FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

POLICY 7A-3

POLICY ON AUTHORSHIP AND DATA ACQUISITION,

MANAGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP

Responsible Executive: Gary K. Ostrander, Vice President for Research

Approving Official: Gary K. Ostrander, Vice President for Research

Effective Date: August 1, 2004

Revision History: Amended:

                        Revised: _____

I. Introduction

Because of the complexity of identifying authors of research reports, a new Data Management Policy has been created to provide basic guidelines for authorship assignments and a means to resolve disputes that may arise. It also provides basic guidelines for investigators related to data and the uses of data from the time of acquisition until the data is intentionally destroyed.

II. Policy

Authorship should be discussed at the beginning of a project with respect to roles, expectations, and performance of each participant in relation to authorship on potential publications arising from the work. Communication is important to maintain or revise understandings should roles change or the nature of the work requires additional expertise as it progresses. A common policy for qualification for authorship within a research group or department, consistent with disciplinary codes and practices of the larger ethical frameworks of their professional organizations, should be established and adhered to for fairness and consistency to avoid misunderstandings. Generally, those individuals that make substantial contributions to the conceptualization, experimental design, troubleshooting, execution, analysis or interpretation of the results of the research should be listed as authors. Those making small contributions in these areas or those that provided helpful materials or reagents should instead be acknowledged. The order of authorship should be a matter of discussion and agreement within the research group. Generally, the lead author will be that individual making the greatest contribution to the work and will take responsibility for obligations related to management of the manuscript, its preparation, and often as corresponding author. In cases where there is a dispute in authorship, it is expected that the matter will be resolved within the research group if at all possible. Should that fail to resolve the matter, input from one or more senior individual(s) not in the research group can be solicited to aid in resolution of the dispute.

Should further mediation be required, the department chair or Dean will work to reach a fair resolution and, if necessary, reach a final decision.

Data is the central focus of the research effort. It involves acquisition, management, sharing, and ownership of the data. Collection of research data involves clear, concise collection of multiple forms of data. Best practices include means to document the research experiment and result as well as who did the work, when, and what the interpretation of the experimental outcome was at that time. Research notes in bound notebooks written in ink, signed and dated by the experimentalist and reviewed and acknowledged by a colleague offers good documentation of research performed and the result. Research data in too large of a format to fit in the lab notebook, or in electronic form, including large data sets and files, must be referenced in the written research notes, backed up and kept secure.

Many types of research will generate data that must be kept confidential (such as human subjects research or that relating to national security) and all laws and policies relating to management of confidential data must be strictly adhered to. Unpublished data, confidential data, or other secured data must be accessible to authorized users but protected from unauthorized access or use.

Sharing of data and their interpretation via publication or presentation must be unbiased and of the highest integrity. Confidentiality of elements of the data often must be retained but in doing so it must be done in such a manner that does not bias the outcome and interpretations of the work as a whole. Although funding agencies may have their own policies and interests in data sharing, timing of data sharing can, and should, be done in view of a broader perspective in the publication of research results, including coordination with results from other related research efforts within the research group and opportunities for possible filing of patent applications given that patent applications must be filed in advance of any public disclosure. In addition to publications and meeting presentations, public disclosures can include events like seminars and casual discussions with others.

Research data must be maintained for an appropriate period depending on needs. Routine published data should be retained for an appropriate period consistent with standard practices or requirements within a discipline, funding agency, or department, or for a fixed period of time such as three years. Other types of data, such as that forming the basis of a patent application, may be required to be retained for an indefinite period in support of the application as well as its prosecution and potential challenges to the validity of an issued patent. Destruction of data must be done thoroughly and effectively. Paper records should be shredded. Electronic records must be erased in a manner that completely eliminates the file, potentially by multiple pass erasures.

Data is ultimately the property of the institution. Though, it is also recognized that university faculty, staff and students may use data in their work that belongs to another institution or

consortium. As appropriate, the policies and details herein should be applied. Use of data in such forums as publications, meeting presentations, grant applications, or patent applications properly requires consultation within the research group responsible for acquiring the data with the principal investigator or lab director that is responsible for the underlying funding having ultimate authority in its initial use. This is meant to provide the principal investigator or lab director the opportunity to frame the communication strategy and timing in presentation of new results within a research group. It is not meant to control the use of previously published results by junior colleagues within the research group who may require that availability in their own efforts to seek independence as an investigator.

III. Legal Support, Justification, and Review of this Policy

Fla. Stat. 1004.22. These policies will be reviewed when changes are necessary.

Gary K. Ostrander, Vice President for Research

August 1, 2014