Authorship, Advice on (UMDNJ Office of Academic Affairs)

IV. AUTHORSHIP

Clear policies on authorship should be established by individual laboratories and research groups. Authorship should be limited to those who have made a substantial intellectual or technical contribution to the conception, planning, design and/or performance of the research, and/or to the analysis and interpretation of the data. If possible, all such individuals should participate in drafting or revising the manuscript. In certain disciplines and in certain journals, the scope of the contribution of each author may be indicated in a statement or acknowledgment in the manuscript. Certain individuals who participate in or make specialized contributions to a study may more appropriately be acknowledged in the manuscript as having contributed materials, support, patients, advice, funds, etc., or as having collected the data, but should not be listed as authors. General supervision of the research group is not sufficient for authorship. Purely "honorary" or mandatory authorships (as in the case of non-contributing department chairs, section heads or supervisors) violate these principles and are therefore deplorable.

The primary (submitting) author should have reviewed all primary data on which the manuscript is based, and be able to identify the specific contributions of each co-author. He/she has overall responsibility for ensuring the review and approval of the final manuscript by each co-author, for defending the study if necessary, and for making responses to post-publication questions and challenges. Each author should review, approve, take responsibility for and be prepared to defend his or her specific contributions to the research and those aspects of the publication in his or her area of expertise, even if no longer associated with the research group or laboratory. If possible, all authors should be able to agree with, take responsibility for, and defend the conclusions and interpretations of the entire manuscript. In collaborative work, scientists of each research group are expected to accept responsibility for the work done in their group; in such collaborations, authors should nevertheless review all aspects of the research.

The above chapter is from:

"Guidelines for Investigators in Scientific Research," published by UMDNJ-Office of Academic Affairs, 65 Bergen Street, Room 1441, Newark, New Jersey 07107 (1995)