

# The Ethics of Authorship

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# Overview of Comments

- Describe what it means to be an author
  - Definition of author
  - Determining authorship
- Identify approaches and timing of discussions about authorship
- Analyze strategies to resolve disagreements amongst individuals regarding authorship and authorship status



# Writing for Science: Why?

- ❖ Writing for science is hard, discouraging, ongoing and can often be unsuccessful.
- ❖ Journals acceptance rates vary:
  - ❖ Psychology: 11 to 65%
  - ❖ Nursing: 20 to 65%
  - ❖ Medicine: 6 to 65%
- ❖ *Northam et al., 2000; American Psychologist, 2009; JAMA website, 2010*



# Why Write for Science? to help others



# Why Write for Science?

## To help others

- To help others by extending knowledge



# Scholarly Writing helps others by extending knowledge:

- Improve clinical knowledge base and thereby clinical care and better care outcomes
- Strengthen training of next generation of trainees, and as a result -
- More informed consumers who may practice more self-care activities
- Stronger academic curricula
- Stronger professional identity

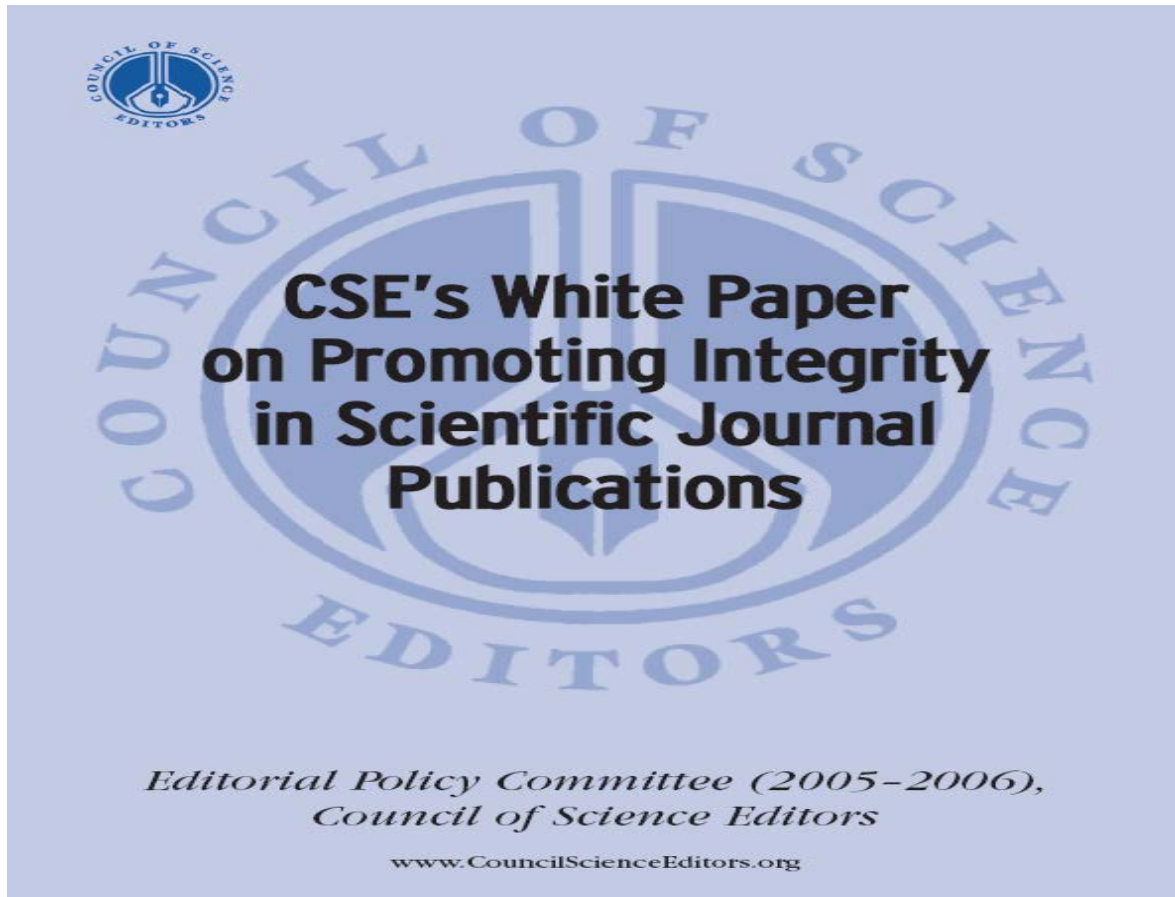


# Who needs to write for science?

- All of us



# Sources of Guidance





# CSE's White Paper

- Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications
- [www.CouncilScienceEditors.org](http://www.CouncilScienceEditors.org)



# CSE's White Paper on Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journals

- Editor Roles and Responsibilities
- Study Sponsor Roles and Responsibilities
- Authorship and Author Responsibilities
- Research Misconduct and Guidelines for Action
- Reviewer Roles and Responsibilities



### Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts

Statement of Purpose  
Ethical Considerations  
Publishing and Editorial Issues  
Manuscript Preparation  
References

### About the ICMJE

Authors  
Use and Distribution  
Inquiries

### Frequently Asked Questions

### Journals that Follow URM

### Update on FDAAA from ClinicalTrials.gov

### ICMJE Editorials

June 2007 Update on Trials Registration  
May 2005 Update on Trials Registration  
2004 Update on Trials Registration

Registration

# Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication

*Updated October 2008*

Publication Ethics: [Sponsorship, Authorship, and Accountability](#)

The following information is available to be viewed/printed in [Adobe Acrobat pdf format](#).

## International Committee of Medical Journal Editors

### I. Statement of Purpose

- A. [About](#) the Uniform Requirements
- B. [Potential Users](#) of the Uniform Requirements
- C. [How to Use](#) the Uniform Requirements

### II. Ethical Considerations in the Conduct and Reporting of Research



## Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Ethical Considerations in the Conduct and Reporting of Research: **Authorship and Contributorship**

### Byline Authors

An "author" is generally considered to be someone who has made substantive intellectual contributions to a published study, and biomedical authorship continues to have important academic, social, and financial implications (1). In the past, readers were rarely provided with information about contributions to studies from persons listed as authors and in Acknowledgments (2). Some journals now request and publish information about the contributions of each person named as having participated in a submitted study, at least for original research. Editors are strongly encouraged to develop and implement a contributorship policy, as well as a policy on identifying who is responsible for the integrity of the work as a whole.

While contributorship and guarantorship policies obviously remove much of the ambiguity surrounding contributions, they leave unresolved the question of the quantity and quality of contribution that qualify for authorship. The ICMJE has recommended the following criteria for authorship; these criteria are still appropriate for journals that distinguish authors from other contributors.

Authorship credit should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3.

When a large, multicenter group has conducted the work, the group should identify the individuals who accept direct responsibility for the manuscript (3). These individuals should fully meet the criteria for authorship/contributorship defined above and editors will ask these individuals to complete journal-specific author and conflict-of-interest disclosure forms. When submitting a manuscript authored by a group, the corresponding author should clearly indicate the preferred citation and identify all individual authors as well as the group name. Journals generally list other members of the group in the Acknowledgments. The NLM indexes the group name and the names of individuals the group has identified as being directly responsible for the manuscript; it also lists the names of collaborators if they are listed in Acknowledgments.

## Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts (URM)

### Statement of Purpose

- [About the URM](#)
- [Potential Users](#)
- [How to Use the URM](#)

### Ethical Considerations

- [Authorship and Contributorship](#)
- [Editorship](#)
- [Peer Review](#)
- [Conflicts of Interest](#)
- [Privacy and Confidentiality](#)
- [Protection of Human Subjects and Animals in Research](#)

### Publishing and Editorial Issues

- [Obligation to Publish Negative Studies](#)
- [Corrections, Retractions, and "Expressions of Concern"](#)
- [Copyright](#)
- [Overlapping Publications](#)
- [Correspondence](#)
- [Supplements, Theme Issues, and Special Series](#)
- [Electronic Publishing](#)
- [Advertising](#)
- [Medical Journals and the](#)



