



**Langone Medical Center**

*Policy No.*

*Issuing Department:*

**Office of Education, Faculty and Academic Affairs  
and Office of Science & Research**

*Effective Date:*

**June 1, 2010**

**Policy on Authorship of Scientific and Scholarly  
Publications**

**I. Summary of Policy**

This Policy establishes the Medical Center's minimum requirements for authorship of scientific and scholarly publications by Medical Center personnel. All individuals who are granted authorship on scientific and scholarly publications should meet the criteria of authorship articulated in this Policy; only those individuals who meet such criteria should be granted authorship; and all of those individuals who meet such criteria should be granted authorship. Ghostwriting, honorary or courtesy authorships, and other practices inconsistent with the criteria of authorship articulated in this Policy are unacceptable and a violation of this Policy.

**II. Policy Purpose**

Scientific and scholarly publications provide the main vehicle to disseminate findings, thoughts, and analyses to the scientific, academic, and lay communities. For the authors of such work, successful publication improves opportunities for academic funding and promotion while enhancing scientific and scholarly achievement and repute. At the same time, the benefits of authorship are accompanied by a number of responsibilities for the proper planning, conducting, analysis, and reporting of research and the content and conclusions of other scholarly work. The Medical Center and its faculty, staff and students must help protect this fundamental element of the scientific and scholarly process.

The Medical Center's minimum requirements for authorship of scientific and scholarly publications as set forth in this Policy are based in large part on requirements set forth in Section II.A. of the **"Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals"** produced by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). The current document (updated October 2008) is and can be obtained on line at <http://www.icmje.org/>.

**III. Applicability of the Policy**

This Policy applies to all scientific and scholarly publications by all faculty (paid and unpaid), staff, postdoctoral scholars, fellows, research associates, residents, trainees, staff, students and other personnel affiliated with the Medical Center and all publications reporting on research conducted at or under the auspices of the Medical Center.

#### IV. Definitions

A. **“Authorship”** or **“Authorship Credit”** means those individuals meeting the authorship or authorship credit criteria set forth in Section V.A. below.

B. The **“PI/Director”** means a principal investigator or senior researcher for research at the Medical Center.

C. The **“Student/Subordinate”** means any student, postdoctoral fellow, technician or other subordinate engaged in research at the Medical Center under the direction or mentorship or in the laboratory of a PI/Director.

D. **“Publication”** or **“Scientific and Scholarly Publication”** refers to articles, abstracts, and presentations at professional meetings related to research.

#### V. Policy

A. **Authorship.** Authorship credit for publications reporting on original research (in any medium), should include only those individuals who:

- i. make substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; and
- ii. draft the publication or revise it critically for important intellectual content; and
- iii. participate sufficiently in the publication to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content; and
- iv. either (a) provide final approval of the version to be published or (b) provide final approval of a substantially similar near-final version and receive the final version to be published with an opportunity to comment prior to the actual publication.

Individuals who make other contributions to research, such as provision of a key reagent, or collection of data, may also be considered for authorship credit as long as conditions (ii), (iii) and (iv) above are met. If such conditions are not met, such individuals should be recognized in the acknowledgements section of the publication (see Section V.E. below).

For reviews or commentaries not based in original research, authorship credit should be based on conditions (ii), (iii) and (iv) above.

For multi-center trials, where authorship is increasingly attributed to a group, authorship credit should be given only to those members of the group who fully meet the above criteria for authorship.

All those granted authorship should meet the above criteria and all those who meet the above criteria should be granted authorship. In addition, the Medical Center recognizes that many

journals may have additional requirements related to authorship. An author must comply with **both** the authorship requirements of the journal to which a manuscript is submitted and to the requirements of the Medical Center as set forth in above.

**B. Unacceptable Authorship.** Any authorship practice inconsistent with this Policy is unacceptable and a violation of this Policy, including all of the following:

- i. Ghost-writing, a practice whereby another entity writes an article or manuscript and a scientist is listed as an author, is unacceptable and a violation of this Policy. Making minor revisions to an article or manuscript that is ghost-written does not justify authorship.
- ii. Honorary or courtesy authorships, the practice of granting authorship to individual who do not meet the criteria for an author of a publication out of appreciation or respect, are unacceptable and a violation of this Policy.
- iii. Unless there are contributions or activities meeting the authorship criteria listed in Part A above, acquisition of funding, collection of data (for example, from a fee-for-service core facility), or general supervision of the research group (e.g. by former or current mentors not directly involved in the conception or execution of the publication), alone, does not justify authorship.

