



# **SOM Authorship Guidelines, Recent Updates to the ICMJE Uniform Requirements for Scholarship, and the Emerging Role of Social Media in Monitoring Scholarship**

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# ICJME/SOM Authorship Guidelines

- The VCU SOM has adopted and follows the Authorship Recommendations from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), *Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly work in Medical Journals*, updated December 2016 (referred to as *Uniform Recommendations*).

**Purpose of the Recommendations:** *“ICMJE developed these recommendations to review best practice and ethical standards in the conduct and reporting of research and other material published in medical journals, and to help authors, editors, and others involved in peer review and biomedical publishing create and distribute accurate, clear, reproducible, unbiased medical journal articles. The recommendations may also provide useful insights into the medical editing and publishing process for the media, patients and their families, and general readers.”*

# ICJME/SOM Authorship Guidelines

- The full text of the ICMJE *Recommendations* may be accessed at:
- The downloadable PDF is located at:  
<http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>
- An annotated PDF highlighting updates is located at:  
[http://www.icmje.org/news-and-editorials/icmje-recommendations\\_annotated\\_dec16.pdf](http://www.icmje.org/news-and-editorials/icmje-recommendations_annotated_dec16.pdf)
- Specific narrative that deals with defining the Role of Authors and Contributors may be found on pp. 2-3 of the current PDF.
- To review list of journals that follow the ICMJE *Recommendations* go to:  
<http://www.icmje.org/journals-following-the-icmje-recommendations/>

# ICJME/SOM Authorship Guidelines

- Remember - these are written by journal editors who would prefer issues are addressed before submission and publication. It is difficult and expensive for journals to manage disputes, corrections and retractions.

# Highlights of Updates

ICJME generally has annual updates, which reflect the changing landscape of scholarship and publishing.

This presentation includes highlights of the 2016 and 2015 ICJME updates.

# Highlights of Updates (2016)

- Authors are responsible for learning about the journals where they submit manuscripts.

*A growing number of entities are advertising themselves as “medical journals” yet do not function as such (“predatory journals”). Authors **have a responsibility to evaluate** (replacing the earlier “should be aware”) of the integrity, history, practices and reputation of the journals to which they submit manuscripts. Further guidance is available at:*

*<http://www.wame.org/about/principles-of-transparency-and-best-practice>*

*(Section II.C.1.a)*

# Highlights of Updates (2016)

*More detail about how to handle pervasive errors is provided:*

*Pervasive errors can result from a coding problem or a miscalculation and may result in extensive inaccuracies throughout an article. If such errors do not change the direction or significance of the results, interpretations, and conclusions of the article, a correction should be published that follows the minimum standards noted above (Section III).*

*Errors serious enough to invalidate a paper's results and conclusions may require retraction. However, retraction with republication (also referred to as "replacement") can be considered in cases where honest error (e.g., a misclassification or miscalculation) leads to a major change in the direction or significance of the results, interpretations, and conclusions. If the error is judged to be unintentional, the underlying science appears valid, and the changed version of the paper survives further review and editorial scrutiny, then retraction with republication of the changed paper, with an explanation, allows full correction of the scientific literature. In such cases, it is helpful to show the extent of the changes in supplementary material or in an appendix, for complete transparency.*

*(Section III.A)*

# Highlights of Updates (2016)

## *Selection and Description of Participants:*

*Ensure correct use of the terms sex (when reporting biological factors) and gender (identity, psychosocial or cultural factors) and, unless inappropriate, report the sex and/or gender of study participants, the sex of animals or cells, and describe the methods used to determine sex and gender*

*Authors should define how they determined (replaces earlier “measured”) race or ethnicity and justify their relevance.*

*(Section IV.A.3.d.i)*

# Highlights of Updates (2016)

## *Discussion Section (added language):*

*Discuss the influence or association of variables, such as sex and/or gender, on your findings, where appropriate, and the limitations of the data.*

*(Section IV.A.3.d.i)*

# Highlights of Updates (2016)

## *Illustrations (Figures) technical standards:*

*For radiological and other clinical and diagnostic images, as well as pictures of pathology specimens or photomicrographs, send high-resolution photographic image files. Before-and-after images should be taken with the same intensity, direction, and color of light.*

*(Section IV.A.3.i)*

# Highlights of Updates (2015)

- It is the responsibility of the authors to be transparent about the research and writing process, disclose conflicts and any issues with the study, and all authors are accountable for the entire study.
- i.e., all authors, including those assisting with technical or statistical aspects of a study, are responsible for the entire study.

# Highlights of Updates (2015)

## Author Responsibilities - COI

Strengthening of language around study sponsorship/conflict of interest, from “*may represent a conflict of interest and should be avoided*” to “*authors should avoid*”

## Protection of Research Participants

In addition to IRB approval, now states:

“*Approval by a responsible review committee does not preclude authors from forming their own judgment whether the conduct of the research was appropriate*”

# Highlights of Updates (2015)

## Correspondence

Responsible debate, critique and disagreement are important features of science, and journal editors should encourage such discourse ideally within their own journals about the material they have published. Editors, however, have the prerogative to reject correspondence that is irrelevant, uninteresting, or lacking cogency, but they also have a responsibility to allow a range of opinions to be expressed and to promote debate.

*New language underlined*

# Highlights of Updates (2015)

## Publishing and Editorial Issues: Fees

- Journals should be transparent about their types of revenue streams. Any fees or charges that are required for manuscript processing and/or publishing materials in the journal shall be clearly stated in a place that is easy for potential authors to find prior to submitting their manuscripts for review or explained to authors before they begin preparing their manuscript for submission.

