

## Authorial Integrity in Scientific Publication

### Purpose of This Document

This document is intended as an overview of SIAM's policies and procedures related to authorial integrity, meaning intellectual honesty and personal responsibility for distinguishing between the work of others and one's own work. These policies apply to all of SIAM's publications, including journals, conference proceedings, books, and SIAM News. They cover materials that are submitted, in review, accepted for publication, or already published in a SIAM publication.

SIAM considers two specific violations of authorial integrity to be misconduct: plagiarism and duplicate publication (sometimes called "self-plagiarism"). It is the responsibility of every author who submits a book, paper, or article to SIAM to avoid plagiarism and duplicate publication. It is the responsibility of editors, referees, and members of book editorial boards to ensure that the highest standards of authorial integrity are maintained.

### Authorial Misconduct

#### Plagiarism

The most common form of authorial misconduct is plagiarism, for which there is no single accepted definition. In the context of research proposals, the U.S. National Science Foundation defines plagiarism broadly as "the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit" (45 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 689.1). Material can be plagiarized even if it is publicly available (e.g., posted on the Web). In scientific publications, plagiarism normally requires a knowing misrepresentation, explicit or implicit, of someone else's work as one's own.

Plagiarism arises in a range of forms that vary widely in ease of identification. The form of plagiarism that is most straightforward to identify involves verbatim or near-verbatim copying, or very close paraphrasing, of text or results from another's work.

The least clear-cut form of plagiarism (and the subject of the most complaints to SIAM) is an inadequacy of relevant citations, i.e., insufficient acknowledgement of the work of other authors. Allegations of this form of plagiarism often arise when authors include or mention results originally obtained by others without citing the associated publications. SIAM's assessment of whether an inadequacy of citations constitutes plagiarism will involve questions such as:

1. Does the omission of citations give a false or misleading impression that the author is the originator of the relevant results?
2. Was the author aware of the work that he/she omitted to cite?
3. Are results in the omitted citations essential to the work presented in the author's paper? Are the results in question regarded as common knowledge in the SIAM community?

#### Duplicate Publication

A related form of authorial misconduct is duplicate publication, meaning unacceptably close replication of the author's own previously published text or results without acknowledgement of the source. (This is sometimes called "self-plagiarism".)

SIAM applies a "reasonable person" standard when deciding whether a submission constitutes duplicate publication. If a few identical sentences previously published by the current author appear in a subsequent work by the same author, this is unlikely to be regarded as duplicate publication. In contrast, it is unacceptable for an author to include significant verbatim or near-verbatim portions of his/her own work, or to depict his/her previously published results as new, without acknowledging the source.

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### How to Notify SIAM of an Issue Regarding Plagiarism

SIAM may receive complaints or allegations of plagiarism from a variety of sources. When discovered in the review process, it is often a referee or editor who first hears of allegations. The purpose of this section is to identify the appropriate people to be notified when any claims of plagiarism or charges of author misconduct are raised.

Any person receiving information about charges of plagiarism or author misconduct should notify the SIAM Publisher ([publisher@siam.org](mailto:publisher@siam.org)) who will notify the Vice President for Publications. The chief editor of the publication in question and the authors involved will typically also be informed.

The initial notification is the same in all three cases:

- Allegations that an author of a SIAM-published paper or book is guilty of plagiarism.
- Allegations that a SIAM author's work has been copied and published by someone else (even if the offending work is published elsewhere).
- Concerns about a paper or book under review raised by an editor or reviewer.

Notification should be sent to the SIAM Publisher via e-mail, detailing the concerns or allegations. Information required to substantiate these claims may include a detailed description of the alleged violation(s), citations to the material in question, and any other relevant information that would help resolve the issue. Copies of the material and/or links to websites on which they appear may be required as well.

### The Process for Adjudicating Claims of Plagiarism or Author Misconduct by a SIAM Author

Once a complaint or allegation is received and sufficient information is provided, the following steps will be followed:

1. The SIAM Vice President for Publications will first ask the chief editor of the publication in question to look into the issue and report back on the merits of the allegations. The editor may inform the author of allegations and seek a response. Issues of inadequate citations, when not intentional and not egregious, may be resolved at this level in a way that satisfies all parties if this process occurs prior to final publication.
2. If further investigation is warranted (the issue is deemed serious and can't be resolved by all parties) and there is sufficient information to proceed, the SIAM Vice President for Publications will assemble a group of experts to examine the allegations. The SIAM Vice President for Publications will coordinate this action with the appropriate people (journal Editor-in-Chief, book series editor, etc., as appropriate) and may ask one of those people to lead the investigation process. The committee investigating the claims will file a formal report with the SIAM Vice President for Publications that provides expert judgment on the validity of claims.
3. Once the report is submitted, the SIAM Vice President for Publications may pursue a variety of remedies, in consultation with the SIAM Journals or Books Committees, if the allegations are found to be valid by the ad hoc committee. Note that the formal investigation only occurs if the Editor-in-Chief is unable to resolve the issue among the parties directly involved. The results of the formal investigation will be shared with the parties directly involved, and an attempt will be made to once again resolve the issue at the lower level. If the issue cannot be resolved at the lower level, and if the reviewing committee determines that author misconduct of any kind occurred, then further action must be taken.