**C. The Senior Author.** In the case of publications with multiple authors, one author should be designated as the senior author. Generally, the senior author is defined as the individual who assumes leadership of the project and makes a major contribution to the research effort. The senior author is responsible for:

- i. Determining Authorship: The senior author must include as co-authors all individuals who meet the authorship criteria set forth in this Policy and only those individuals who meet the authorship criteria set forth in this Policy. The senior author should be prepared to explain the presence and order of all co-authors.
- ii. Consent: The senior author must provide the final draft of the publication to each individual contributing author for review and consent for authorship. The senior author should obtain written documentation of each individual author's approval of the final manuscript, including the order of authorship. A journal may have specific requirements governing author review and consent, which must be followed. Failure to obtain the necessary approvals, signatures, and corresponding documentation will represent a violation of this Policy.
- iii. Integrity: The senior author is responsible for the integrity of the work as a whole, including research conducted at other labs or sites.

**D. Co-authors.** All co-authors of a publication are responsible for:

- i. Authorship: By providing consent to authorship to the senior author, co-authors acknowledge that they meet the authorship criteria set forth in this Policy.
- ii. Approval: By providing consent to authorship to the senior author, co-authors are acknowledging that they have either (a) provided final approval of the version to be published or (b) provided final approval of a substantially similar near-final version and receive the final version to be published with an opportunity to comment prior to the actual publication.
- iii. Integrity: Each co-author is responsible for the content of all appropriate portions of the publication, including the integrity of any applicable research.

An individual retains the right to refuse, for any reason, co-authorship of a manuscript.

**E. Acknowledgments.** Some individuals may have made substantial contributions to a publication, but do not meet the criteria for authorship. These individuals should be recognized in an acknowledgments section of the publication. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include persons who provide only:

- Technical skill
- Writing or editorial assistance
- Data collection
- Coordination of data collection
- Provision of reagents or technical methods
- General support (e.g., Department chair)

In addition, financial and material support for the research should be acknowledged and disclosed. The terms of such acknowledgement may be provided in the grant, contract or agreement with the party providing the financial and/or material support.

Because readers may infer their endorsement of the data and conclusions, all persons should give permission to be acknowledged.

**F. PI/Directors Responsibilities.** PI/Directors have special responsibilities to assure the overall cohesiveness and validity of the publications authored by the Student/Subordinates on which they appear as co-authors or which arise out of research performed under their direction or mentorship or in their laboratory even if they fail to meet the criteria for an author set forth in this Policy. As part of these special responsibilities, PI/Directors are expected to:

- a. review and consent to, or provide in writing any objections to, any publication authored by a Student/Subordinate reporting original research under their direction or mentorship or in their laboratory, including with respect to its authorship;

- b. be responsible for the content of all appropriate portions of any such publication, including the integrity of the applicable research; and
- c. train Student/Subordinates authoring publications on the policies, procedures and guidelines outlined in this Policy.

**G. Publications by Student/Subordinates.** Student/Subordinates are expected to report in publications related to original research under a PI/Director's direction or mentorship or in his or her laboratory only after the review and consent of such PI/Director. Both the Student/Subordinate and the PI/Director is responsible for the content of all appropriate portions of such publications, including the integrity of the applicable research. These expectations pertain to work done under supervision of a PI or mentor, and are not intended to restrict mutually agreed-upon independent publications.

**H. Disputes between Student/Subordinates and PI/Directors.** In the event the PI/Director is unwilling to consent to a proposed publication by the Student/Subordinate as contemplated by Section V.G. above, he or she is expected to provide in writing his or her objection to the proposed publication, including, if possible, any alterations which might be sufficient for the PI/Director to provide consent.

When a PI/Director is unwilling to consent to the publication by the Student/Subordinate and the Student/Subordinate wishes to proceed with the publication, the potential author is encouraged to discuss the issue, the proposed publication and the PI/Director's written comments, with a senior colleague, supervisor, advisor, or mentor outside of the research group, with the author's thesis committee, with a mentoring committee, and/or, for students, with the Medical Center's Senior Associate Dean for Biomedical Sciences. Department chairs are encouraged to develop procedures to review requests by Student/Subordinates under this paragraph.

