

Scientific cooperation and protection of research results

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Don't learn the hard way – learn from others' mistakes!

- Scenario 1 – conflict about authorship order
- Scenario 2 – responsibility to coauthors
- Scenario 3 – sharing information in large research consortia



Scenario 1

- You have completed a first draft of a manuscript as part of your Ph.D. thesis. Your supervisor has advised you on the design of the study and the statistical analyses, discussed interpretation of your results and provided comments on the draft manuscript. You did all of the practical work, analysed the data and wrote the paper. When you got the draft back from your supervisor it became clear that he expected not only to be co-author but first author!
- Is this fair?
- How should you deal with it?





Authorship

- **Authorship means: credit, accountability, responsibility**
- **One of the most sensitive issues in science**
- **Rules and traditions vary**
- **You can very easily get into trouble**
 - Including authors that shouldn't be
 - Excluding authors that should be
 - Ordering authors inappropriately
- **Probably best to agree on this before the paper is written**

My suggestion

- **Don't ever get into this situation!**
- **Ideally, find out how a potential supervisor addresses the coauthorship either from him/her directly or from other Ph.D. students.**
- **Agree on authorship (especially first and last) before the work is done.**
- **If you get in a difficult situation, politely but firmly explain your views.**
- **If necessary, get help.**



Scenario 2



- You helped a fellow Ph.D. student with some experiments. She has decided to present the results as a poster at an international conference and has included you and her supervisor as coauthors. She sent you and the supervisor a copy of the abstract for comment before submitting it. She never sent either of you the poster itself, and by chance you discover that she has submitted the same abstract to another conference.
- Should she have sent you the poster to approve?
- Should she have let you know that she was presenting the same poster at another conference?
- How should you handle this?

My suggestion



- Yes, she should have gotten approval from all coauthors on the actual poster.
- She should not have submitted the poster elsewhere without informing all coauthors.
- You should contact her, tell her that you have seen she is submitting the poster at a new conference, ask to receive a copy of the poster, and request that if she submits it elsewhere that you are informed. You should also suggest that she inform her supervisor likewise.
- Next time – make it clear when the abstract is submitted that you want to see the poster.



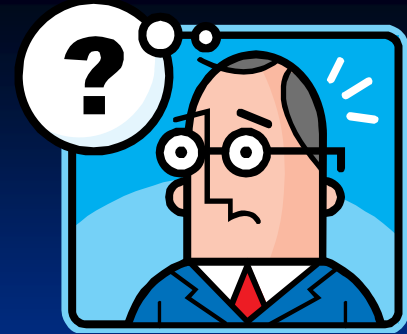
Scenario 3

- You are participating in a research cruise with multiple investigators, some of whom you have never met. It is expected that the data gathered will be shared and that people will help each other out with their measurements on board. The data you are collecting are central for your Ph.D. thesis, but are likely to be useful background data for some of the other projects. You are concerned that someone else might publish your data before you have the chance making it impossible for you to publish them as original data. You are also concerned that you could spend a lot of cruise time assisting others, but do not know whether you will get any formal credit.
- What should you do?



My suggestion

- **Pay careful attention to the details of the written collaboration agreement.**
 - If there is no written contract, request one.
 - If you do not understand the text, ask your university's legal representative or the principle investigator.
- **Suggest to the principle investigator that the rules for data sharing, acknowledgement and coauthorship are discussed and agreed in writing by all participants prior to the cruise.**



- **8.3.3 Cooperation obligations**
- **The Parties undertake to cooperate to allow the timely submission, examination, publication and defence of any dissertation or thesis for a degree which includes their Foreground or Background. However, confidentiality and publication clauses have to be respected.**
- **Where a person carrying out work on the Project on behalf of a Party needs to include Background or Foreground of another Party in a publication to qualify for a degree, dissertation or thesis, approval of such Use shall be obtained from the appropriate Party owning such rights, or from the Party affected by such Use in accordance with the provisions of section 8.3.1 above, such approval not to be unreasonably withheld.**
- **The Parties agree to cooperate to allow the timely submission, examination, publication and defence of any dissertation or thesis for a degree, which includes their Foreground and/or Background.**



Conclusions

- Where there are clear rules of conduct, follow them.
- You usually won't fail with a combination of common sense and good manners.
- If in doubt, get things out in the open – sooner rather than later.

