

Guidance for Authorship in Scholarly or Scientific Publications

Authorship Principles

An important component in upholding the integrity of the research and scholarly enterprise is the assignment of authorship. It serves as an explicit way of assigning responsibility and giving credit for intellectual work. Authorship should be given to those who contribute and participate in substantive ways to scholarly and scientific work, and should honestly and accurately reflect actual contributions. Fair and equitable determination of authorship is important to the reputation, academic promotion, and funding support of the individuals involved, and to the strength and reputation of the authors' respective institutions.

As early as possible in the research or scholarly process, collaborators should discuss the general requirements for authorship of any manuscript that will report results of joint work. This does not mean deciding who will – or will not – be an author. Rather, the principles guiding authorship decisions should be discussed, potentially with reference to this or similar guidance documents. To prevent misunderstandings, it is recommended that discussions of authorship standards be held openly and frequently within collaborative projects. Agreements should be established between coauthors early in the writing process for each manuscript, and these agreements should be reviewed and revised as needed to reflect changes in the actual contributions of each individual.

Disagreements sometimes arise regarding who should be named as an author of or contributor to intellectual work and the order in which individuals should be listed. Some of these disputes are a result of failed communication and expectation setting. This guidance is meant to serve as a set of standards that are shared by the academic community as a whole, to help facilitate open communication through adherence to common principles. These principles apply to all intellectual products, whether published or prepared for internal use or for broad dissemination.

Applicability

This guidance applies to all faculty, students, postdoctoral researchers, and staff.

Designing an ethical and transparent approach to authorship and publication of research is the responsibility of the principal investigator(s). This guidance document outlines the ethical responsibilities of the investigator(s) and the University resources available to support implementation of the principles outlined herein.

Chapman University acknowledges and appreciates that there are many different standards across fields regarding authorship (e.g., the order in which authors are listed). As a result, each laboratory, department, college and/or school should have conversations and clear guidelines around discipline-specific standards of authorship and, if needed, should supplement these guidelines with a description of their own customary ways of deciding who should be an author and the order in which authors will be listed. If such standards are documented in writing, they should be made available to all collaborators and discussed at the beginning of the collaboration.

Recommendations for Attribution of Authorship

Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for its content. All co-authors should have been directly involved in all four of the following:

1. Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; **and**
2. Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; **and**
3. Final approval of the version to be published; **and**
4. Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

Some diversity exists across academic disciplines regarding norms for substantive contributions that would lead to attribution of authorship. This guidance is intended to allow for such variation in disciplinary best practices while ensuring authorship is not inappropriately assigned.

Acknowledgements

Individuals who do not meet the requirements for authorship but who have provided a valuable contribution to the work should be acknowledged for their contributing role as appropriate to the publication.

Recommendations for Implementation

Successful implementation of this guidance relies on a commitment to collegiality and open, frank, consistent communication and expectation-setting throughout the research and scholarly process.

Integral to implementation of this guidance is the following:

- Research groups should discuss authorship credit/criteria, presentation of joint work, and future directions of the research as early as practical, and frequently, during the course of their work. This should involve explicit discussion of expectations of continued collaboration if a contributor who would normally be considered an author leaves the project or institution during the conduct of the work. The lead investigator should initiate these discussions; however, any collaborator may raise questions or seek clarity throughout the course of the collaboration. Each lab or group may consider having a written guiding document in place.
- Collaborators are expected to adhere to good laboratory practices, including maintaining a complete laboratory notebook and annotating electronic files, as these practices will aid in identifying and clarifying individuals' contributions to a project.
- Disposition of collaborative data and research materials should be mutually agreed upon among collaborators as early as practical and in accordance with any data-sharing and retention requirements;
- Laboratories, departments, and educational programs supporting scholarly work at Chapman should include in any procedure manuals this guidance and a description of their own customary ways of deciding who should be an author and the order in which authors are listed. This guidance and customary practices should be included in orientation of new members.
- Discussion of the principles of authorship outlined in this guidance should be integrated into any responsible conduct of research courses taught at Chapman.

