

## **Authorship Rights of Graduate Students**

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### **It is agreed that...**

1. Graduate students are considered a vulnerable population with regard to authorship issues in scientific publications because of their junior status in the academic hierarchy.
2. Graduate students rely on principal investigators, faculty members, and other individuals in positions of power for funding and for access to research opportunities and data.
3. Graduate students rely on principal investigators, faculty members, and other individuals in positions of power for successful completion of any graduate program.
4. Graduate students who participate in research studies often fulfill necessary roles, and provide vital support towards the completion of research projects conducted by teams of faculty, students and staff.
5. Principal investigators, faculty members, and other individuals in positions of power can influence, directly or indirectly, positively or negatively, credit given for work done by students following the successful completion of a research study.
6. Authorship credits are often important for graduate students' careers.
7. Students may be given inappropriate and unethical authorship credits to enhance the student's chances of success. Conversely, students may be denied appropriate and ethical authorship credit.
8. There is little recourse for a graduate student should a principal investigator, faculty member, or other individual in a position of power negatively influence deserved authorship credit.
9. A set of rights and guidelines to protect graduate students and to define faculty-student authorship criteria are needed.
10. The rights and guidelines listed in the sections "General Research Studies" and "Dissertation or Thesis Research" listed below shall be adopted to protect graduate students from negligence or mistreatment and to define graduate student authorship.

### **General Research Studies**

1. A graduate student who has participated in a research study conducted by a faculty member who is affiliated with graduate student's program or who supervises the graduate student has the right to be invited to become an author on any report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document developed based on the results of the study, provided the student has completed sufficient training.
  - a. Study participation may include, but is not limited to, the following: recruitment of study subjects, providing an intervention, data collection, data entry, questionnaire coding, supervision and training of study personnel, writing of the research protocol, or the provision of other technical services.
  - b. Authorship is defined as providing a major contribution to a report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document including, but not limited to, the following: writing the final version of the submission, designing the study, interpreting the results, study coordination, statistical analysis, laboratory analysis, data management, or providing informative advice on study design and analysis. The worksheet in Appendix 1 may serve as a guide for determining authorship credit but should not be the only criterion used.
  - c. Sufficient training may include, but is not limited to, the following: completion of specific coursework, knowledge of the subject-matter, or knowledge of the study design. The extent of training is to be agreed upon prior to the student's involvement in the research study and occurs between the student, the study's principal investigator, and/or the student's major advisor.
2. A graduate student's role in the drafting of a report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document, as well as possible authorship position, is to be discussed prior to the first draft of a report, abstract, or journal manuscript.

3. Financial compensation, whether through graduate assistantships or by other means, is not a replacement for authorship credit.
4. Acknowledgement is not a replacement for authorship credit.
5. A graduate student's role on a report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document shall not change without notifying the student, allowing the student to respond to the notification, and agreement of all co-authors.
6. A graduate student has the right to refuse authorship on a report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document for any reason.
7. If a disagreement over authorship occurs between a graduate student and a principal investigator, the graduate student may appeal to the Director of their graduate program or the Chair of the department with which the principal investigator is affiliated to appoint an unbiased arbitration committee to resolve the conflict. This committee will be comprised of three individuals and will consist of at least one student.
8. The principal investigator or any other faculty member shall not penalize a graduate student by eliminating future authorship opportunities, removing study responsibilities, assigning an excessive workload, withholding monetary compensation, or by imposing any other punishment, directly or indirectly, should the student disagree with the principal investigator over authorship or invoke independent arbitration.
9. These guidelines shall apply for an agreed upon amount of time after the student graduates, changes institutions, or otherwise is no longer affiliated with the graduate program. The time limit shall be agreed upon by the student, the study's principal investigator, and/or the student's major advisor.

#### Dissertation or Thesis Research

1. Research and analyses conducted by a graduate student for the purposes of fulfilling doctoral dissertation or master thesis requirements is considered the property of the graduate student, regardless of who is listed as principal investigator on funding, regulatory, or other documentation.
2. A graduate student has the right to first authorship on any report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document that is created based on the results of dissertation or thesis research conducted by said graduate student.
3. The principal investigator listed on funding, regulatory, or other documentation that supports a graduate student's dissertation or thesis research shall in no way impede, and will support, said graduate student in creating a report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document.
4. Data generated from dissertation or thesis research will revert to the principal investigator if, and only if, a graduate student has not produced a first draft of a report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document within a previously agreed upon window.
  - a. If no window is agreed upon, then the data generated from dissertation or thesis research shall not revert to the principal investigator under any circumstances.
  - b. If the first draft of a report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document is not produced by the student within the previously agreed upon window, the principal investigator must include the graduate student in the drafting of a report, abstract, journal manuscript, or other document using the guidelines specified in the "General Research Studies" section, unless the graduate student agrees to be excluded from the process.
5. A graduate student has a right not to publish, and not to have published, dissertation or thesis research.
  - a. A graduate student may invoke this right at any time prior to, during, and after the previously agreed upon publication window, unless the previously agreed upon window has already been exceeded, the graduate student has been included in the authorship process, and the results have already been published in a peer-review journal; or the graduate student has previously agreed to be excluded from the process.
6. If a disagreement over authorship occurs between a graduate student and a principal investigator, the graduate student may appeal to the Director of their graduate program or the Chair of the department

with which the principal investigator is affiliated to appoint an unbiased arbitration committee to resolve the conflict. This committee will be comprised of three individuals and will consist of at least one student.

7. The principal investigator or any other faculty member shall not penalize a graduate student by eliminating future authorship opportunities, removing study responsibilities, assigning excessive workload, withholding monetary compensation, or by imposing any other punishment, directly or indirectly, should the student disagree with the principal investigator over authorship or invoke independent arbitration.

Appendix 1.

**Activities Associated with Research Manuscript/Poster: Points and Method of Assignment**

This instrument should be completed collaboratively, with discussion including all contributors. Scores are estimates and are negotiable as the project progresses. Some of the items may not be appropriate for studies analyzing existing data and authorship “cut-off” scores may have to be adjusted. Please note that these scores should be used as guidelines and that the final order of authors might not reflect the rank of the contributors’ scores.

Activity Category	Total Points	Method of Assigning Points*	Contributor Score (the total of these columns should equal the Total Points column)				
			Initials				
Conceptualizing and refining research ideas	50	Q					
Literature search	20	T					
Creating research design	30	Q					
Instrument selection	10	Q					
Instrument construction/questionnaire design	40	Q/T					
Selection of statistical tests/analyses	10	Q					
Performing statistical analyses and computations	10	T					
Collection and preparation of data (gathering, scoring/coding, entering)	40	Q/T					
Interpretation of statistical analyses	10	Q					
Drafting manuscripts/posters							
First draft	50	T					
Second draft	30	T					
Redraft of a page (on later drafts)	2	T					
Editing manuscript	10	T					
Total Score**							

\*Q = points assigned on qualitative criteria; T = points assigned based on proportion of total time expended on the task or on proportion of total pages drafted or revised; Q/T = points assigned partly on the basis of time spent on the tasks and partly on qualitative criteria.

\*\*50 points minimum to be an author

This table is based on information described in the following article:

Winston, Jr., R. B. (1985). A suggested procedure for determining order of authorship in research publications. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 63, 515-518.