For a paper or book in review, further action may include outright rejection of the

manuscript for publication. It could even include, in extreme circumstances, involving the offending author's institution (but only after suitable legal review by SIAM's counselor).

The case where the offending material has already been published is more serious, as one must ensure that scholarly records remain correct.

If the offending material has already appeared in a SIAM publication, then additional steps may be required. These steps might include publishing a formal notice (with or without the consent of the plagiarizing author) that states the facts about the source of the work and provides the appropriate citations to that work. This may be done by simply publishing an addendum that indicates which parts of the work appeared earlier and providing the citations to that work.

The SIAM office may need to contact the publisher of the original work and inform them of the problem and its resolution. That publisher may request additional remedies.

Results will be communicated via e-mail to both parties (the person who filed the complaint and the author alleged to have committed plagiarism).

#### **When a SIAM publication is plagiarized in another publication – Procedure for responding to complaints of plagiarism**

- The SIAM office typically learns of complaints when an author or EIC contacts them. It is the responsibility of the SIAM office to manage these complaints
- Upon receipt of the complaint, SIAM will contact the EIC of the SIAM journal in which the article originally appeared. The EIC may decide to convene a small team of experts to determine the claim's validity, or may choose to make this determination on their own. The EIC or team should consider the evidence and issue a report to the SIAM office with their findings, along with supporting justification
- If the determination is made that plagiarism has occurred, the SIAM office will contact the publisher of the offending article, outlining the complaint and suggesting courses of action
- The other publisher will typically contact the EIC of the journal in which the plagiarized article appeared. They may also elect to contact the authors directly. In either case, they forward our concerns and ask for a response to the charge
- This part of the process may take several months and the SIAM office will contact the publisher periodically in an attempt to keep the process moving forward
- If the other publisher - after consulting with the EIC and/or author - agrees with our conclusion, the offending paper is either retracted or an addendum is published with the paper that outlines the situation
- If the other publisher does not agree with our conclusion, the SIAM office will decide what further action is required
- If the other publisher fails to respond at all, the SIAM office may write directly to the institution of the authors suspected of plagiarism and inform them of the situation. It may also consider further unspecified action.

**Download Plagiarism Guidelines for Journal Boards [here](#).**

#### **General Information and Some Useful References**

##### **National Science Foundation (NSF)**

NSF adopted a definition of research misconduct which includes plagiarism which can be found at: <http://www.nsf.gov/oig/resmisreg.pdf>

**COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics):** <http://publicationethics.org/>

COPE has flowcharts, guidelines, and sample letters for dealing with various kinds of ethical problems in publishing.

### Other General Information

The Council of Scientific Editors has a white paper on *Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications* which can be found at: [http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/editorial\\_policies/whitepaper/entire\\_whitepaper.pdf](http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/editorial_policies/whitepaper/entire_whitepaper.pdf)

### Scientific Societies

#### ACM

ACM has a simple plagiarism policy statement: [http://www.acm.org/publications/policies/plagiarism\\_policy](http://www.acm.org/publications/policies/plagiarism_policy)

#### AMS

<http://www.ams.org/secretary/ethics.html>

#### APS

The American Physical Society published the Supplementary Guidelines on Responsibilities of Coauthors and Collaborators: [http://www.aps.org/policy/statements/02\\_2.cfm](http://www.aps.org/policy/statements/02_2.cfm)

#### IEEE

[http://www.ieee.org/web/publications/rights/ID\\_Plagiarism.html](http://www.ieee.org/web/publications/rights/ID_Plagiarism.html)

### Commercial Publishers

#### Wiley

Wiley-Blackwell's website included *Best Practice Guidelines on Publication Ethics* is available at [http://www.wiley.com/bw/publicationethics/#\\_Toc149460089](http://www.wiley.com/bw/publicationethics/#_Toc149460089)  
They also have a flow chart for dealing with suspected plagiarism <http://www.wiley.com/bw/publicationethics/files/04.pdf>

#### Elsevier

Elsevier maintains a very complex Publishing Ethics Resource Kit (PERK) that includes templates for letters to send out in various situations. See <http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/editors/home.editors/Introduction>

PERK also contains the decision tree for a plagiarism complaint [http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/editors/home.editors/2\\_Plagiarism\\_complaints](http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/editors/home.editors/2_Plagiarism_complaints)

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