



# Northeastern University

## Guidance on Plagiarism and Authorship Disputes

There are circumstances in which the expression of scholarly or research efforts is not clearly either an authorship dispute or a case of plagiarism. Based on fact patterns from previous disputes brought to the attention of NU-RES Research Compliance, we have created some features indicative of each.

Please note that no single fact is dispositive of one or the other, each case is fact-pattern specific. Information that may be brought to bear in reviewing these matters includes data sets, images, research data (including lab notebooks), and past publications in the scientific or scholarly record. [Please email us with questions.](#)

**An Authorship Dispute** is a "conflict among collaborators which does not meet the definition of Research Misconduct and which may include: (1) who should be named as an author/ contributor; (2) order of authorship; (3) expectations for contributors to a project; or (4) intellectual property or confidentiality issues affecting publication"

<https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/authorship-dispute>

- Some collaborators revisit past research contributions and expand upon them
- All individuals involved have contributed to the underlying or resulting work
- Current authors dispute extent of contributions, including order
- Authors cannot agree who should be authors
- If there was an error in attribution, actively seeks to correct the record
- Posting data or other results to a repository without consent of other contributors

**Plagiarism** is "the theft or misappropriation of intellectual property and the substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work. It does not include authorship or credit disputes."

<https://www.ori.hhs.gov/ori-policy-plagiarism>

- Takes past research results and rewrites without rework or further development and publishes without credit to past collaborators or previous publications
- Use of existing publication without citation
- Includes self-plagiarism, i.e. failing to cite one's own prior works
- Fails to credit intellectual contributions
- Obfuscation of intellectual contribution
- May know the individuals from whom they are plagiarizing
- May have contributed to underlying work