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Authorship Ethics.

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Aside from parts of the "Requirements for Authors" statements that appear in various professional journals, very little has been written about ethical standards for authors in the education field. Topics that have not been addressed include criteria for authorship, acknowledgments, redundant publication, competing manuscripts, and conflict of interest. The education community can benefit from the debates, experiences, and standards developed by the biomedical research community.

Presented here is a summary of key ethical standards outlined in the "*Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals*," developed by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Adopted by over 500 scientific and biomedical journals, including the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Science*, and *Lancet*, these ethical standards are effective guidelines for educational publications.

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All persons listed as authors must have made a substantial intellectual contribution to the overall study and accept public responsibility for it. In other words, the author must give input beyond general supervision or instruction of a research group, have a clear understanding of the methodology and implications of the work, and be able to defend the contribution against academic challenge.

Specifically, individuals identified as authors should have made significant contributions:

1. to the conception and design, or analysis and interpretation of data, or both;
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All three conditions must be met. Participation solely in the acquisition of funding or the collection of data does not merit authorship status.

In cases where more than one person meets the qualifications for authorship of a manuscript, the order of authorship should be a joint decision of the co-authors. The submission should be accompanied by a form stating that the manuscript has been read and approved by each of the co-authors. By signing this form, the authors verify that the manuscript represents honest work. The co-authors share responsibility and accountability for the results. Deceased persons who meet the criteria for inclusion should be listed, with a footnote reporting the date of death. No fictitious name should appear as an author.

Multiple authorship often results in complications. Chances for errors may be greater when the number of persons responsible for a submission is increased. Differences in roles and status compound the difficulties of according credit. Junior scholars may seek to gain automatic acceptance of their work by associating it with the name of an established scholar. This practice leads to an uncritical and inappropriate acceptance by other co-authors, the reviewers, or the readers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Persons who made significant contributions to the work but did not justify authorship may be listed in the Acknowledgment section along with their function or contribution. Authors should be responsible for obtaining written permission from all persons being acknowledged by name. Technical help should be acknowledged in a separate paragraph from those acknowledging intellectual contributions.

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FURTHER READING

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Descriptors: *Authors; *Conflict of Interest; *Educational Research; *Ethics; Research Methodology; Scholarly Journals; *Standards; *Writing for Publication

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