

explorations



Explorations: A Journal of Language and Literature

Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement based on Committee on Ethics in Publication ([COPE](#)) Best Practice Guidelines for Journal Editors

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Authors' responsibilities:

- Authors should present an objective discussion of the significance of their research. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behavior and are unacceptable.
- Authors should ensure and confirm that their work is entirely original, and if the work and/or words of others have been used, this has been appropriately acknowledged. Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical behavior and is unacceptable. Authors should obtain permission to reproduce any content from other sources.
- Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable. Authors should not submit articles describing essentially the same research to more than one journal.
- The corresponding author should ensure that there is a full consensus of all co-authors in approving the final version of the paper and its submission for publication.
- Authors should declare any potential conflicts of interest (e.g. where the author has a competing interest (real or apparent) that could be considered or viewed as exerting an undue influence on his or her duties at any stage during the publication process).
- When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his or her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify *Explorations* editors and cooperate with them to either retract the paper or to publish an appropriate correction statement or erratum.

Editors' responsibilities:

- Editors should evaluate manuscripts exclusively on the basis of their academic merit, without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the authors.
- Editors and any editorial staff must not disclose any information about a submitted paper to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, as appropriate.
- Editors must not use unpublished information in their own research without the express written consent of the author.
- Editors should take reasonable responsive measures when ethical complaints have been presented concerning a submitted manuscript or a published paper. In cases of alleged or proven scientific misconduct, fraudulent publication, or plagiarism the editors will take all appropriate measures to clarify the situation and to amend the article in question. This includes the prompt publication of a correction statement or erratum or, in the most severe cases, the retraction of the affected work.

- Authors should be given a reasonable opportunity to respond to any complaints. All complaints should be investigated no matter when the original publication was approved. Documentation associated with any such complaints should be retained.

Reviewers' responsibilities:

- Any manuscript received for review must be treated as a confidential document. Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage.
- Reviews should be prepared in a timely manner.
- Reviews should be conducted objectively, and comments should be formulated clearly with supporting arguments, so that authors can use them for improving the paper.
- Any invited reviewer who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a paper or knows that its prompt review will be impossible should immediately notify the editor and excuse himself or herself from the review process.
- Reviewers should alert the editors to any published or submitted content that is substantially similar to that under review.
- Reviewers should not consider manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors.

Procedures for dealing with unethical behavior

1. Identification of unethical behavior

- Misconduct and unethical behavior may be identified and brought to the attention of the editor and publisher at any time, by anyone.
- Misconduct and unethical behavior may include, but need not be limited to, plagiarism, fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements, submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal, the existence of a conflict of interest.
- Whoever informs the editor or publisher of such conduct should provide sufficient information and evidence in order for an investigation to be initiated. All allegations should be taken seriously and treated in the same way, until a successful decision or conclusion is reached.

2. Investigation

- An initial decision should be taken by the editor, who should consult with or seek advice from the publisher, if appropriate.
- Evidence should be gathered, while avoiding spreading any allegations beyond those who need to know.

3. Minor breaches

- Minor misconduct might be dealt with without the need to consult more widely. In any event, the author should be given the opportunity to respond to any allegations.

4. Serious breaches

- Serious misconduct might require that the employers of the accused be notified. The editor, in consultation with the publisher, should make the decision whether or not to involve the employers, either by examining the available evidence themselves or by further consultation with a limited number of experts.

5. Outcomes (in increasing order of severity; may be applied separately or in conjunction)
- Informing or educating the author or reviewer where there appears to be a misunderstanding or misapplication of acceptable standards.
 - A more strongly worded letter to the author or reviewer covering the misconduct and as a warning to future behavior.
 - Publication of a formal notice detailing the misconduct.
 - Publication of an editorial detailing the misconduct.
 - A formal letter to the head of the author's or reviewer's department or funding agency.
 - Formal retraction or withdrawal of a publication from the journal, in conjunction with informing the head of the author or reviewer's department, Abstracting & Indexing services and the readership of the publication.
 - Imposition of a formal embargo on contributions from an individual for a defined period.
 - Reporting the case and outcome to a professional organization or higher authority for further investigation and action.

[Procedures aimed at preventing ghostwriting and guest authorship](#)