



Scholarly Research Authorship # 2370.080

INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE:	LAST REVISION DATE:	RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT
September 5, 2025	September 5, 2025	Office of Research and Economic Development

POLICY STATEMENT

Authorship explicitly assigns both credit and responsibility for intellectual work and has tangible implications for faculty, staff, and student participants on project teams. It is the policy of the University that authorship assignments should honestly reflect actual contributions as a function of the ethical conduct of research, scholarship and creative works. Faculty should be especially aware of their responsibility to safeguard the rights of staff and students at all levels to publish.

Adherence to this policy is specifically intended to eliminate authorship assignments rooted in power inequities, inappropriate practices, and perceptions of conflict of interest in the presentation of research scholarly findings.

Participants are expected to engage early in the publication development process with open and clear communication about the assignment of authorship roles with their potential publishing colleagues. Written agreements specifying the details of authorship and contributions may be warranted in many cases but are good practice in all cases.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all individuals at FIU engaged in the publication of research, defined broadly as all forms of scholarly investigation or creative work, regardless of funding source. However, this policy does not apply to publications: (a) whose authors are only University students (i.e., no University faculty or staff member participated in the development of the publication); and (b) which results from the performance of research that is performed exclusively as part of the students' academic coursework. Generally, student-related authorship disputes will be handled by the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

Colleges and departments are encouraged to develop additional "best practices" guidelines regarding authorship for their faculty, staff, and students that address discipline-specific issues.

REASON FOR POLICY

The University bears the primary responsibility for the integrity of its research, scholarly activities and creative works. The University must take action necessary to ensure the integrity of the same and the observance of legal requirements or responsibilities.

This policy sets forth the procedures for dispute resolution and disciplinary action emanating from authorship disputes other than authorship disputes related exclusively to student academic coursework, which generally will be addressed by Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. This policy seeks to:

- a) Foster a research and scholarly environment that promotes responsible conduct of research as it pertains to collaboration and authorship;
- b) Set forth reasonable and practical steps to protect the positions and reputations of good faith complainants, and protect them from retaliation by respondents and other University members;
- c) Take reasonable and practical steps to ensure the cooperation of authors engaged in authorship disputes that fall under the purview of this policy.

The determination of authorship or order of authorship is not a research misconduct matter. If any Publication involves an allegation of research misconduct (i.e., an allegation of fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results), such matter shall be handled pursuant to Research Misconduct policy #2370.070.

DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITIONS
Ghost Authorship	The failure to identify as an author someone who made substantial contributions to the research or writing of a manuscript thus meriting authorship or allowing significant editorial control of a publication by an unnamed party, which may constitute a real or perceived conflict of interest that should be disclosed.
Honorary Authorship	Honorary (guest, courtesy, gift or prestige) authorship is granting authorship out of appreciation or respect for an individual, or in the belief that the expert standing of the honored person will increase the likelihood of publication, credibility, or status of the work.
Lead Author	The individual who contributed intellectually the most to the research leading to the publication. It is typically the first author, but it depends on the discipline and the nature of the collaborative work. The lead author need not be the first, last, or



	most senior author, nor necessarily the principal investigator or project leader. The Lead Author may also be referred to as the corresponding author or principal author. All references to the Lead Author encompass corresponding author or principal author.
Participating Author	Each author of a publication, regardless of relative seniority or level of contribution.
Publication	The term "publication" as used in this policy is meant generically, representing as inclusively as possible any manner of report, paper, manuscript, article, book, chapter, treatise, or other publishable product whether printed or digital in format.
University or FIU	Florida International University

RELATED RESOURCES

Conflict of Interest in Research Policy # 2370.005

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The University community is responsible for following the requirements of this policy and the associated procedures.

CONTACTS

Office of Research Integrity
Modesto A. Maidique Campus, MARC 430
11200 S.W. Eighth Street Miami, Florida 33199
Telephone: (305) 348-2494



HISTORY

Initial Effective Date: September 5, 2025

Review Dates (*review performed, no updates*): n/a

Revision Dates (*updates made to document*): September 5, 2025.



