Letters to the Editor

Corrections of errors which have been noted on papers published in *The American Statistician* in the future will be listed in a Corrigenda section. Letters to the Editor will be confined to discussions of papers which have appeared in *The American Statistician* and of important issues facing the statistical community. Letters discussing papers in *The American Statistician* must be received within two months of publication of the paper; the author of the paper will then be given an opportunity to reply and the letters and reply will be published together. All letters to the Editor will continue to be refereed.

A Markov Chain with a Given Stationary Distribution

F. J. Connell (*The American Statistician*, 31, 93, May 1977) showed how to construct an irreducible aperiodic $k \times k$ transition probability matrix $P = (p_{ij})$ such that for a given probability row vector π with positive rational elements π_i, $i = 1, \ldots, k$, $\pi P = \pi$. There is a simpler procedure which is valid for arbitrary positive probability vectors π and yields a matrix P which may be chosen arbitrarily close to the $k \times k$ identity matrix I.

Let $\min(\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_k) = \pi_0 > 0$ and choose any ϕ such that $0 < \phi < \pi_0$. Define P by $p_{ii} = 1 - \phi/\pi_i$, $i = 1, \ldots, k$; $p_{i,i+1} = \phi/\pi_i$, $i = 1, \ldots, k-1$; $p_{k1} = \phi/\pi_k$; $p_{ij} = 0$, otherwise. This P is irreducible and aperiodic. Moreover, $\pi P = \pi$ and $\lim_{\phi \downarrow 0} P = I$.

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To Our Readers:

The Editorial Board of *The American Statistician* thought that it would be useful for our readers to learn about some significant aspects of the operations of *The American Statistician*.

The number of new submissions of papers and letters during the period July 1, 1976–June 30, 1977 was as follows:

Papers	327
Letters	43
TOTAL	370

The disposition of these new submissions as of July 31, 1977 was as follows:

Accepted	41
Out for review	67
Rejected	240
Out for revision by author	22
TOTAL	370

While the number of rejections is large, many are the result of manuscripts not meeting the publication policy guidelines for *The American Statistician*. This can be seen from the following breakdown:

Does not fit publication policy guidelines	149
Rejected after review	91
TOTAL	240

Thus, the rejection rate among manuscripts which on first review appear to fit the publication policy guidelines for *The American Statistician* is 41 percent. This percentage will be somewhat higher as the manuscripts still out for review and revision are resubmitted.

Our aim has been to complete the first review of a manuscript within three to four months. This objective has been achieved for most of the papers submitted, as the following tabulation of the length of time between submission and completion of first review for new manuscripts submitted between October 1, 1976–March 31, 1977 shows:

Number of months	*Percent of papers*
Under 1 month	56
1–under 2 months	21
2–3 months	10
3–4 months	8
4–5 months	2
5–6 months	1
6–7 months	1
7–8 months	1
8–9 months	0
More than 9 months	0
TOTAL	100

Thus, only 5 percent of all manuscripts submitted did not have their initial reviews completed within four months.

The total length of time between submission and final decision, which includes the time the manuscript is out to the author for revision, is also of interest. For manuscripts submitted during the period October 1, 1976–March 31, 1977 which were either accepted or rejected by July 31, 1977, the total length of time was as follows:

Number of months	*Percent of papers*
Under 1 month	53
1–under 2 months	16
2–3 months	11
3–4 months	9
4–5 months	4
5–6 months	1
6–7 months	2
7–8 months	3
8–9 months	0
More than 9 months	1
TOTAL	100

The American Statistician welcomes the submission of suitable manuscripts. Persons wishing to submit manuscripts should review the publication policy guidelines which are published in each issue of *The American Statistician* (see p. 38 of this issue). Basically, *The American Statistician* seeks to publish expository and tutorial articles of general interest, articles dealing with statistics and public policy, articles on statistical education, and articles about statistical computing. We are particularly anxious to publish expository and tutorial papers which help the practitioner to understand recent developments in statistical methodology and their uses.

John Neter
Editor

Editor's Correction

The name of Associate Editor Charles R. Nelson has appeared in the masthead of *The American Statistician* with an incorrect middle initial during the past year. We regret very much this error.