ETHICS IN AUTHORSHIP

The Graduate Council (GC) has addressed the issue of ethics in authorship as it relates to graduate student/major professor interactions (or comparable collaborative author circumstances). The GC recognizes that faculty or other University researchers may co-author scholarly publications with graduate students. The GC also recognizes that such collaboration is usually beneficial to all parties involved and should not be discouraged.

Nevertheless, conflicts occasionally arise over collaborative authorship. The GC urges that whenever possible such problems be resolved by the concerned parties on the bases of professional ethics, integrity, and fair play. As a guide, the Graduate Council recommends that authors adhere to the principles of the accompanying statement regarding authorship, as prepared by the Council. Most difficulties can be reconciled by careful consideration of the contributions and responsibilities inherent in joint authorship and to the professional conduct noted in the GC guidelines. Faculty are urged to be cognizant of their relationship with graduate students and the possibility of intimidation. The Faculty Code of Conduct, Part IIA, specifically states that the professor must avoid any exploitation of students for private advantage and that significant assistance from them be acknowledged.

Disagreements about joint authorship may be avoided or alleviated by continued discussion as to the role of each author during the course of the research. A listing or discussion of the contributions and responsibilities of each author prior to submission for publication may aid in avoiding conflicts.

The Graduate Council nevertheless recognizes that the guidelines for authorship of intellectual pursuits can occasionally legitimately be interpreted differently and that misunderstandings may arise. Should the parties fail to resolve the conflict, any of the authors may request advice from the Administrative Committee of the Graduate Council. Continued failure to resolve the issue may lead to allegations of faculty misconduct per the Academic Senate Faculty Code of Conduct. The accompanying GRADUATE COUNCIL GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORSHIP is presented in the hope that conflicts of authorship can be resolved prior to Academic Senate involvement.

GRADUATE COUNCIL GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORSHIP

With respect to professional ethics, integrity, and fairness, the authorship of any scholarly work implies the following:

1) That each author has made a substantial intellectual contribution to the work;

2) That each author accepts responsibility for individual contribution to the collaborative effort;

3) That each author accepts responsibility for the scholarly conclusions appearing in the publication.

"Substantial intellectual contribution" is interpreted by the Graduate Council to mean input beyond that of (1) only providing instruction, (2) granting use of laboratory space or equipment, (3) provision of financial support, or (4) dissertation guidance by a faculty member. It means a considerable degree of involvement with the development of the work, the generation and interpretation of data, the drawing of conclusions and/or the actual writing of the manuscript. "Responsibility" means that an author understands the methodology involved, the relationship to other research of a similar nature, and the significance and implications of her/his contributions to the publication. Responsibility implies the ability to defend the individual's contribution against academic challenge. Authorship should not be taken by students or faculty if they do not understand these aspects of the work, are unwilling to accept responsibility for them, or do not agree with the conclusions made in the report.

Source: Graduate Advisors' Handbook