

Authorship Guidelines for Dept of Dermatology
Prepared at the request of the faculty by June Robinson
Revisions are in *italics* and are based upon the faculty discussion February 13, 2008. For
at March 5, 2008 faculty meeting
For consideration: once accepted these guidelines may be posted on the dept web page

Abstracts to be presented at meetings

Include everyone who worked on the project. It shows the team working together. It may be important to the lead author when submitting for a research grant. More junior authors (medical students) may need it to establish credibility for work in dermatology.

In advance of preparing the abstract for submission, the following items need to be done:

1. The listing of the authors should be agreed upon.
2. All named authors should agree that the work is ready to submit for presentation, and the meeting is the correct forum.
3. Select who will present the work if the abstract is accepted.
4. Agree who is paying for the trip. This is especially relevant for residents and students.

Once the abstract is drafted, the draft should be circulated for comment / revision prior to submission.

Manuscripts submitted to journals for consideration of publication

Authorship of manuscripts is selective and is codified by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). Ensuring that the status of author is only conferred on those who have earned it is an important component of research and publishing. The instructions for authors of a journal may include a requirement for a list of attribution(s) of the components of the work. Aspects of the work are:

1. Conception and design
2. Acquisition of data
3. Analysis and interpretation of data
4. Drafting of the manuscript
5. Critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content
6. Statistical expertise*
7. Obtained funding*
8. Administrative, technical, or material support *

** Individuals with contributions limited solely to a single item marked with an asterisk (items 6, 7, or 8) will not be considered as authors, rather their contributions may be acknowledged. For example: Dr X performed the statistical analysis. If the biostatistician did not contribute to the study design or interpretation of the data, then the acknowledgment of the contribution is sufficient. If Dr. X (biostatistician) came to monthly meetings of the research team, helped design the study and revised the manuscript in critical sections, then Dr. X is an author.*

Once an author indicates their role in the work, only the author may change the role as it is defined on the title page and / or conflict of interest statement. This means that authors should define the roles prior to drafting the manuscript. Open discussion prevents misunderstandings and malfeasance later on. Editorial policy for some journals is that neither the senior author or corresponding author may add or delete an author without the permission of all authors, nor may they change the attribution of components of the work after it is agreed upon by all.

The ICMJE includes the following statement on authorship in its publication detailing the requirements for manuscripts¹:

‘Authorship credit should be based on:

1) substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data;

2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content;
and

3) Final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2 and 3.’

Items to define prior to drafting the manuscript:

1. The listing of the authors should be agreed upon
2. Designate the corresponding author
3. Determine the journal to which you wish to submit the work
4. Set a timeline

What is **not** enough to qualify for authorship?

1. Simply proof-reading a paper and pointing out spelling or grammatical errors is not the same as ‘revising it critically for important intellectual content. Acknowledge the person’s work.

2. Providing a photograph. In the legend of the figure, state that the photograph was provided by Dr. X.

3. Providing care to a clinical case without intellectual contribution to the manuscript.

4. *Obtaining funding*

5. *Technical or administrative support*

6. *Statistical expertise* . Please see the discussion on the previous page.

How to deal with large multi-institution trials

Large multi-author trials in general are concerned, there are several ways of dealing with the situation, one of which is to list a smaller number of main authors who have made significant contributions to the design and conduct of the study, with acknowledgement of others who helped in some way, but were not prime movers. Alternatively, a group name can be used (and indexed) which includes all contributors, not just the named authors.

Reference

1. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals: writing and editing for biomedical publications. Available online at <http://www.icmje.org/>