

Contract for Research Collaboration

Collaborative research efforts take many forms and may change throughout the process of designing a study, collecting and analyzing data, and/or disseminating the work through conference presentation and publication. To better delineate and define the research relationship, we will discuss and negotiate the roles, responsibilities, expectations, and deadlines for the following project. All research efforts must be flexible, thus this contract will be reviewed at least every two months. At that time, the research relationship may be redefined according to needs and contributions.

While there are numerous variations of research collaboration, the following types offer a starting point for discussion and negotiation. Each one recognizes the different skill sets and levels of expertise associated with learning and doing research. Each level of participation honors the ethical codes of educational research while allowing for diverse research partnerships.

- **Apprenticeship:** This type of collaboration assumes at least one researcher is a novice researcher (apprentice) who wants to focus on research skills development. The time commitment of the apprentice will vary due to the nature of the project. The apprentice may be expected to participate in certain types of tasks to build skill capacity in that area, but is not seeking ownership of the project and subsequent research. An example would be a doctoral student who wants to learn to develop survey instruments or learn a qualitative software program.
- **Limited Partnership:** This type of collaboration assumes one researcher is a novice researcher (partner) who may already have well-developed research skills, but wants to enhance those skills or learn new ones by participating at all decision points in the research process from design to dissemination. This type of collaboration may be suitable, also, for newcomers to an existing project. Authorship is equitable according to contribution and should be discussed prior to initiating the project. However, the senior partner retains ownership of the project, thus has the final responsibility for research decisions such as design, manuscript editing, etc. An example would be a new faculty member joining an existing research project. The new researcher may initiate new line of inquiry, and thus publish as first author, but the manuscript is subject to review and edit.
- **Full Partnership:** This type of collaboration assumes both researchers will contribute fully and equally to all aspects of the research project. Authorship is equitable according to contribution and should be discussed prior to initiating the project. Neither individual owns the project separately from the other. All decisions are subject to both researchers, thus constant communication is necessary to continuously negotiate. Authorship may be negotiated as rotational (researchers 'take turns' as first author) or conceptual (researchers assume first author of any papers or manuscripts that emphasize their specific conceptual contributions). These issues should be negotiated early in the research process to avoid confusion about roles and publication contributions.

Few collaborative partnerships will fit neatly in one category, thus negotiation is central to success. For further information, please review the following websites:

American Association of University Professors: Statement on Professional Ethics
<http://www.aaup.org/statements/Redbook/Rbethics.htm>

American Educational Research Association: Ethical Standards
<http://www.aera.net/about/policy/ethics.htm>

American Educational Research Association: Ethical Guidelines
<http://www.aera.net/epubs/howtopub/ethics.htm>

Dr. L. Earle Reybold (2004)

Name of project:

Type of research collaboration:

Expected outcomes for each researcher:

Researcher roles:

Ownership of project:

Authorship arrangements:

Renegotiation date:

Signatures: