

This material is part of a collection that documents the harassment, discrimination, and retaliation perpetrated against Alaska's women research scientists by their supervisor, with full knowledge (and arguably, "tacit approval") of their federal employer, the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS)



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

December 8, 2009

SUBJECT: Clarification on PWA Authorship Policy

TO: Cynthia Bower
Research Food Technologist
Subarctic Agricultural Research Unit

FROM: Maureen C. Whalen
Assistant Area Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maureen C. Whalen", written over the printed name and title.

This acknowledges receipt of your email correspondence from December 4, 2009 addressed to me regarding PWA's policies on authorship.

Regarding authorship, I have attached P&P 152.2. All authors have to fulfill the three authorship criteria in section 1, page 3.

Anyone who fulfills the authorship criteria (P&P 152.2 section 1) must be offered authorship.

For management approval of authorship (see P&P 152.2, section 3, page 4), the AD has delegated the approval to the RL WITH GUIDANCE. The guidance that is in effect is described in the attached memo from May 17, 1999.

Co-authoring papers is not in the position description of technicians. Because it is not in their position descriptions, technicians should not be routinely co-authoring papers. A supervisor is responsible for ensuring the employee is performing the work described in the position description (PD). The supervisor's signature on the PD cover sheet attests to the accuracy of the document and that the employee is performing the work. The supervisor should not be assigning work outside of the PD.

P&P 152.2 recognizes technical help by technicians and acknowledges their assistance as described in P&P 152.2 section 2 Acknowledgement of Contributions.



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In the rare instances where a support scientist is to serve as a co-author, as it says in the PWA guidance, “the role must be established...as soon in the research process as possible, ideally prior to the conduct of the research.” The example, used by the PWA office, is it would be appropriate if a technician were specifically assigned the development of a method and then fulfilled the three authorship criteria. The RL would have to give prior approval to the role.

According to P&P 152.2, section 3, the RL as AD/AD designee “may require authors to justify the assignment of authorship, by explaining how each individual participated in the activities described by the guidelines for authorship...” The system for justification for authorship is up to the RL as AD designee. The RL signs the ARIS 115s according to the P&P 152.2, the PWA guidance and position descriptions.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions regarding PWA authorship policy.

Enclosure

ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS

Policies and Procedures

Title: Authorship of Research and Technical Reports and Publications

Number: 152.2-ARS

Date: May 12, 1997

Originating Office: Office of the Administrator, ARS

This Replaces: ARS 152.2 dated 11/9/90

Distribution: ARS Headquarters, Areas, and Locations

This P&P provides guidelines for authorship of scientific and technical publications.

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1. Guidelines on Authorship

The question of who should be an author is fundamentally an issue of scientific ethics. Each author must have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for the content of the article. This participation must include:

- conception or design, or analysis and interpretation of data, or both; and,
- drafting the article or revising it for critically important intellectual content; and,
- final approval of the version to be published.

All elements of an article critical to the main conclusions must be attributable to at least one author. The order of names on a multi-authored article will be decided by the group responsible for the research.

Participation solely in the collection or summarization of data does not justify authorship.

The issue of “credit” for performance evaluation or the Research Position Evaluation System (RPES) relates to actual role rather than order of names, and is a separate issue beyond the scope of this P&P.

All individuals to be listed as authors, regardless of the classification of their positions, or other affiliation, must meet these authorship guidelines.

2. Acknowledgment of Contributions

Persons who have contributed intellectually to the paper and whose contributions do not justify authorship may be named and their contribution described—for example, “advice,” “critical review of study proposal,” “data collection.” Such persons must give their permission to be named.

At an appropriate place in the article one or more statements should specify:

- contributions that need acknowledgment but do not justify authorship;
- acknowledgments of technical help (required in a separate paragraph); and,
- acknowledgments of financial and material support.

3. Approval of Authorship

Authority to approve authorship by employees who do not occupy research or service scientist positions (Categories 1, 2 and 4) resides with the Area Director. The Area Director may delegate this authority to lower management levels (Institute Director, Center Director, Laboratory Director, or Research Leader). **Note:** Hereafter, “Area Director” also includes lower management levels when delegation has occurred.

- The Area Director may require authors to justify the assignment of authorship, by explaining how each individual participated in the activities described by the guidelines for authorship.
- When approval of authorship by the Area Director is required, such approval will be sought as soon as the need for approval becomes evident, but prior to production of the first draft of the manuscript.
- Any person who, in the judgment of the Area Director, meets the guidelines for authorship, and who wishes to be listed as an author, cannot ethically be denied authorship.

4. Reference

Guidelines on Authorship, International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (Brit. Med. J. 291:722, 1985)

5. Summary of Responsibilities

Principal Investigators and Coinvestigators

- Determine when an individual has made contributions meeting the authorship guidelines.
- Request Area Director approval of authorship when required by Section 3, and provide justification upon demand.

Area Directors (or Delegates)

- Determine when authorship is warranted, and grant or deny approval as appropriate.

EDWARD B. KNIPLING
Acting Administrator
Agricultural Research Service