

# Guidance on Authorship Practices and Dispute Resolution

## Overview

This document sets forth the guidelines and procedures for determining authorship for purposes of scholarly contribution and attribution on research and scholarly publications. The guidance describes both the responsibilities of authors and defines procedures for authorship dispute resolution at Colorado State University.

## 1. Authorship Guidelines

### A. Proactive Communication of Responsibilities and Expectations

As there is often some level of expectation on the part of individuals with respect to authorship or acknowledgment for contributions to research or scholarly work, it is appropriate to address questions of authorship and acknowledgment at the earliest practical stage of a project. All contributors to a work should have an understanding of what level of contribution merits authorship and/or acknowledgment, the expected order of authorship, and the responsibilities and expectations for each contributor. Additionally, it is important for contributors to discuss such matters on an on-going basis, as the contributors and their roles often change during the course of a project.

### B. Principles of Authorship

Standards for authorship vary between disciplines and journals. It is expected that all contributors to research and/or scholarly work at Colorado State University shall conform to the specific, written authorship standards stated for the relevant journal or publishing house. In absence of a relevant journal standard, all contributors to a research and/or scholarly work may mutually agree to conform to a written standard that is widely regarded as acceptable in the relevant field. In the absence of any of the aforementioned specific, written standards, the following principles, based upon the [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors \(ICMJE\) “Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals”](#) (2014), are endorsed by Colorado State University:

- To qualify for authorship, a contributor must meet all of the following criteria:
  - Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work, or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
  - Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
  - Final approval of the version to be published; AND
  - Agreement to be fully accountable for his or her contribution to the content;
- All contributors identified as an author must qualify for authorship, and all contributors who qualify for authorship must be identified as an author;
- All authors should be able to identify which co-authors are responsible for specific portions of the work, and should have confidence in the integrity of the contributions of their co-authors;
- Contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship should be

- acknowledged in the work if they agree to be acknowledged;
- For multi-authored works, one author should be designated as the “corresponding author”, who takes responsibility for the integrity of the work in its entirety.
  - The following contributions, without otherwise meeting the above qualifying criteria for authorship, do not qualify a contributor for authorship:
    - Acquisition of funding;
    - Collection of data;
    - Provision of research material;
    - General supervision of a research group;
    - Editing/assembly of text or illustrations;

Regardless of the standard applied, the following practices are not acceptable:

- Honorary, prestige and courtesy authorships (provision of authorship to persons not otherwise meeting appropriate authorship criteria, including but not limited to granting authorship as a favor, gift, or result of a person’s position or relationship to an author)
- Ghost authorships (not naming as authors those persons that otherwise meet appropriate authorship criteria)
- Coercive authorships (exertion of seniority or supervisory power by a person in order to be conferred authorship when appropriate authorship criteria are not otherwise met)
- Intentional or knowing denial of deserved authorships

## 2. Authorship Dispute Resolution

### A. Dispute Resolution

It is recognized that even when the aforementioned principles of authorship are followed, conflicts of opinion with regard to authorship may arise. In the event of an authorship dispute, the disputing parties should attempt to resolve the matter at the local level by taking the following steps:

- The parties in conjunction with the other authors of the work at issue should first attempt to resolve the dispute amongst themselves through open discussion, potentially involving a local authority (e.g. department Chair/Head as a third party).
- If the dispute remains unresolved, the parties are encouraged to seek outside assistance based on the following table:

CSU Party to Contact	Name	Phone #	Student Assistance	Faculty/Staff Assistance
Conflict Resolution Services (CRS)	Melissa Emerson	491-7165	yes	yes*
Responsible Conduct of Research Coordinator	Carolyn Broccardo	491-3133	yes	yes
Office of General Counsel	Linda Schutjer	491- 6270	yes	yes
Office of the Ombuds	Lenai Greenhalgh	491-1527	refer to CRS	yes
Research Integrity Officer	Ellen Fisher	491-7194	yes	yes

\* if dispute involves 1 or more students

Adapted from Emory University Policy 7.10