*New language underlined*

# Highlights of Updates (2015)

## **Manuscript Preparation and Submission: Methods**

- *Methods section should aim to be sufficiently detailed such that others with access to the data would be able to reproduce the results.*
- *If an organization was paid or otherwise contracted to help conduct the research (examples include data collection and management), then this should be detailed in the methods.*
- *The Methods section should include a statement indicating that the research was approved or exempted from the need for review by the responsible review committee (institutional or national). If no formal ethics committee is available, a statement indicating that the research was conducted according to the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki should be included.*

*All new language*

# Highlights of Updates (2015)

## References:

- *References should not be used by authors, editors, or peer reviewers to promote self-interests*

*All new language*

# Highlights of Updates (2015)

## **Sending the Submission:**

- *The (cover letter or submission form) should inform editors if concerns have been raised (e.g., via institutional and/or regulatory bodies) regarding the conduct of the research or if corrective action has been recommended.*

*All new language*



# SOM (ICMJE) Authorship Guidelines

## **“Who is an Author?”**

This is a commonly raised issue leading to hard feelings and/or formal complaints.

This should be discussed as soon as a plan for publishing papers begins, and revisited throughout the writing process.

Transparency and accountability are key.

# SOM (ICMJE) Authorship Guidelines

## II.A.2. All authors must meet all 4 criteria for authorship:

1. *Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; **AND***
2. *Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; **AND***
3. *Final approval of the version to be published; **AND***
4. *Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.*

## Who is an Author?

*In addition to being accountable for the parts of the work he or she has done, an author should be able to identify which co-authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work.*

*In addition, authors should have confidence in the integrity of the contributions of their co-authors.*

# Order of Authorship

All from: <https://hms.harvard.edu/about-hms/integrity-academic-medicine/hms-policy/faculty-policies-integrity-science/authorship-guidelines>

- Many different ways of determining order of authorship exist across disciplines, research groups, and countries. Examples of authorship policies include descending order of contribution, placing the person who took the lead in writing the manuscript or doing the research first and the most experienced contributor last, and alphabetical or random order. While the significance of a particular order may be understood in a given setting, order of authorship has no generally agreed upon meaning.
- As a result, it is not possible to interpret from order of authorship the respective contributions of individual authors. Promotion committees, granting agencies, readers, and others who seek to understand how individual authors have contributed to the work should not read into order of authorship their own meaning, which may not be shared by the authors themselves.
- The authors should decide the order of authorship together.
- Authors should specify in their manuscript a description of the contributions of each author and how they have assigned the order in which they are listed so that readers can interpret their roles correctly.
- The primary author should prepare a concise, written description of how order of authorship was decided.

# Emerging Role of Social Media in Monitoring Scholarship

- [PubPeer.com](http://PubPeer.com)
- [retractionwatch.com](http://retractionwatch.com)

Electronic access (Pub Med) and on-line forums make it much easier for scientists to (often anonymously) discuss published scholarly work and raise concerns.

Retraction Watch was started in August 2010 by two medical reporters and features a moderated comment site as well as nearly daily blog posts about current issues in research ethics.

PubPeer.com was founded in 2012 to support post-publication discussion, often lacking on journal websites. If you are a first or last author on an article indexed in Pub Med you can sign up for an account on PubPeer.com.

# Emerging Role of Social Media in Monitoring Scholarship

From [pubpeer.com/about](http://pubpeer.com/about)

- **PubPeer** seeks to create an online community that uses the publication of scientific results as an opening for fruitful discussion among scientists. With PubPeer, scientists can comment on almost any scientific article published with a DOI or preprint in the arXiv.
- All comments are consolidated into a **centralized** and searchable online database.
- Authors, as well as a small group of peers working on similar topics, are **automatically notified when their article is commented on**.
- Pubpeer strives to maintain a high standard of commentary by inviting **first and last authors** of published articles to post comments.
- The chief goal of this project is to provide the means for scientists to work together to improve research quality, as well as to create improved transparency that will enable the community to identify and bring attention to important scientific advancements.
- **PubPeer started from the lack of post-publication peer discussion on journal websites.** Thus was born an idea for a website where open peer review was not intimidating to users, while maintaining the rigor and anonymity of the closed review process currently used by the major journals. The site has been put together by a diverse team of early-stage scientists in collaboration with programmers who have collectively decided to remain anonymous in order to avoid personalizing the website, and to avoid circumstances in which involvement with the site might produce negative effects on their scientific careers.

## Emerging Role of Social Media in Monitoring Scholarship

Most comments on PubPeer.com are anonymous. Those commenting are identified as “Peer 1”, “Peer 2”, etc. unless they choose to identify themselves.

As on most social media, not all comments are constructive and thoughtful. However, many comments reflect a careful review of the paper and represent a depth of knowledge. Discussions on PubPeer have been cited as contributing to multiple article retractions. ([retractionwatch.com/?s=PubPeer](http://retractionwatch.com/?s=PubPeer), searched 06/12/15)

You can subscribe to Retraction Watch and receive email notifications of new blog posts.

## Emerging Role of Social Media in Monitoring Scholarship

- [PubPeer.com](http://PubPeer.com)
- [retractionwatch.com](http://retractionwatch.com)

You may wish to familiarize yourself with these discussion forums.

## **Emerging Role of Social Media in Monitoring Scholarship**

**For questions:**

<http://www.icmje.org/icmje-recommendations.pdf>

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