authorship and acknowledgements

All listed authors must have made significant intellectual contributions to the work and approve the final version for submission. The corresponding author is responsible for ensuring that all coauthors agree to the submission and for communicating with the Journal.

- Authorship should be limited to those who contributed substantially to the conception, development, proofs/results, or writing of the manuscript.
- Contributors who do not meet authorship criteria should be acknowledged with their permission.
- Requests to add, remove, or reorder authors after submission must be justified and require written consent from all authors.

4.3 Citation practice and permissions

Authors must properly cite sources that influenced the work and provide complete and accurate bibliographic information for all references. Authors are responsible for verifying that each cited source exists, that its bibliographic details are correct, and that its content supports the statement for which it is cited. References must be relevant to the manuscript and to the claims they are used to support; irrelevant, excessive, or otherwise inappropriate citations are not acceptable. Authors should cite relevant, timely, and verified scholarly literature, using peer-reviewed sources where appropriate. This does not prohibit citation of preprints or other non-peer-reviewed sources when they are relevant and appropriately identified. Any material (figures, tables, or substantial text) reproduced from other sources requires appropriate permission and attribution.

4.4 Reporting standards and reproducibility

Manuscripts must contain sufficient detail and appropriate references to allow reviewers and readers to verify the statements made and to reproduce the work where applicable (for example, by providing clear definitions, assumptions, and complete proofs). When numerical experiments or data analysis are included, authors should describe methods, parameters, and datasets with enough detail to enable replication.

4.5 Conflicts of interest and funding

All authors must declare any relevant financial or non-financial conflicts of interest that could be perceived to influence the work. If applicable, authors should disclose funding sources and describe the role of funders in the research.

5. Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

5.1 Authors

The Journal does not encourage the use of artificial intelligence (AI). AI and AI-assisted tools may be used only for linguistic correction (grammar, and language polishing) and technical formatting. They must not be used to generate, develop, rewrite, or modify scientific content, including ideas, arguments, proofs, results, data, calculations, code, interpretations, conclusions, or references.

Authors bear sole and full responsibility for the entire manuscript and for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and validity of all its content. The use of AI does not transfer, reduce, or limit this responsibility.

- AI tools must not be listed as authors or coauthors. Any permitted use of AI must be disclosed in the manuscript or submission materials, identifying the tool, the version where available, and the purpose of its use.

5.2 Editors and peer reviewers

Editors and peer reviewers must not use AI to generate, draft, or replace scientific assessment, editorial decisions, or peer-review reports.

Unpublished manuscripts or their content must not be uploaded, pasted, transmitted, or otherwise disclosed to third-party AI services. Any permitted linguistic or formatting correction must not compromise manuscript confidentiality. Editors and reviewers remain fully responsible for their own decisions and reports.

6. Research misconduct, plagiarism, and redundant publication

The Journal takes publication ethics seriously. Any suspected misconduct may be investigated and may result in rejection, withdrawal during review, publication of a correction, or retraction after publication.

6.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes presenting another person's ideas, text, results, proofs, equations, figures, or tables as one's own without proper attribution. This includes close paraphrasing without citation. Any plagiarism is grounds for rejection.

6.2 Redundant and duplicate publication

Redundant publication includes submitting or publishing substantially overlapping content without appropriate disclosure and citation. Duplicate publication (publishing the same work in more than one venue without justification and transparency) is not acceptable.

6.3 Fabrication and falsification

Fabrication (making up results or data) and falsification (manipulating results or selective reporting to misrepresent findings) are serious forms of misconduct and will be handled accordingly.

6.4 Screening and editorial action

Submitted manuscripts may be checked using plagiarism detection tools and expert assessment. If concerns arise, the Journal may request clarifications, supporting materials, or original sources. In serious cases, the Journal may contact authors' institutions or funders, consistent with accepted ethical practices.

7. Post-publication record: corrections, retractions, and expressions of concern

7.1 Corrections

If a published article contains an error that does not invalidate the main results (e.g., a typographical error affecting a statement, a minor mistake in a proof that can be corrected, or metadata errors), the Journal may publish a correction (erratum or corrigendum). Corrections are linked to the original article.

7.2 Retractions

A retraction may be issued when the results are unreliable due to major error, plagiarism, duplicate publication, fabrication or falsification, or other serious ethical breaches. The purpose of retraction is to maintain the integrity of the scholarly record.

- Retraction notices state the reason for retraction and who initiated it (authors, editors, or publisher).
- The original article remains available, clearly marked as retracted (e.g., with a visible watermark) and linked to the retraction notice.
- If only part of an article is unreliable, the Journal may consider a correction or partial retraction, as appropriate.

7.3 Expressions of concern

If an investigation is ongoing and there are credible concerns about the integrity of a published article, the Journal may publish an expression of concern to alert readers while the matter is resolved.

8. Complaints and appeals (ethical issues)

Anyone may notify the Editor-in-Chief of suspected unethical behavior, errors, or misconduct by providing information sufficient to initiate an assessment. Allegations and supporting materials are treated confidentially.

8.1 Investigation process

- The Editor-in-Chief determines whether a formal review is warranted and may consult members of the Editorial Board who have no conflicts of interest.
- Authors (and, where relevant, reviewers) are given an opportunity to respond to concerns.
- If misconduct is confirmed, the Journal will take proportionate action ranging from a request for correction to retraction and notification of relevant institutions.

In handling ethical cases, the Journal follows recognized best practices, including the principles and recommendations of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), where applicable.

9. Data protection and privacy

The Journal collects and processes personal data necessary for editorial handling and publication (e.g., names, affiliations, and email addresses). Personal data are used solely for journal operations, communication with authors and reviewers, and publication of author metadata in accepted articles. The Journal does not sell personal data and does not share it with third parties except where required for publication services (e.g., typesetting, indexing) or where legally required.

Authors are encouraged, but not required, to provide ORCID identifiers for all authors in order to improve author disambiguation and metadata quality. Provision of an ORCID identifier is a recommendation and is not a condition of submission or publication. Where provided, ORCID identifiers may be published with the article.

By submitting a manuscript, authors agree to comply with the Journal's editorial and ethical policies.