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PROCEDURE STATEMENT

I. Attribution of Authorship

Authorship is limited to those who meet all of the following criteria and expectations; all those who meet these standards should be included as an author:

1. Significant intellectual contribution to a project through conception and design, or data collection and analysis, or interpretation; and
2. Ability to identify their own contribution, and ideally the contributions of each Participating Author, and defend the major aspects of the project presented in the Publication, although not necessarily all the technical details.
3. In addition, it is expected that each Participating Author has been given the opportunity to participate in the drafting of the manuscript (or substantive revision of its scholarly content) and approves the final version of the manuscript to be published.

Provision of logistical, financial, or administrative support to a Publication alone does not constitute a valid basis for authorship. Recognition of these types of contribution is appropriate for an acknowledgments section of a Publication.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

A. Publication Planning

At the outset of the collaboration for which the Publication is planned, all Participating Authors should discuss the outline of work and a tentative order of authorship should be established with the logic governing this order made explicit. As projects proceed, agreements regarding authorship may need to be changed. 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, reasonably interpreted, and accessible to others within the norms of the discipline and requirements of the publishing venue.

B. Authorship Recognition

It is the responsibility of the Lead Author to ensure that the contributions of all Participating Authors are properly recognized. In cases where a Lead Author has been formally assigned for the Publication, this individual assumes overall responsibility for the Publication and typically serves as the managerial and corresponding author.

In consensus situations, all Participating Authors jointly share responsibility. The Lead Author (or consensus authors) is (are) responsible for: (a) confirming that all Participating Authors meet this policy's authorship criteria; (b) providing the manuscript's final draft to each Participating Author for review and approval; and (c) following any journal-specific requirements governing author review and consent (such as signature forms).

Each Participating Author is responsible for providing confirmation of authorship in accordance with this policy's criteria and the requirements of the selected Publication venue. Confirmation of authorship includes verifying review and approval of the final manuscript to be published. Each Participating Author is responsible for the content of those portions of the manuscript ascribed to them, including the integrity of any applicable research. An individual offered authorship of a publication for which they do not satisfy the criteria for authorship as set forth in this policy should decline authorship in accordance with this policy.

C. Lead Author Responsibilities

The Lead Author has the responsibility of ensuring that all Participating Authors agree on all issues related to authorship and authorship order and for maintaining documentation that reflects the same. The Lead Author also has the responsibility of making all reasonable attempts to seek confirmation in accordance with this policy from individuals who meet authorship criteria but who have left the University (e.g., students who have graduated) or are no longer in contact with the Lead Author or the other Participating Authors.

IV. Standards

A. Authorship Order

This policy acknowledges that the significance of a particular method of

ordering authorship may be understood in a given setting, but that order of authorship has no generally agreed-upon meaning across all academic disciplines. Additionally, standards for "substantive" and "scholarly content" differ among the various disciplines and publishing venues. This policy requires that criteria for attributing and ordering authorship by practitioners of specific disciplines at FIU will be widely recognized and consistent across that discipline as a whole, and generally consistent with the standards of the publication in which the work appears, including the following.

B. Authorship Roles

As a practical issue for multi-author publications in disciplines where "lead" (also known in some fields as "corresponding") authors are the norm, collaborators on a publication are to agree as early in the planning process as practical on one author as Lead Author. The remaining authors are then designated as Participating Authors. Lead Author designation is intended as an administrative role and does not necessarily imply greater individual contribution to the Publication. In disciplines where authorship practices are typically more consensus based, collaborators are encouraged to proactively discuss responsibility for administrative matters relating to Publication submittal.

