

# *Department of Psychology: Authorship Credit and Ownership of and Access to Data Guidelines*

*(prepared by Grad Exec; adopted by the Psych. Dep.t, 18 November 2003)*

## **Preamble**

Publishing is the essence of science, and learning to publish is an important component of learning to conduct scientific research. Within the department, there are many instances of multi-authored publications, and it is important for the ethics of authorship to be explicit and relatively uniform, particularly as they apply to publications co-authored by supervisors and graduate students.

This document contains the following information: (1) the policy for publication credit developed over many years by the American Psychological Association (APA) that guides the professional conduct of all psychologists; (2) UVic policy about data ownership and intellectual property; (3) departmental guidelines related to these policies; and (4) best practices and recommendations for negotiating authorship credit, taken from an article by Fine and Kurdek (1993), conclude this document.

These guidelines apply to all members of the Department of Psychology.

## **APA: Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct**

The following is from section 1.03 of the Publication Manual of APA (pp. 6-7):

*Authorship is reserved for people who make a primary contribution to and hold primary responsibility for the data, concepts, and interpretation of results for a published work (Huth, 1987). Authorship encompasses not only those who do the actual writing but also those who have made substantial scientific contributions to a study...*

*To prevent misunderstanding and to preserve professional reputations and relationships, it is best to establish as early as possible in a research project who will be listed as an author, what the order of authorship will be, and who will receive an alternative form of recognitions."*

For a more extensive discussion of this text, see 8.05 Ethics of Scientific Publication, pp. 348-355 in the Publication Manual of the APA (2001), and especially the section on Publication credit (pp. 350-351). Furthermore, Section 8.12 **Publication Credit** of the APA Ethics Code 2002 states:

- a) Psychologists take responsibility and credit, including authorship credit, only for work they have actually performed or to which they have contributed.
- b) Principal authorship and other publication credits accurately reflect the relative scientific or professional contributions of the individuals involved, regardless of their relative status. Mere possession of an institutional position, such as Department Chair, does not justify authorship credit. Minor contributions to the research or to the writing for publications are appropriately acknowledged, such as in footnotes or in an introductory statement.

- c) A student is usually listed as principal author on any multiple-authored article that is substantially based on the student's dissertation or thesis.

## Data Access and Ownership

This material is excerpted from Section 2.0 Contributions, UVic Policy on Intellectual Property (#1180, Nov 2000):

*[Intellectual property] is frequently the result of collaborative or cooperative activities between or among University members. This article deals with the relations between or among several creators of a single work or property.*

*The University is committed to the Tri-Council position that authorship of published work includes all those who have materially contributed to, and share responsibility for, the contents of the publication, and only those people, and expects compliance with this policy statement by members of this University.*

*Standards for the discipline, where they exist, should be applied when determining proportionate contributions to a scholarly or creative work. In the event of commercialization, all intellectual contributors to the work should be entitled to share in the proceeds in proportion to their contributions, unless the entitlement to share within the framework of this policy has been willingly waived through informed consent or previously agreed to through a written arrangement.*

....

*Student theses, projects, graduating papers and artistic productions are special cases of scholarly work. Students are the primary authors of their creations, but the work is carried out under the supervision of faculty members. Publications or works coming from student research or creative activity must acknowledge appropriately all contributors to the work. The appropriate Dean and the departmental Chair, in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies or the Office of the Vice President Research (OVPR), is responsible for ensuring that there is a process to address the students' interest with respect to: the protection of their IP; the freedom to publish results in open literature; and the discussion of the research or creation in internal venues. Students should not be involved in research or creative activities that conflict with, or jeopardize, their progress toward meeting their degree requirements.*

Also, UVic's Research Policy (#1200, June 2002), states the following:

*4.3 No restriction shall unnecessarily prohibit the use of research results by graduate students for theses or other academic purposes related to the completion of their graduate degree.*

## Department Guidelines, Additions and Caveats

### 1. Timeliness:

- a) Regarding APA principle (c) above (thesis/dissertation research): If a student does not produce the first draft of the manuscript within e.g., 12 months of defending the thesis or dissertation, unless another arrangement has been negotiated in advance, the supervisor

can take over the lead and be listed as principal author. The student, however, remains an author on the article.

