MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES ON AUTHORSHIP

Adopted by the University Research Council

January 15, 1998

(To apply to all academic units which have not adopted their own written policies)

1. **Authorship** - A person claiming authorship of a scholarly publication must have met the following criteria:
   a. Substantial participation in conception and design of the study, or in analysis and interpretation of data;
   b. Substantial participation in the drafting of the manuscript or in the substantive editing of the manuscript;
   c. Final approval of the version of the manuscript to be published;
   d. Ability to explain and defend the study in public or scholarly settings.
   e. (Note: these criteria follow closely those recommended by several professional associations. See especially the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, *Annals of Internal Medicine* 1988; 108: 258-65.)

2. **Acknowledgment** - Contributions that do not justify authorship should be acknowledged separately in the notes to the manuscript. These may include general supervision of a research group, assistance in obtaining funding, or technical support.

3. **“Honorary Authorship”** - A claim of authorship by, or assignment of authorship to, persons who may have been associated in some way with a study but do not meet the four criteria in item 1 may constitute an unethical research practice.

4. **Graduate Student Authorship** - “Faculty should be especially aware of their responsibility to safeguard the rights of graduate students to publish the results of
5. **Senior Author and Order of Authorship** - The senior author is generally defined as the person who leads a study and makes a major contribution to the work. All the authors at the outset of a project should establish senior authorship, preferably in a written memorandum of understanding. This memorandum of understanding should reference the authors’ agreement to abide by their departments’ policy on authorship or this University default policy on authorship. At the outset of the study the Senior Author should discuss the outline of work and a tentative Order of Authorship with the study participants. As projects proceed, agreements regarding authorship may need to be changed. It is the responsibility of the senior author to assure that the contributions of study participants are properly recognized.

6. **Disputes Over Authorship** - Disagreements over authorship, e.g. who has a right to be an author or the order of authorship, should be resolved by the Senior Author in collegial consultation with the other authors. When this process cannot reach resolution, the Senior Author should arrange with his or her chairperson for arbitration by a knowledgeable and disinterested third party acceptable to all the authors. If the authors cannot agree on a mutually acceptable arbitrator, then the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies shall appoint an arbitrator. During the arbitration process all the authors are expected to refrain from unilateral actions that may damage the authorship interests and rights of the other authors.

7. **Accountability** - Every author listed on a publication is presumed to have approved the final version of the manuscript. Each author is responsible for the integrity of the research being reported.

8. **Plagiarism** - The word *plagiarism* is derived from the Latin *plagiarius*, an abductor, and *plagiare*, to steal. The expropriation of another author’s text, and the presentation of it as one’s own, constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism, in turn, constitutes misconduct in scholarship under University policies and procedures. Plagiarism in scholarly projects should be reported to one’s chairperson, dean, or the University Intellectual Integrity Officer. (American Historical Association, *Statements on Standards*, 1993, p. 13)

9. **Distribution** - This policy should be widely distributed, especially to each new
faculty, graduate student and research staff member in academic units.