V. Appropriate Use or Acknowledgment Disclosures

The nature and character of acknowledgments appearing in manuscripts vary considerably depending on a given discipline. The following principles are meant to provide guidance but not contradict the requirements prescribed by specific journals or publications:

"Acknowledgments" should communicate to granting agencies, promotion committees, scholarly readers, and others the specific contributions that are insufficient under this policy to justify authorship. Such contributions include general supervision of a research group, assistance in obtaining funding, technical support, and assistance in writing and editing the manuscript. Individuals who may have participated in the development of a publication but who do not meet the criteria for authorship, such as editorial assistants, illustrators, medical writers, or other individuals, provide a valuable contribution to the writing and editing of Publications. Since those contributions do not meet the criteria for authorship under this policy, these individuals should be listed in an acknowledgments section of the published work.

All authors, in their manuscripts submitted for review and publication, must disclose the source(s) of support (financial and/or tangible resources) for the

work unless otherwise instructed by the journal or publication. Examples of support include but are not limited to: (a) research and educational grants; (b) contracts; (c) corporate sponsorships; (d) gifts; and (e) institutional sources (departmental, collegiate, central administration, or hospital).

Participating Authors shall fully disclose in the Publication all relevant financial interests that could be viewed as a potential conflict of interest in accordance with University policies, including the Conflict of Interest in Research Policy # 2370.005.

Since it is possible that readers may infer endorsement of the data and conclusions from an acknowledgement, those acknowledged should give written permission and a disclaimer shall be included specifically indicating that inclusion in the acknowledgements does not imply endorsement by those named.

The use of Honorary Authorship constitutes a significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community. It represents dishonesty to the scientific community and to the University from the perspective of faculty performance evaluation. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) indicates that "gift authorship is especially damaging when the recipient is a senior author... anyone who doesn't realize that the authorship is honorary -- that is, almost everyone who reads the paper -- will wrongly assume that this well-known scientist has performed his or her role in ensuring the integrity of the data." The Council of Science Editors have indicated that "the guest author makes no discernible contributions to the study, so this person meets none of the criteria for authorship." The Council of Science Editors have indicated that "the guest author makes no discernible contributions to the study, so this person meets none of the criteria for authorship." It has been indicated that "inappropriate (honorary) authorship is a frequently reported publication ethics violation. In obvious cases of misconduct, individuals with minimal or no scholarly contributions are credited as authors." (Zimba & Gasparian, 2020).

VI. Violations

The following are examples of acts that may violate this policy:

1. Exclusion of a person as a Participating Author who meets the criteria defined above in section I of this Procedure Statement.
2. Acceptance or ascription of an Honorary Authorship in the Publication.

3. Acceptance or ascription of a Ghost Authorship in the Publication.
4. Failure to adhere to the authorship order or authorship designation agreed upon by the Participating Authors without a valid justification.

VII. Dispute Resolutions

- A. If a dispute arises concerning authorship, the parties should initially attempt to resolve it informally. Parties should consult any documentation pertaining to authorship agreement to inform such resolution.
- B. If the dispute cannot be resolved pursuant to the process in section VII.A., then the party who is making the complaint shall refer the dispute to the department chair of the complaining party and that department chair will determine if other department chairs need to be consulted based on the composition of the parties involved.
- C. If the dispute cannot be resolved pursuant to the process in section VII.B., then the department chair to whom the dispute was referred pursuant to section V.B shall refer the dispute to the relevant college dean(s).
- D. If the dispute cannot be resolved pursuant to the process in section VII.C., then the dean to whom the dispute was referred pursuant to section VII.C, shall refer the dispute to the Director of Research Integrity in the Office of Research of Research and Economic Development (ORED) for further review. If improper authorship practices are identified, the Senior Vice President for Research may confer with other University units (e.g., the applicable college or departmental personnel, Academic Affairs, University Graduate School) in determining corrective actions and if appropriate, sanctions if they are warranted.
- E. During dispute resolution, the involved parties are expected to maintain all records related to the authorship dispute and to refrain from actions that may damage the authorship interests and rights of the other Participating Authors.