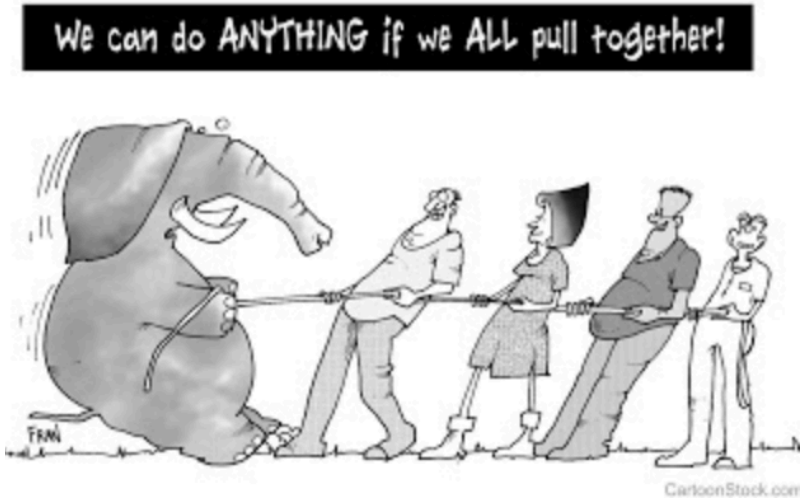
Academic collaborations



Outline

1. Brief introduction: What are collaborations, and how are they established
2. Focus on manuscript authorship
3. Conflict resolution – case studies and discussion

Brainstorming session: Why collaborate?

Why collaborate?

- Combine diverse skill sets
- Access to resources, academic exchanges
- Training: techniques, applications
- Mentorship and opportunities
- Heavy-hitters – increase status
- FUN!

Scales: within/between

- Labs
- Departments
- Institutions
- Countries

How are collaborations established?

- Approach and pose ideas
- Determine involvement and establish roles (ground rules, mutual expectations)
- Key principles for successful collaboration:
  - Well-defined division of labor: when and where will work occur, what techniques, who will be responsible?
  - Expectations for data sharing, communicating results, authorship, preventing misconduct
  - Timelines
  - Communication – how much, when, what mode?
  - Mechanisms for resolving disagreements?

Maintaining collaborations

- Carry out your agreed upon tasks in timely fashion
- Communicate progress, challenges, changes in approach
- Focus on lasting relationships
- Be reliable and realistic – under-promise and over-deliver
- Try to help others meet their obligations when setbacks occur

Collaboration logistics

- Regular conversations keep everyone in the loop
- Scheduling – dos and don'ts
  - Do: check broad details of availability first, narrow down times of day that usually work
  - Don't: Send out a doodle poll with 80 options, select times that are not possible due to timezones, known conflicts
- Agenda can be helpful
- 24h prior to meeting – send reminder in all time zones (check daylight savings)
- Skype/Zoom/etc – make sure everyone is added/set up well before meeting time
- Keep a record of meetings and commitments, e.g. Google doc– share but keep edit privileges restricted
- Leader of collaboration (that's YOU) sets the tone and moderates
- How will document editing take place?

Authorship – take home messages

1) discuss authorship issues early on in the research
2) you have to qualify to be an author
3) authorship has responsibilities
4) authorship plans can change as project develops but should always be discussed with all authors

Additional resource: Example of lab authorship guidelines, Williams lab (in Files tab).

Criteria for authorship:

"Each author is expected to have made substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data; or the creation of new software used in the work; or have drafted the work or substantively revised it; AND to have approved the submitted version (and any substantially modified version that involves the author's contribution to the study); AND to have agreed both to be personally accountable for the author's own contributions and to ensure that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work, even ones in which the author was not personally involved, are appropriately investigated, resolved, and the resolution documented in the literature."

McNutt et al. 2018 PNAS https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1715374115.

Author order and contributions

- Authorship order should be determined by the rank order of the authors in terms of each person's contribution to the work. Authorship rank does not depend on time put into the project (though this is a component of the input), but on the total intellectual/professional input to the paper
- First = led the work
- Last = senior or anchor author (this is field-specific)
- Middle author order may be determined by ranked contributions or alphabetical
- Occasionally, shared first authorship is possible
- Corresponding author – must be available and responsible for all aspects of paper. Usually first or last author.
- Collaborations with different fields/cultures may entail use of different authorship guidelines. It is very important to discuss authorship issues when collaborating across cultures that may have different reward structures.
- Taxonomy of author contributions (https://casrai.org/credit/)

When disagreements arise:

- Listen respectfully, assume good intentions
- Separate intent from impact
- Thoughtfully and calmly convey your point of view, take a break if needed
- Focus on compromises that will keep the work moving forward
- Get help from third parties

Principles for Healthy conflict (from NCFDD)

- Chose a medium (pros and cons)
- Clarify goals (express feelings, influence outcome)
- Make power differential overt
- Use “I” messages
- Validate other person (look in eye, state what you value)
- Find common ground
- Use strategic apologizing when appropriate
- State what you want (specific)
- Clarify message sent versus message received (“What I hear you say is…” “I feel like we’re miscommunicating. What do you hear me saying?”)
- Be aware of personal triggers, redirect

Collaborator conflict scenarios

- For each scenario:
  - What principles and power dynamics are at play here?
  - How would you resolve the conflict in the moment? Think about words, tone, and phrasing
  - How would you prevent this happening in future?
  - Prepare a short role play of one or more scenarios to share with the class

Google doc with scenarios and discussion notes:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rvYDjzK31dPiNfqXNHuEcfYlozTo6Yh54gYUQFJ-_tw/edit?usp=sharing