If the matter fails to be resolved in this manner, the Student/Subordinate may request a review of the proposed publication from the Senior Associate Dean for Biomedical Sciences. The Senior Associate Dean for Biomedical Sciences (or a faculty designee with expertise in the area in question) shall review the publication and written objection and determine whether the proposed publication is suitable for publication under the circumstances. It is expected that the Student/Subordinate will not pursue a publication objected to by the PI/Director in the absence of a finding of suitability by the Senior Associate Dean for Biomedical Sciences (or designee).

**I. Conducting Responsible Authorship.** Customs governing authorship often vary widely by discipline and even by research group. Adhering to the following procedures and guidelines will help prevent situations that may lead to new authorship disputes:

- i. **Discuss Proactively.** In a group effort, there should be early discussions regarding who will be given authorship credit and the possible authorship order.
  - a. Criteria for authorship should be discussed before beginning to prepare a manuscript, and, where feasible, possibly even before starting a project.

- b. Each party should have an understanding of what kind of work merits authorship, with the knowledge that, as the research project progresses, authorship credit and the possible order of authors may change.
- c. Each party should also have an understanding of who among many authors will have primary responsibility for the writing, submission, and editing work required for a paper. This can be extremely important when a project involves collaborations between labs.
- d. Each party has a shared responsibility for the published result. Accordingly, all parties in a group effort should be given the opportunity to review all sample preparation procedures and data, as well as all data acquisition and analysis procedures.
- e. Each party should have access to the manuscript prior to its being submitted for publication and should agree then to his or her inclusion as a co-author.
- f. Each party should know that the paper is being prepared for publication.

In addition, early in the project, each research group should define appropriate practices for the maintenance of data as required in the Medical Center's Policy on Retention or and Access to Research Data.

- ii. **Be Consistent.** Determination of authorship credit and authorship order should be consistent, both within the research group and with the norms for the field.
- iii. **Understand the Rules.** All authors should review and follow this Policy and other institutional and journal-specific policies and guidelines regarding authorship.
- iv. **Communicate.** The criteria for authorship should be discussed as part of the initial planning process for a research project and a resulting publication. The Medical Center encourages potential authors to agree upon authorship plans and criteria in writing, where feasible. As the project and/or the manuscript evolve, authorship credit and authorship order should be revisited as needed. There should be discussion and agreement as to the critical elements/data that will be included in the publication.

**J. Resolving Disputes – Authorship Credit.** Disputes frequently arise over who should or should not be listed as an author and the possible order of authors. Resolution of authorship credit or authorship order disputes that do not represent a violation of this Policy must be resolved at the department level.

For any dispute related to authorship credit or authorship order, the potential authors should first attempt to resolve disputes regarding among themselves. In conjunction with the senior author, co-authors should discuss authorship and authorship order at the onset of the project and revise their decision as needed. All authors should work together to make these informed judgments.

For instances when a potential co-author is a Student/Subordinate, resolving disputes can be particularly difficult. When possible, the potential author should discuss the issue with a supervisor, laboratory chief, advisor, or mentor.

For disagreements regarding authorship credit or authorship order which are not resolved after reasonable efforts to resolve the issue within the research group, it may help to discuss the issue with a senior colleague outside of the research group. If the matter fails to be resolved in this manner, the authors should request mediation from the department chair involved or, in the event one author is a student, the Medical Center's Senior Associate Dean for Biomedical Sciences.

In cases that cannot be resolved, the senior author, in consultation with the department chair, will have the final authority to resolve the dispute.

**K. Conflicts of Interest.** Authors must fully disclose, in all publications, to journals, and at professional meetings, all relevant financial interests that could be viewed as a potential conflict of interest or as may be required by the Medical Center and/or journal. All such financial interests must be reported internally as required by the Medical Center's Policies on Conflict of Interest, Commitment and Consulting.

## **VI. Policy Enforcement**

Violations of this Policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or association with the Medical Center, in accordance with the Medical Center disciplinary policies and procedures applicable to the individual in question.

## **VII. Related Policies**

Complaints regarding application of authorship criteria, authorship order and acknowledgements do not constitute scientific misconduct under the New York University Principles and Procedures Concerning Allegations of Scientific Misconduct in Scientific Research.

**Membership of Ad Hoc Committee on the development of Policies for Authorship of Scientific and Scholarly Publications and for Speaking Supported by Industry**

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