

## **Clemson University**

### **Best Practices in Authorship**

*Issued January 24, 2014*

#### **I. General Principles and Responsible Conduct**

The mission of Clemson University is to fulfill the covenant between its founder and the people of South Carolina to establish a "high seminary of learning" through its historical land-grant responsibilities of teaching, research and extended public service. Coupled with this mission is the responsibility to communicate truthfully new knowledge gained from research and scholarly activity. When publishing results of research, authors should adhere to certain standards that will assure the quality and integrity of the publication. Specially, authors should:

- i. If possible, report results and their verification in a peer-reviewed forum
- ii. Report all relevant data including conflicting data if pertinent to the hypothesis in question
- iii. Acknowledge the work of others that is relevant to the context of the study and its interpretation
- iv. Refrain from redundant primary publications of the same data
- v. Take ultimate responsibility for the scholarly character, accuracy, and conduct of the research performed under their supervision
- vi. Present research in appropriate scientific forums before reports are released to the press
- vii. Alert editors and readers of potential conflicts of interest that may affect how the article will be interpreted

Fabricating data, falsifying data, and/or knowingly representing the work of others as one's own are serious violations of our mission and the public trust and constitute scientific misconduct.

#### **II. Criteria for Authorship**

Authorship refers to the listing of names of participants in all written communications of data and their interpretation to the scientific community. Authorship is the fulfillment of the responsibility to communicate scientific research to society and is the primary means

for assigning credit for a scientist's contributions to the advancement of scientific knowledge.

Authorship should be given generously, but only to those who have contributed significantly to the research, are prepared to stand behind their findings, and have reviewed the entire manuscript. All authors of a scholarly publication should meet the following four criteria:

- i. Participated substantially in conception, design, and execution of the study, or in the analysis and interpretation of data
- ii. Participated substantially in the drafting of the manuscript or in the substantive editing of the manuscript
- iii. Reviewed and gave final approval of the version of the manuscript to be published
- iv. Be able to explain and defend in public or scholarly settings that portion of the study for which he or she was directly responsible, including potential conflicts of interest

A claim of authorship by, or assignment of authorship to, persons who may have been associated in some way with a study but do not meet the four criteria above is considered highly inappropriate. The referral of patients included in a clinical study does not in and of itself warrant co-authorship status. Individuals who have made lesser contributions such as providing advice, occasional analyses, subject/patient material, space, or who may have supported the research in other ways, should be acknowledged. The practice of permitting honorary authorship is unacceptable and should be actively discouraged.

### **III. Responsible Author**

One author, designated as the Responsible Author must assume overall responsibility for each publication (e.g., primary research report, abstract, review article, book chapter) submitted from Clemson University. The Responsible Author is typically the faculty member who leads the study and who assumes the responsibility for coordinating and completing the work, drafting of the manuscript, satisfying pertinent rules for submitting the manuscript and any required revisions, and coordinating responses of the group to inquiries or challenges. The Responsible Author should exercise due diligence in assuring the validity of the entire manuscript.

The selection of the Responsible Author, inclusion of collaborator(s) as co-author(s), and the order of authorship should ideally be determined by the research team as a whole. Authorship criteria should be discussed before the study begins and any disputes resolved at that time. A written memo attesting to this discussion can be valuable if a dispute subsequently arises. The Responsible Author should assure that all collaborators are appropriately recognized and that study collaborators listed as co-authors meet the criteria for authorship described herein. The Responsible Author does not necessarily have to be the first author.

The Responsible Author should assure that all co-authors have had the opportunity to approve the final version of a manuscript or abstract, that each co-author has reviewed the portions of the manuscript or abstract representing his or her contribution, and each is willing to support that material.

Each co-author must consent to authorship prior to submission of any manuscript bearing his or her name. In addition, each co-author should practice due diligence to assure the validity of the manuscript.

#### **IV. Students, Fellows, and Research Associates**

All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship as defined herein. Faculty should be aware of their responsibility to ensure that students, postdoctoral fellows, and other research associates participate in the preparation of manuscripts and are recognized as authors in publications covering the results of research in which they were active participants.

#### **V. Multi-Authorship/Multi-Center Manuscripts**

These criteria are considered important because there has been a gradual diffusion of responsibility for multi-authored or collaborative studies that has led to the publication of papers for which no single author was prepared to take full responsibility.

Multi-authorship, including authorship on papers from multi-center studies, raises special issues, such as the ability of an author to evaluate all aspects of a study and the sequence of listing of authors. Authors should discuss these issues openly before initiating a multi-authored project and repeatedly during the course of such work. To promote this process in multi-center studies, specially charged Publication Committees are often invaluable (see section on Disputes over Authorship).

All authors should approve the final version of a manuscript and should be prepared to take public responsibility for the work. It is recognized, however, that studies often involve investigators from several disciplines, and it may not always be possible for a single investigator to confirm each piece of data used in the written report. It is therefore the responsibility of each participating investigator to be actively involved in verifying the sections of a manuscript that discuss his or her specialty area, and to assure all co-authors that the sections are accurate and valid.

*Reviewed by:*

*Faculty Senate Research Committee, 11/2013*

*Research Integrity Officer, 12/2013*

*Vice President for Research, 1/2014*