EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE AT
PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS

Saad E. Hebboul

The American Physical Society, Ridge, NY

http://prl.aps.org
OUTLINE

① PRL EDITORIAL JOB

② PRL INNER WORKINGS

③ EDITORIAL ENVIRONMENT

④ EDITORIAL CAREER
Welcome to QTrack - PRISM's Task Tracking Application

Logged in as **hebboul**  [Logout](#) (Listing as of Mar 19, 09:05 NY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Queue</th>
<th># of Tasks</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Queues</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Create New Queue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Active Tasks</td>
<td>166</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delete</strong></td>
<td><strong>up</strong></td>
<td><strong>dn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Urgent Tasks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delete</strong></td>
<td><strong>up</strong></td>
<td><strong>dn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/BFR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delete</strong></td>
<td><strong>up</strong></td>
<td><strong>dn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/OTR</td>
<td>19</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delete</strong></td>
<td><strong>up</strong></td>
<td><strong>dn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1RL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delete</strong></td>
<td><strong>up</strong></td>
<td><strong>dn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TODAY'S DONE TASKS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delete</strong></td>
<td><strong>up</strong></td>
<td><strong>dn</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back-up</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Edit</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delete</strong></td>
<td><strong>up</strong></td>
<td><strong>dn</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Create New Personal Queue Group Named: [Add](#)

Group Queues

Expand All  Collapse All

**PRL Editors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>00. Overdue PRL tasks</th>
<th>52</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01. My Overdue Tasks</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0a. URGENT</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0b. Due Alerts</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0c. FYI/Misc/Query/VerifyDraft/LC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Check-in (NEW)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. New Papers (LOG)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. NR/TR/JR</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. All Reports (BFR/BFB)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c. Other Reports (OTR)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Resubmissions (BFA)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Minor Corr (CFA/CFR)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRL Sugg.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics Selection Comm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TASK ≡ INDIVISIBLE “QUANTUM” UNIT OF EDITORIAL WORK ( ~ 1 Task/Manuscript )**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Queue</th>
<th># of Tasks</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My Active Tasks</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>Edit</td>
<td>Delete</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Urgent Tasks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Edit</td>
<td>Delete</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/BFR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Edit</td>
<td>Delete</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/OTR</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Edit</td>
<td>Delete</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1RL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Edit</td>
<td>Delete</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TODAY’S DONE TASKS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Edit</td>
<td>Delete</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back-up</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Edit</td>
<td>Delete</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>dn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Create New Personal Queue Group Named: _Insert Name_ [Add]

**Group Queues**

- **PRL Editors**
  - **00. Overdue PRL tasks**: 52
  - **01. My Overdue Tasks**: 47
  - **0a. URGENT**: 2
  - **0b. Due Alerts**: 0
  - **0c. FYI/Misc/Query/VerifyDraft/LC**: 4
  - **1a. Check-in (NEW)**: 3
  - **1b. New Papers (LOG)**: 47
  - **2a. NR/TR/JR**: 24
  - **2b. All Reports (BFR/BFB)**: 21
  - **2c. Other Reports (OTR)**: 29
  - **3. Resubmissions (BFA)**: 24
  - **4. Minor Corr (CFA/CFR)**: 14
  - **PRL Sugg.**
  - **Physics Selection Comm**
**MANUSCRIPT TASK WORK FOR Saad Hebboul**

**TASK ≡ INDIVISIBLE “QUANTUM” UNIT OF EDITORIAL WORK ( ~ 1 Task / Manuscript )**

**REAL-TIME LISTS OF TASKS FOR FULL-TIME EDITOR:**

**LOAD = 800 - 1000 MANUSCRIPTS / YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Queue</th>
<th># of Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Active Tasks</strong></td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Urgent Tasks</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/BFR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/OTR</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1RL</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TODAY'S DONE TASKS</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back-up</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example Tasks:**
- 00. Overdue PRL tasks
- 01. My Overdue Tasks
- 0a. URGENT
- 0b. Due Alerts
- 0c. FYI/Misc/Query/VerifyDraft/LC
- 1a. Check-in (NEW)
- 1b. New Papers (LOG)
- 2a. NR/TR/JR
- 2b. All Reports (BFR/BFB)
- 2c. Other Reports (OTR)
- 3. Resubmissions (BFA)
- 4. Minor Corr (CFA/CFR)
- PRL Sugg.
- Physics Selection Comm
MANUSCRIPT TASK WORK FOR Saad Hebboul