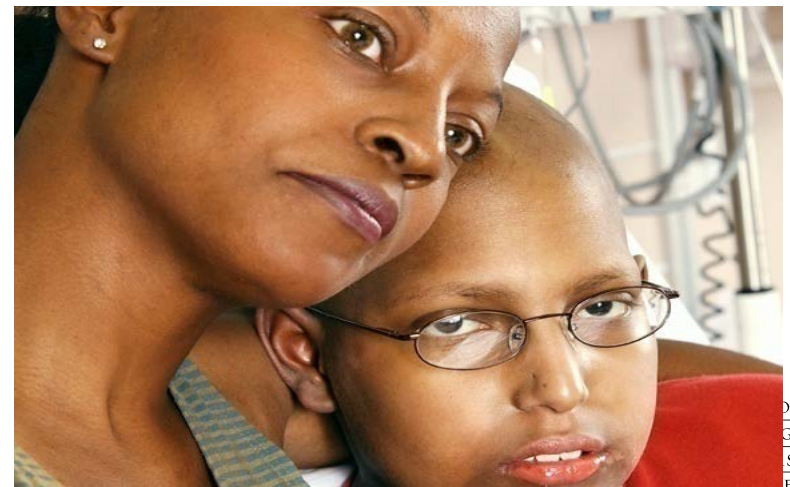
# Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts

- **Editors Eleven** and adoption of document by major journals
- **Criteria for Authorship based on ICMJE criteria**
  - 1) Substantial contributions to conception and design;
  - 2) drafting or revising a manuscript critically for intellectual input;
  - 3) final approval



# Role of the Author

- Central focus for trustworthy knowledge
- This is the most central person for scientific integrity and the generation of new and trustworthy knowledge that will allow us “to help”



# Who is eligible to be an author?

- **Ethical issue:**
  - Criteria for authorship
  - Accountable for content to the lay and scientific communities



# When should we discuss authorship?

- Essential to discuss authorship as soon as an idea is developing that could lead to publication
- Dangers of misunderstanding authorship
  - Lost data and thus new knowledge
  - Lost relationships
  - Retracted published papers





# Role of the Author

- Authorship credit is openly discussed
- Honest about actual and potential conflicts of interest
- Honest about originality of the work being reported
- Honest about other related submissions
- Compliant with funding agency requirements
- Can attest to the content in the manuscript



# Sequencing Authors

- Agreement amongst authors
- Different options for sequencing
  - First author role
  - Senior author
  - Alphabetical
  - Priority author (i.e, promotion pending)
  - All equal contributors



# Discussion:

- Experiences with deciding about authorship
  - Issues
  - Strategies to resolve issues



# Scientific Misconduct

How is scientific misconduct related to writing for science?



# Scientific Misconduct

- Scientific Misconduct : any action that involves mistreatment of research participants or ‘purposeful manipulation of the scientific record so that it no longer reflects observed truth.’
  - CSE’s White Paper, 2008-2009



# Scientific Misconduct

- Very important to note:
  - there is no universal definition of scientific misconduct
  - Each setting needs to establish its own definition and consequences to confirmed examples of scientific misconduct
  - Scientific misconduct does not include honest error or difference of opinion.



# Scientific Misconduct: Inappropriate Authorship

- **Gift Authorship**
- A person is included as an author who has not met the criteria for authorship
  - Senior person
  - Data collector
  - Friend



# Scientific Misconduct: Inappropriate Authorship

Avoid gift authorship by:

- Attempting to provide opportunities for others to meet the criteria for authorship
- Use the acknowledgement section for those who assisted in some way but did not meet criteria for authorship





# Scientific Misconduct: Inappropriate Authorship

## Ghost Authorship

- A person who makes a significant contribution to a publication but is not included as an author
- Threatens objectivity by implying a potential conflict of interest and thus hiding it by ‘ghost writing’
- Most commonly an acknowledged concern in collaborations with industry



# Scientific Misconduct: Inappropriate Authorship

- **Avoid ghost authoring**
  - All authors declare conflicts of interest
  - All who meet the criteria of authorship are included as authors



# Why Write for Science?: to help others



# Writing for Science

- Writing for science is hard work
- The results are meant to help but results can be slow and uneven for all involved in writing for science



## Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could.*

*Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense.*



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