

Authorship on Scientific and Scholarly Publications

Policy Statement

Applicability

Faculty, Staff, Fellows, Residents, Collaborators and Students affiliated with Kansas City University.

Purpose

Scholarly integrity and the responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by faculty, staff and students and the conduct and reporting of research are essential for maintaining public trust in the research enterprise, and for community benefits from research discovery.

Scientific and scholarly publications, defined as articles, abstracts, presentations at professional meetings and grant applications, provide the main vehicle to disseminate findings, thoughts, and analysis to the scientific, academic, and lay communities. For academic activities to contribute to the advancement of knowledge, they must be published in sufficient detail and accuracy to enable others to understand and elaborate the results. For the authors of such work, successful publication improves opportunities for academic funding and promotion, while enhancing scientific and scholarly achievement and reputation. At the same time, the benefits of authorship are accompanied by a number of responsibilities for the proper planning, conducting, analyzing, and reporting of research, and the content and conclusions of other scholarly work. As a respected member of the academic community, it is the responsibility of Kansas City University and its faculty, staff and students to help protect these fundamental elements of the scientific and scholarly process. This policy provides an educational resource describing the essential considerations and requirements in responsible authorship and publication at Kansas City University.

Policy

The following principles define Kansas City University's policy on authorship of scientific and scholarly publications.

I. Defining Authorship

An author is generally considered to be an individual who has made substantial intellectual contributions to a scientific investigation. All authors should meet the following three criteria, and all those who meet the criteria should be offered authorship:

- a. Scholarship: Contribute significantly to the conception, design, execution, and/or analysis and interpretation of data.
- b. Authorship: Participate in drafting, and/or revising the manuscript for intellectual content.
- c. Approval: Approve the manuscript to be submitted for publication.

An administrative or services relationship, funding sources, funding agencies, facilities and infrastructure services, artwork and graphic designing services, IT and data processing services and software alone do not constitute authorship.

It is recognized that definitions of authorship differ among the various scientific disciplines and professional journals, as may standards for “substantial” and “scholarly effort”, and the extent to which authors must participate in scholarship and authorship. For example, design/development of research equipment, or collection of a specific data set, may be substantial scholarly effort in certain disciplines. The expectation of this policy is that standards and criteria for authorship in an academic discipline will be widely recognized and consistent across that discipline (including within Kansas City University), and consistent with the appropriate professional association, and/or journal or a book chapter (publication) in which the work appears.

II. Lead Author

As a practical matter in the case of publications with multiple authors, one author should be designated as the lead author. The lead author assumes overall responsibility for the manuscript, and also often serves as the managerial and corresponding author, as well as providing a significant contribution to the research effort. A lead author is not necessarily the principal investigator or project leader. The lead author is responsible for:

- a. Authorship: Including as co-authors all and only those individuals who meet the authorship criteria set forth in this policy.
- b. Approval: Providing the draft of the manuscript to each individual contributing author for review and consent for authorship. The lead author should obtain from all coauthors their written agreement to be designated as such and their approval of the manuscript. A journal may have specific requirements governing author review and consent, which also must be followed.
- c. Integrity: The lead author is responsible for the integrity of the work as a whole, and ensuring that reasonable care and effort has been taken to determine that all the data are complete, accurate, and reasonably interpreted.

III. Co-authors

All co-authors of a publication are responsible for:

- a. **Authorship:** By providing written consent to authorship to the lead author, co-authors acknowledge that they meet the authorship criteria set forth in section 1 of this policy. A coauthor should have participated sufficiently in the work to take responsibility for appropriate portions of the content.
- b. **Approval:** By providing written consent to authorship to the lead author, co-authors are acknowledging that they have reviewed and approved the manuscript.
- c. **Integrity:** Each co-author is responsible for the content of all appropriate portions of the manuscript, including the integrity of any applicable research. An individual retains the right to refuse co-authorship of a manuscript if s/he does not satisfy the criteria for authorship.

IV. Acknowledgments

Individuals or entities who may have made some contribution to a publication, but who do not meet the criteria for authorship, such as staff, editorial assistants, medical writers, funding sources, funding agencies, facilities and infrastructure services, artwork and graphic designing services, IT and data processing services or other individuals, can provide a valuable contribution to the writing and editing of publications. Since those contributions do not meet the criteria for authorship under this policy, those individuals should be listed in an acknowledgement and/or contributorship section of the work.

V. Unacceptable Authorship

Guest, gift, and ghost authorship are all inconsistent with the definition of authorship, and are unacceptable and a violation of this policy.

Guest (honorary, courtesy, or prestige) authorship is defined as granting authorship out of appreciation or respect for an individual, or in the belief that expert standing of the guest will increase the likelihood of publication, credibility, or status of the work.

Gift authorship is credit, offered from a sense of obligation, tribute, or dependence, within the context of an anticipated benefit, to an individual who has not contributed to the work.

Ghost authorship is the failure to identify as an author, someone who made substantial contributions to the research or writing of a manuscript that merited authorship, or an unnamed individual who participated in writing the manuscript. Ghost authorship may range from authors for hire with the understanding that they will not be credited, to major contributors not named as an author.

VI. Authorship Order

The order of authors is a collective decision of the authors or study group. This policy does not address questions or disputes regarding the order of authorship on publications. It is not possible for the University to define the order of authorship. In conjunction with the

lead author, co-authors should discuss authorship order at the onset of the project and revise their decision as needed. All authors must work together to make these informed judgments.

Should authors fail to resolve disputes about the order of authors, the chair or head of the involved department(s) should mediate an effort to resolve the dispute. If not successful, such mediation may be addressed by the College Dean in conjunction with the Provost.

VII. Research Funding

All authors, in manuscripts submitted for review and publication, must acknowledge/disclose the source(s) of support for the work. Support includes research and educational grants, salary or other support, contracts, gifts, and departmental, and institutional support.

IX. Conflicts of Interest

Authors shall fully disclose, in all manuscripts to journals, grant applications, and at professional meetings, all relevant interests that could be viewed as a potential conflict of interest or as required by the University and/or publisher of the journal, publication or book. All such financial interests must also be reported internally as required by the University's conflict of interest policies.

Violations of the Policy

Knowing, intentional, or reckless violations of this policy are considered research misconduct as defined by the Kansas City University [Standard Operating Procedures and Compliance Documents - Research Misconduct Policy](#) and as such, will be referred to the Research Integrity Officer. Violations of the policy that do not rise to the level of research misconduct may subject the individual to corrective action or other sanctions as deemed appropriate by the Executive Vice President of Research Affairs. Disagreements regarding the order of authorship do not, in and of themselves, constitute a violation of this policy or research misconduct.

Additional Resources and Guidance

- [Author's Checklist & Resources for Preparing a Publication](#)