What is plagiarism and how can I avoid it?

The core concept of plagiarism is relatively simple but the application of the concept to specific situations can be more complicated, controversial, and discipline-specific. The Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) states that plagiarism "occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.[2]" Thus, whenever a person chooses to repeat the exact words written by another author, that person must mark them with quotation marks ("") and provide a citation to the original source (as above for the CWPA definition of plagiarism). Where problems generally arise is when someone attempts to paraphrase the words or ideas of other authors. Here it is critical that the writer uses his/her own words in expressing the original author's writing and clearly informs the reader of the original source of information. Two excellent sources of additional guidance, from which many of the ideas above were abstracted, are websites maintained by Purdue's Online Writing Laboratory[3] and Indiana University's Writing Tutorial Services[4]

How can I get additional information regarding scholarly publication?

Due to the variation in customs among disciplines, the best source of additional information on the standards for scholarly publication is the student's major professor and this is a topic that every graduate student should discuss with his or her advisor early in the course of graduate study. The book and websites referenced in this brief article also contain useful guidance on these topics.
Additional resources:

- Gordon Harvey, Writing with Sources: A Guide for Students (Hackett Publishing Co.)
- Michael Harvey, The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing (Hackett Publishing Co.)

[2]Council of Writing Program Administrators, "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices," http://www.wpacouncil.org
[3]Online Writing Laboratory, "Avoiding Plagiarism," http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html
[4]Writing Tutorial Services, "Plagiarism: What it is and How to Recognize and Avoid It," http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html

Purdue's Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)
http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/research/rcr

Purdue's Statement of Integrity and Code of Conduct
https://www.purdue.edu/purdue/about/integrity_statement.php

Purdue's Policies and Procedures of Integrity in Research

http://www.purdue.edu/faculty_staff_handbook/research_policies/integrity.html

Purdue's Policy on Research Misconduct

http://www.purdue.edu/policies/ethics/iiia2.html

This brochure is adapted from The RCR Booklet, Graduate School, Purdue University

Dr. Linda Mason
Dean and Professor of Entomology
lmason@purdue.edu

Dr. James Mohler
Associate Dean and Professor of CGT
jlmohler@purdue.edu

The Graduate School
Purdue University
Ernest C. Young Hall, Room 160
155 South Grant Street
West Lafayette, Indiana 47907-2114

Telephone: 765.494.2600
FAX: 765.494.0136

gradinfo@purdue.edu
https://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/

Authorship and Scholarly Publication

PURDUE
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
ADVANCE TO A HIGHER DEGREE

A Guide to Authorship and Scholarly Publication for Graduate Students and Post Doctoral Scholars

Scholarly publication is the process whereby the fruits of the researcher's labor becomes part of the "research record," the cumulative compilation of the hypotheses, methods, data, analyses, conclusions, and speculations of those who practice the disciplines.
Because of the obligation to share methods and conclusions with the community of scholars and researchers, it is important for all graduate students to become familiar with the conventions and standards of scholarly publication.
**Many of the ideas and information in the sections that follow were abstracted or paraphrased from a text by Macrina (2000)*[1].

Why is it important to publish the results of research and scholarship?

Practical reasons why one might choose to create and submit a formal scholarly essay or article or monograph for publication are:

- for peer review - New methods, data and conclusions become part of the research record only after peers have reviewed them and agreed that they advance the field.
- for dissemination of detailed formal descriptions of research or scholarship, results and conclusions which provide the opportunity for others to duplicate their approach
- to test conclusions by applying alternate methods to gather complementary data
- for acknowledging contributions - Through publication, researchers record and acknowledge the contributions of all participants in a scholarly project. Publication also provides an opportunity to place contributions in the context of previous work, acknowledging and anchoring the work in the foundation on which it was built.
- to provides an opportunity to speculate on implications or applications of conclusions for future application and they are an important metric of professional accomplishment and accountability.
- for benchmarking - Publications justify to employers and sponsors how their resources have been utilized, and why their continued investment is warranted. Publications are also often used to justify merit increases in salary or promotions in rank and responsibility, and to document the appropriateness of awards and other recognitions.

How do I know when to publish?

Timing and format of scholarly publication vary between and among scholarly disciplines. In some disciplines, the custom is to publish several individual technical articles in scholarly/scientific journals, while in others, it is customary to combine and synthesize the various components of the project as chapters in a monograph. It is best for the new researcher to ask their major professor to share the customs of their discipline. However, a few general principles apply broadly across disciplines:

- The time to write a formal publication is when the author has a significant story to tell.
- The evolution of a story may take several years of varied approaches and complex analysis.
- The practice of publishing in "least publishable units" has given rise to the expression "salami science," which describes the practice of presenting the story as a series of very thin slices … and "salami science" is generally considered to be an undesirable form of publication.
- Also considered undesirable is the practice of publishing less than complete descriptions of methods or analytical approaches, which fail to provide sufficient detail to allow the work to be reproduced.

How is the authorship of a scholarly publication determined?

A commonly accepted standard states that all authors of a scholarly publication should satisfy three conditions:

- each author should have made a significant contribution to the work described.
  (A significant contribution entails a substantial role in the conceptualization, design, execution, or interpretation of data, and a clear understanding of the goals and outcomes of the work.)
- each author must be prepared to take responsibility for all aspects of the work described in the publication. However, they should be sufficiently familiar with the total project that they are comfortable with the description, methods, and conclusions and that they are willing to accept responsibility for the content of the publication.
- each author should have read and approved the final draft of the manuscript and explicitly consented to the submission of the manuscript to a publisher. Individuals who have contributed to the project, but whose contributions do not rise to the level justifying authorship, should be recognized in an Acknowledgements section of the manuscript.

How is the order of authors for a publication decided?

Conventions for determining the order of authors for a research or scholarly publication vary among disciplines. For example, in the life sciences, the first author listed is the person who generated data, interpreted results, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. In this convention, the last author listed is usually the principal investigator, lab director, or major professor responsible for oversight of the project. In physics, it is common for authors to be listed alphabetically in research publications.
It is very important for graduate students/post docs to discuss authorship and the order of authors with their advisor before they begin to write a joint publication. It is also highly desirable to discuss expectations regarding publications when collaboration between researchers or laboratories is being planned.

[1] Macrina, Francis L. (2000) "Scientific Integrity: An Introductory Text with Cases", Second Edition, ASM Press, Washington, DC, pp. 49-72.