- b) Regarding course and other research activities: The same timeliness is expected for publishing research results produced in courses and other research activities.
2. Any and all papers reporting research performed under the direction of a supervising faculty member (i.e., not necessarily the chair of the student's supervisory committee) **must** be submitted to the supervisor for scrutiny before being submitted for publication, for two reasons. First, supervisors retain the right of first refusal on authorship of any work conducted under their supervision. Second, supervisors have the right to prohibit publication of questionable data or interpretations, because supervisors are responsible for the quality of research conducted in their labs.
  3. A student can be a sole author or a co-author with other students when the research has not involved a faculty member's intellectual input. However, research involving human subjects, which must be signed off by a faculty member, is subject to guideline #2 above.
  4. All sources of funding for research must be acknowledged.
  5. If the supervisor and student cannot agree, even after consultations with peers, on their authorship-related decisions, an ad hoc third party arbitration process should be established in the department beginning with Grad Executive composed of faculty and the student representative.

## Best Practices & Recommendations

- abstracted from Fine & Kurdek (1993):

### Process Recommendations

1. Early in the collaborative endeavour of preparing a paper for publication, the supervisor should provide the student with information related to (a) how authorship decisions are made, (b) the nature of professional and non-professional contributions to publications, (c) the meaning of authorship credit and order, and (d) the importance of both parties agreeing on what contributions will be expected of each collaborator for a given level of authorship credit. This information will provide the student with the knowledge necessary to exercise his or her autonomy and to choose whether to participate in the authorship determination process with the supervisor.
2. The supervisor and student should assess the specific abilities of each party, the tasks required to complete the scholarly publication, the extent of supervision required, and appropriate expectations for what each collaborator can reasonably contribute to the project.
3. On the basis of this assessment, the collaborators should discuss and agree on what tasks, contributions, and efforts are required of both parties to warrant joint authorship and to determine the order of authorship.

4. Agreements regarding authorship credit and order may need to be renegotiated for two reasons. First, scholarly projects often take unexpected turns that necessitate changes in initial agreements made in good faith. Second, many manuscripts need to be revised substantially before they are accepted for publication. These revisions may require additional professional contributions beyond those necessary for the completion of the initial draft of the manuscript. Thus, when such revisions are required, the supervisor and student should re-examine their original agreement and determine whether it needs to be modified.

## Outcome Recommendations

1. To be included as an author on a scholarly publication, a student should, in a cumulative sense, make a professional contribution that is creative and intellectual in nature, that is integral to completion of the paper, and that requires an overarching perspective of the project. Examples of professional contributions include developing the research design, writing portions of the manuscript, integrating diverse theoretical perspectives, developing new conceptual models, designing assessments, contributing to data analysis decisions, and interpreting results. Such tasks as inputting data, carrying out data analyses specified by the supervisor, and typing are not considered professional contributions and may be acknowledged by footnotes to the manuscript.

Fulfillment of one or two of the professional tasks essential to the completion of a collaborative publication does not necessarily justify authorship. Rather, the supervisor and student – in their discussions early in the collaborative process – must jointly decide what combination of professional activities warrants a given level of authorship credit for both parties. By necessity, there will be some variation in which tasks warrant authorship credit across differing research projects.

2. Authorship decisions should be based on the scholarly importance of the professional contribution and not just the time and effort made. In [the opinions of Fine and Kurdek, 1993], even if considerable time and effort are spent on a scholarly project, if the aggregate contribution is not judged to be professional by the criteria stated above, authorship should not be granted.
3. Authorship decisions should not be affected by whether students or supervisors were paid for their contributions or by their employment status. It is the nature of the contribution to the article that determines whether authorship credit is warranted and not whether participants received compensation for the efforts.
4. When confronted with ethical dilemmas, we advise supervisors to consult with colleagues when authorship concerns arise. Furthermore, supervisors should encourage their students to do the same, whether with faculty or with student peers. With the informal input generated from such consultations, it is possible that new light will be shed on the issues involved and that reasonable and fair authorship agreements will result.

Reference: Fine, M.A., & Kurdek, L. A. (1993). Reflections on determining authorship credit and authorship order on faculty-student collaborations. *American Psychologist*, 48, 1141-1147.