Authorship Disputes and Resolution

Conflicts related to authorship may arise at any time during the research or scholarly process, resulting from differing perceptions of one's contributions and resulting attribution of credit. Chapman University recommends adherence to the following procedures when a dispute arises, unless disagreements are a result of alleged fabrication or falsification of data or plagiarism and, therefore, instead subject to the institution's [Integrity in Research Policy](#).

1. Resolution of disputes among collaborators through open and collegial discourse and mutual agreement is strongly encouraged. To facilitate this process, any prior decisions or discussions among authors, including verbal or written agreements between coauthors, should be reviewed and considered. This guidance and any documented customary practices in the relevant discipline should be applied, as appropriate. Extending an invitation to a mutually agreed upon party outside the group who is familiar with publication norms in the field to informally serve as a neutral facilitator may ensure that all viewpoints are weighed and considered and objectively applied. It is expected that most disputes will be resolved collegially among collaborators.
2. If the disagreement cannot be resolved among collaborators, input should be sought from a neutral third party, such as the University Ombudsperson or other trusted parties.
 - a. **Department-level resolution.** The collaborators should engage the Department Chair or his/her designee to facilitate a resolution of the dispute acceptable to all parties. This assumes that the Department Chair is not a direct party to the dispute and does not otherwise have a conflict of interest. If multiple departments are involved in the dispute or the Department Chair has a conflict, the parties may opt to engage the University Ombudsperson.
 - b. **Engagement of the University Ombudsperson.** Chapman's ombudsperson is a resource available to all members of Chapman University and can act as a neutral party to mediate disputes at any point in the process. The ombudsperson is skilled at facilitating conflict resolution and while he/she cannot adjudicate an authorship dispute by taking formal action, he/she may bring together the parties involved to assist them in reaching their own settlement.
 - c. **Graduate Research Resolution.** In the event that a dispute arises regarding graduate student research, the disagreeing party/parties (student(s) and/or faculty member(s)) should request a meeting of all interested persons, with at least five business days' notice, for the purpose of resolving the problem. In the case of disputes between students, the meeting must include at least one faculty member familiar with the research. If the dispute cannot be resolved through this process, or if the proposed solution is unacceptable to the student(s) or the faculty member(s), the disagreeing party/parties may request that the dean of the college or school review the problem and recommend a solution. The dean may appoint a designee to review/recommend, provided the dean's designee is not personally involved in the dispute. If the problem cannot be resolved at the department or college/school level, or if the dispute involves the dean of the college/school, the dispute should be appealed to the Vice Provost for Graduate

Education, which will be the final level of appeal.

- d. **Resolution when authors are from multiple institutions:** The collaborators should engage a mutually agreed upon neutral party outside the group who is familiar with publication norms in the field to facilitate a resolution.

Resources and Contacts

- This guidance document is based partially on guidelines at Brown University (with permission) "[Guidelines on Authorship in Scholarly or Scientific Publications](#)"
- The International Committee for Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) provides comprehensive instruction on authorship that is not detailed in this guidance document, but can be accessed on its [website](#).
- Washburn, J.J. (2008) Encouraging Research Collaboration Through Ethical and Fair Authorship: A Model Policy, *Ethics & Behavior*, 18:1, 44-58,
- Warrender, J.M. (2016) A Simple Framework for Evaluating Authorial Contributions for Scientific Publications. *Sci Eng Ethics* 22: 1419.
- Winston, Jr., R. B. (1985). A Suggested Procedure for Determining Order of Authorship in Research Publications. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 63, 515-518.
- Chapman University - Office of Research
 - Thomas Piechota, Vice President for Research
 - Michael Briggs, Director of Research Integrity
- Chapman University Faculty Ombudsperson – Dr. Frank Frisch