**GLOBAL CATEGORIES OF TASKS FOR EACH PRL EDITOR**

**REAL-TIME LISTS OF TASKS FOR FULL-TIME EDITOR:**

**LOAD = 800 - 1000 MANUSCRIPTS / YEAR**

**TASK = INDIVISIBLE “QUANTUM” UNIT OF EDITORIAL WORK ( ~ 1 Task/Manuscript )**
**MANUSCRIPT TASK WORK FOR Saad Hebboul**

**Real-time lists of tasks for full-time editor:**

**Load = 800 - 1000 manuscripts / year**

**Task = Indivisible "Quantum" unit of editorial work (~ 1 Task / Manuscript)**

### Global categories of tasks for each PRL editor

### Detailed categories of tasks for each PRL editor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Queue</th>
<th># of Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My Active Tasks</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Urgent Tasks</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/BFR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/OTR</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1RL</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TODAY'S DONE TASKS</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back-up</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggestions / Physics selections**
### Global Task Categories for PRL Editors

**Total number of tasks for editor to act on**

**No Report from referee / Back From Referee**

**No Report from referee / Out To Referee**

**Manuscripts that are too long to review**

**Back-up tasks from editors who are out**

**Daily tasks done by editor (20 – 40 / Day)**

---

#### Task Queue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Queue</th>
<th># of Tasks</th>
<th>Create New Queue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Queues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Active Tasks</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>Edit Delete up dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Urgent Tasks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Edit Delete up dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/BFR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Edit Delete up dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR/OTR</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Edit Delete up dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1RL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Edit Delete up dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TODAY'S DONE TASKS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Edit Delete up dn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back-up</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Edit Delete up dn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Welcome to QTrack - PRISM's Task Tracking Application**
### Detailed Task Categories for PRL Editors

#### 13 days old tasks for ALL PRL Editors
- New manuscripts that are ready for editor
- Miscellaneous types of office internal tasks
- All reports from Referees & Boards
- Back From Author Resubmissions

#### 9 days old tasks for ONE PRL Editor
- New manuscripts that just arrived in office
- No Report / Transfer Report / Joint Report
- Not all reports from Referees & Boards
- Correspondence from Authors & Referees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Queues</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRL Editors</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00. Overdue PRL tasks</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01. My Overdue Tasks</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0a. URGENT</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0b. Due Alerts</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0c. FYI/Misc/Query/VerifyDraft/LC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Check-in (NEW)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b. New Papers (LOG)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. NR/TR/JR</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. All Reports (BFR/BFB)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c. Other Reports (OTR)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Resubmissions (BFA)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Minor Corr (CFA/CFR)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRL Sugg.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physics Selection Comm</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OUTLINE

① PRL EDITORIAL JOB

② PRL INNER WORKINGS

③ EDITORIAL ENVIRONMENT

④ EDITORIAL CAREER
EVOLUTIONARY TREE OF SCIENCE
PRL GOALS & CRITERIA

HIGHLIGHT MAJOR PROGRESS IN ALL FIELDS
PRL GOALS & CRITERIA

ACHIEVE CROSS-FIELD FERTILIZATION
FIELD ASSIGNMENTS FOR PRL EDITORS

MAIN PACS # identifies the EDITOR for your MANUSCRIPT

EDITOR A

EDITOR B

PACS NUMBERS

10  30  50  70  90
PRL REFEREE SELECTION:  (Step 1 of 2)

- REFERENCES
- KEY WORDS
- PACS NUMBERS
- COVER LETTER

DATABASE (> 55,000)

WORKING LIST OF REFEREES (< 100)
PRL REFEREE SELECTION: (Step 2 of 2)

WORKING LIST OF REFEREES (< 100)

- AVAILABILITY? NO
  - YES
  - EXPERTISE? NO
    - YES
    - REF. RECORD? NO
      - YES
      - PUB. RECORD? NO
        - YES
        - COLLABORATIONS? NO
          - YES
          - 2 - 3 REFEREES
PRL REJECTION WITHOUT REVIEW

PRL Editors reject about 10% - 20% of new manuscripts without external review.

These include manuscripts that are:

- POOR
- INCOMPLETE
- SPECIALIZED
- MARGINAL
- ...

