Recommendation for establishing co-authorship for papers originating from SIAT graduate classes

Graduate Chair’s Recommendation

GPC supported the Grad Chair in publishing this recommendation on April 20, 2011

The criteria for co-authorship are not cast in stone and differ between disciplines. In general, the following three areas are considered essential to establish the claim for one becoming a co-author:

1. Conceptual aspects of work/ideas
2. Performing research
3. Interpreting results and writing

Typically a contribution into all three aspects is expected in the research collaborations.

In the graduate programs the situation differs slightly, with the second part being mainly done by the graduate students, while faculty contributes in the first and third parts. This applies to the context of the graduate courses as well. If the course work results in a publishable outcome, to establish a claim of an instructor as a co-author one should be given an opportunity and contribute to at least two areas (concept, interpretation and writing). As the paper being produced is typically a part of a course assessment, I recommend the following process.

1. Typically the instructor contributes to the conceptual aspects by providing guidance and feedback on the proposed course project.
2. A student performs the work, quite often with a feedback provided within the course. However, it is understood that the student is doing the most of the work.
3. The student, for the purpose of assessment, is doing the initial result interpretation and writing independently.
4. If the student or the instructor is considering the paper for submission, they will discuss this. At this point the instructor gets directly involved in the paper writing and contributes to both interpretation (minimally reviewing for correctness) and to the writing itself.

Note 1: Involvement of the senior supervisor follows the same rules as stated for the course instructor.
Note 2: If the work spans several courses and partial contributions exist the co-authorship should be determined based on the extent of these contributions to the main focus of the paper. The senior supervisor should consult with the instructors of courses that contributed to the work.

SIAT Graduate Program Chair