Ethics of Publishing

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How Does the Publication Process Work?

• For journals:
  – Paper submitted, staff vets it, applies plagiarism detection software
    • To Editor-in-Chief for a scope check
      – To Associate Editor for selection of reviewers
        » Reviewers (usually at least 3) comment on papers and make recommendations to Associate Editor
      – Associate Editor summarizes reviews and makes recommendation to EIC
    • EIC makes final decision and has staff send out the decision.
  – Lots of time and energy involved.
How Does the Conference Publication Process Work?

• For conferences:
  – Paper submitted: Program Chair Vets it (uses plagiarism detection software)
    • To area chair for reviewer selection
      – To 3 or more reviewers who make comments, critiques and recommendations
      – Area Chair summarizes reviews and makes recommendation to Program Chair
    • Program Chair makes final decision and has staff send out the decision.
  – Lots of time and energy involved.
What do I know about publication?

- Former EIC of IEEE Transactions on SMC – Cybernetics
- IEEE Publications Conduct Committee Chair 2014-15
- IEEE Publications and Services Products Board member and SPC Chair
- Over 80 journal papers and over 160 conference papers
Getting Your Work Published

• You need a literature review
  – You need to indicate what is new
  – You need to show why what is new is important
    • You may compare with other methods

• Some of what you need in your paper may exist in others works.

• How much can you reuse?
Reuse

• Reuse without attribution is called plagiarism. You can NOT reuse even 1 sentence without quoting it and referencing it.

• A figure may be good for comparison, but if it is in someone else’s work you MUST get permission from the publisher AND reference it.

• If you redraw a figure, you MUST cite the original.

• Open access? Still must be referenced. Can only be reused under some creative common licenses.
Reuse

• How about if I paraphrase all of my introduction and background because it is like another paper?
  – NO

• What if I reference the paper I paraphrase?
  – No, still Plagiarism.

• What should I do?
  – Write in your own words
Why do People Plagiarize?

• They have trouble writing.
  – Practice, practice, practice, practice and you will write better

• Must publish to graduate, get tenure, get promoted, satisfy the boss...
  – Research can be time consuming and have dead ends. Almost anyone who sticks with it can eventually publish their own unique words and results.
Ideas

• You read a paper, it has a good idea.

• Can you reuse the idea without attribution (providing credit)?
  – NO.
Why Publish?

• You have a good idea, algorithm, theorem, etc. that you want to share to advance the state of the art.

• You will really understand and refine the nuances of your work as you write it up.

• Writing it for publication will show you new things to work on.
Good Papers

• Remember Science and Engineering are about Truth and Correctness.

• An incorrect equation can cause a bridge to fall down, a spaceship to crash, etc.

• Always, be honest and self-critical in presenting your work (no Plagiarism as it is not honest).
Good Papers

• All the details to re-create your results need to be included and documented.

• Provide code and data where you can.

• A picture is worth 1000 words.

• Always ensure your results are accurate and fully supportable.

• Report all relevant results (no selective reporting).
Authorship

• Everyone who provides a substantial contribution should be an author.

• Remember all authors must be ethical because all get to share the penalty for a lack of ethics (i.e. carefully read anything your name is on and question everything that is unclear).

• To include someone as an author they MUST have the opportunity to read and comment on the paper!

• If someone consults or provides some advice they can be acknowledged.
Authorship Examples

• Joe checks some proofs in the paper. Author?
  – No. Could be acknowledged

• Shawna provides ground truth (labels) for data. Author?
  Yes, if they also participate in the writing or analysis.

• Marty writes a portion of the paper. Author.

• Sally is the lab director and hired Marty and Shawna, but has not participated in the work at all. Author?
  – No. Not acknowledged either at her request.

• Questions?
Submission

• It takes a while to get reviews. