

1 Authorship

2 Effective: June 18, 2018

3 Contact: [Vice President for Research](#)

4 Introduction

5 A key expectation of faculty, staff, and students in a research university is the generation of
6 knowledge, and dissemination of knowledge, as evidenced by publications and other scholarly
7 products and creative work including generation of intellectual property, regardless of the medium or
8 format. Recognizing that authorship issues can often be complicated, and conventions can vary
9 between disciplines, Iowa State University encourages its faculty, staff and students to proactively
10 discuss authorship in their creative pursuits to identify and navigate potential conflicts that may
11 impede wide and open dissemination.

12 Applicability

13 This policy applies to all individuals at Iowa State University engaged in the publication of research,
14 defined broadly as all forms of scholarly investigation or creative work, regardless of funding source.

15 Colleges and departments are encouraged to develop additional "best practices" guidelines
16 regarding authorship for their faculty, staff, and students that address discipline-specific issues.

17 The term "publication" as used in this policy is meant generically, representing as inclusively as
18 possible any manner of report, paper, manuscript, article, book, chapter, treatise, exhibit or creation,
19 or other publishable product whether printed or digital in format.

20 Policy Statement

21 Purpose and Expectations

22 Authorship assignments must honestly reflect actual contributions as a function of the ethical
23 conduct of scholarship. Authors of scholarly products must adhere to the highest ethical standards of
24 scientific integrity and accountability—an expectation from both society at large and granting
25 agencies.

26 Authorship explicitly assigns both credit and responsibility for intellectual and creative works and has
27 tangible implications for faculty, staff, and student participants on project teams. Faculty have the
28 responsibility to safeguard the rights of staff and students at all levels to publish.

29 Adherence to this policy is specifically intended to eliminate authorship assignment rooted in power
30 inequities (i.e. prejudiced by academic position, rank or other hierarchical considerations),
31 inappropriate practices, and perceptions of conflict of interest in the presentation of scholarly
32 findings.

33 Participants are expected to engage early in the idea generation, collaboration and publication
34 development process in open and clear communication about the assignment of authorship roles
35 with their potential publishing colleagues and especially keeping in mind that depending on the
36 nature, complexity and longevity of the project, changes in authorship (additions, deletions and
37 order) may become necessary. Written agreements specifying the details of authorship and
38 contributions may be warranted in many cases but are recommended in all cases. [See Resources
39 below for *Tips for Determining Authorship Credit, American Psychological Association*]

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41 Attribution of Authorship

42 Authorship is limited to those who meet both of the following criteria and expectations; all those who
43 meet these standards should be included as an author:

- 44 • Significant intellectual contribution to a project through conception and design, or data
45 acquisition and analysis, or interpretation; and
- 46 • Ability to identify their own contribution, and ideally the contributions of each participating author,
47 and defend the major aspects of the project presented in the publication, although not
48 necessarily all the technical details, and accept responsibility for its integrity and credibility.

49 In addition, it is expected that each author has been given the opportunity to participate in the
50 drafting of the manuscript (or substantive revision of its scholarly content) and approves the final
51 version of the manuscript to be published.

52 Provision of logistical, financial, or administrative support alone does not constitute a valid basis for
53 authorship. Recognition of these types of contribution is appropriate for an acknowledgements
54 section of a publication.

55 Most journals have established criteria regarding authorship, acknowledgement, and conflicts of
56 interest, but not regarding authorship order (note that some disciplines/journals practice authorship
57 in alphabetical order). Potential authors must review and conform to journal specific policies and
58 requirements prior to submission.

59 Violations

60 The following are examples of acts that may violate this policy:

- 61 • **Intentional exclusion of a person as author** who meets the criteria defined above in the
62 Attribution of Authorship section.
- 63 • **Acceptance or ascription of an honorary authorship.** Honorary (guest, courtesy, or prestige)
64 authorship is granting authorship out of appreciation or respect for an individual, or in the belief
65 that the expert standing of the honored person will increase the likelihood of publication,
66 credibility, or status of the work even in the absence of significant intellectual contribution.
- 67 • **Acceptance or ascription of a gift authorship.** Gift authorship is credit, offered from a sense
68 of obligation, tribute, or dependence, within the context of an anticipated benefit, to an individual
69 who has not appropriately contributed to the work.
- 70 • **Acceptance or ascription of a ghost authorship.** Ghost authorship is the failure to identify as
71 an author someone who has made substantial contributions to the research or writing of a
72 manuscript thus meriting authorship or allowing significant editorial control of a publication by an
73 unnamed party, which may constitute a real or perceived conflict of interest that should be
74 disclosed.

75 Dispute resolution and disciplinary action

76 A person who believes their authorship rights have been intentionally violated or who wishes to
77 report other improper authorship practices must first attempt pursuing informal/collegial resolution of
78 the issue within the research group, through discussions with a senior colleague/mentor external to
79 the research group, through facilitated discussion with a disinterested party such as the institution's
80 Ombuds officer and/or through departmental or collegiate channels (supervisor, chair, dean or
81 equivalent within their units).

82 Authorship disputes that do not involve plagiarism as defined in the Research Misconduct Policy are
83 not a matter of research misconduct. If an authorship dispute involves plagiarism it should be
84 brought to the attention of the Research Integrity Officer in accordance with the Research
85 Misconduct Policy for assessment.

86 **Resources**

87 **Links**

- 88 • [Authorship: Applications & Guidance from the Office of the Vice President for Research](#)
- 89 • [Non-Retaliation against Persons Reporting Misconduct Policy](#)
- 90 • [Research Integrity Officer \(RIO\)](#)
- 91 • [Vice President for Research Office](#)
- 92 • [U.S. Office of Research Integrity \(ORI\)](#)
- 93 • [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#)
- 94 • [Tips for Determining Authorship Credit, American Psychological Association](#)
- 95 • [Authorship Practices to Avoid Conflicts \(HHS Office of Research Integrity\) \[PDF\]](#)

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