

Authorship Policy, *Scholarship and Practice of Undergraduate Research* (SPUR)

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on Behalf of the SPUR Editorial Board

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What Is Authorship?

Authorship is a role taken when an individual or group decides that the results of scholarly or creative work merit sharing with the greater creative and scholarly community in the form of a piece of writing. When this work is a collaborative piece, the project team must consider how the rewards and responsibilities of authorship apply to individuals and their roles in the project.

Committing to participate in the translation of the study and its findings to the persistent archival scrutiny of the community comes with certain rewards and responsibilities, and should not be entered into lightly. For all members of the authorship team, the rewards are often psychical and intangible. There is a strong sense of pride and confidence that comes from knowing that one has contributed to the creative or scholarly practice of one's academic discipline. Intangible and often of considerable significance to many authors is the value placed on authorship by higher education institutions when making admissions, hiring, promotion, tenure, and awards decisions, as well as employers in the public and private sectors.

Authorship comes with significant responsibilities, too, that extend beyond crafting the text used in the manuscript. These necessitate having a more substantial role in the development, execution, and analysis of the project than simply writing or editing the text. Journal articles are written to share with others in a particular discipline and related fields to allow the greater community to advance knowledge. For this reason, it is vital that those who identify as authors understand the study and its findings, and can speak to the integrity of the work reported if requested. All those who have contributed to the scholarly or creative activity and do not meet the standards for authorship (see below) should be recognized in the Acknowledgments section of the paper where their specific contributions should be explicitly stated.

What Are the Standards for Authorship?

Standards for authorship vary widely across disciplines, within disciplines, and even between research teams working in the same discipline. Because the previously discussed responsibilities of authorship are so very important, guidelines have been crafted (see below) to ensure that those identified as authors can fulfill the duties of this vital role and that all those who have contributed significantly are correctly credited as authors.

Since the focus of SPUR is on the scholarship and practice of undergraduate research, it is likely that studies submitted to SPUR involve partnerships with undergraduate researchers.

Undergraduate researchers may not be present and available to participate in all of the needed work over the often lengthy time frame required to acquire and analyze the necessary data, craft and submit the original manuscript, wait for the reviews, revise the manuscript, and ultimately

see their work published. Furthermore, it may take an extended period of time partnering with a series of undergraduate collaborators to collect the necessary data to support a high-quality publication.

Recognizing that standards for authorship vary widely, to the extent possible, the SPUR Editorial Board expects that all authors should meet the following criteria:

- The authors made a significant contribution to the project through study design, data collection, analysis, and/or interpretation.
- Whenever possible, the authors have written and ideally revised one or more sections of the manuscript; and
- The authors agree to be held accountable for the accuracy and integrity of their contributions to the study.

What Responsibilities Are Entailed by Authorship?

Corresponding Author

The corresponding author accepts responsibilities that go beyond the usual duties of authorship. The corresponding author assumes primary responsibility for managing all of the correspondence between coauthors and SPUR, and responding on behalf of the coauthors to all inquiries from the editor-in-chief or other members of the journal's editorial team in a timely fashion from the submission of the manuscript to the journal through its publication. The corresponding author, in most cases, is a leader of the particular study but may be a coauthor who has the time and ability to follow the paper through the publication process. In SPUR, the information for corresponding author (name, institution, email address) is listed at the end of the article before the bio sketches. The corresponding author often is the first author, but this is not the case universally.

The corresponding author bears the responsibility of ensuring that all coauthors who meet the standard for authorship as defined here have agreed to serve as authors, that all interested coauthors have been involved in the authoring process to the full extent possible, and that all coauthors have read and approved of the manuscript before the manuscript is submitted to SPUR. Corresponding authors also assume responsibility for uploading all of the materials such as photographs and figures that are required for a complete submission in their proper form and keeping all of the coauthors apprised of the status of the manuscript. As the paper undergoes review and revision, the corresponding author involves all coauthors in the revision process as fully as possible and ensures that all coauthors approve of the final version of the accepted manuscript.

Coauthors

All coauthors must accept responsibility for the authenticity and accuracy of their contributions. They must feel confident that they can explain their work, the way they performed the work, and the significance of the data for others in the field. Coauthors must commit to participating in writing and revising the manuscript, as much as they are able and as time permits. They must accept responsibility for articulating their views concerning the interpretation and presentation of

their contributions in the manuscript, as authors cannot be accredited without taking responsibility for the published work.

A Few Words about Student Coauthors

Academic faculty and staff acting as research advisers and mentors must take responsibility for communicating their authorship policies to their undergraduate researchers, no matter the duration of the student's involvement in the research, the adviser's or mentor's initial perceptions of the student's likely contributions to a project, and the student's last whereabouts when the study may be publishable. This discussion should take place at the start of the research project or as soon as it becomes clear that the project may evolve into a study worthy of publication. Advisers and mentors must take responsibility for explaining the significance of relative position in the byline and be willing and transparent in making any needed modifications to the relative position of author names in the byline as appropriate as the work progresses to publication. If student authors feel that a discussion of authorship and relative credit as reflected in the byline has been overlooked or is unclear, or if the project's outcome has evolved, then student authors should not hesitate to ask their coauthor(s) for clarification regarding their contributions as authors.