PRESENTATION vs. RESEARCH

TITLE
ABSTRACT
INTRODUCTION
CONCLUSION
REFERENCES

RESULT
FIGURES
TABLES
EQUATIONS
ANALYSIS
DISCUSSION

INTERNAL COUPLING
PRESENTATION

RESEARCH

INTERNAL COUPLING
PRL EDITORS: PART 2 of 3

Sonja Grondalski

Manolis Antonoyiannakis

Daniel Ucko

Deniz van Heijnsbergen
PRL EDITORS: PART 3 of 3

Frank Narducci
Brant Johnson
Karsten Kruse
Stanley Brown
RIDGE HOLIDAY LUNCHEON, 12/15/11

Rashmi Ray, PRD

Reiny Schuhmann, PRL

Sharon Lensky, JIS

Robert Garisto, PRL

Tony Begley, PRB

Matt Eager, PRB

Arthur Smith, JIS
The referee writes in his report:

“This manuscript is terse, so my report will also be terse.”
The referee writes under "JOINT REPORT":

"None. I wrote this report all by myself. My mother would be proud."
The authors do not like the report of referee A:

“The report of referee A reads like a message from an asylum.”
The authors resubmit many months later:

“We finally succeeded in removing the obscured abracadabra from our manuscript so that the referees can understand our work better.”
OUTLINE

① PRL EDITORIAL JOB

② PRL INNER WORKINGS

③ EDITORIAL ENVIRONMENT

④ EDITORIAL CAREER
EDITORIAL CAREER AS A SEPARATE WORLD

Many Different Journals

Many Different Skills

Editorial

PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS
SPECTRUM OF DIFFERENT CAREER WORLDS

- Funding
- Academic
- Editorial
- Patenting
- Industrial
- Financial

WORLDS
SPECTRUM OF DIFFERENT CAREER WORLDS

NO SUPERIOR / INFERIOR CAREER WORLDS

Funding
Academic
Editorial
Patenting
Industrial
Financial

WORLDS
SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND FOR PRL EDITORS

SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND

PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS

ACADEMIC

EDITORIAL

PhD GRADUATE

SCIENTIFIC FIELDS
SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND FOR PRL EDITORS

PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS

SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND

ACADEMIC

EDITORIAL

PhD GRADUATE

PhD GRADUATE + POSTDOCTORAL

SCIENTIFIC FIELDS
ADDITIONAL SKILLS FOR PRL EDITORS

1. WRITTEN & ORAL COMMUNICATIONS
2. APPRECIATION OF RESEARCH DONE BY OTHERS
3. ACCEPTANCE OF ALL SCIENTIFIC FIELDS
4. INTUITION FOR QUALITY OF RESEARCH
5. INTEREST IN HELPING AUTHORS & REFEREES
6. COMFORTABLE IN SOCIAL SETTINGS
7. ABILITY TO TAKE CRITICISM
ENHANCING RESUMES FOR EDITORIAL JOBS

1. INCLUDE PLENTY OF EMPTY SPACE AROUND EACH ITEM

2. INCLUDE TWO TO FIVE WELL SPACED “BULLET” ITEMS:
   - Reviewed 3 manuscripts for PRL, 4 for PRB, and 2 for Nature
   - Co-authored 2 Letters in PRL, 3 Articles in PRB, and 1 Article in Nature
   - 
   - 

3. INCLUDE A LINK TO YOUR YOUTUBE-STYLE VIDEO < 5 min

4. INCLUDE YOUR PHOTO IN THE UPPER RIGHT CORNER
INAPPROPRIATE PHOTOS FOR RESUMES

Fashionable Posture
Distracting Background

Wedding Like
Obstructing Hat
APPROPRIATE PHOTOS FOR RESUMES

NO Face Obstructions

NO Distracting Backgrounds
SUMMARY

① PRL EDITORIAL JOB:
Editors work on manuscripts in various real-time queues.
Each full-time editor handles dozens of manuscripts/day.

② PRL INNER WORKINGS:
Review major progress in all fields & Induce cross-field fertilization.
Referee selection is a two-step process using key words, references, etc.
Rejection without external review for 10% - 20% of new manuscripts.

③ EDITORIAL ENVIRONMENT:
Editors attend various domestic & international conferences.
Relaxed academic atmosphere without students & No campus.

④ EDITORIAL CAREER:
Editorial world exists between Academic & Patent worlds.
Candidates qualify by gaining broad scientific background + specialty.
Resumes can be enhanced by self-portrait photos & links to videos.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. LANCE COOPER
2. AUTHORS
3. REFEREES
4. READERS
5. APS physics
MAIN MATERIAL SOURCES

① PRL:
   prl.aps.org

② CLIP ART:
   www.clipart.com

③ GOOGLE IMAGES:
   www.google.com/imghp

④ CELESTIA:
   www.celestiamotherlode.net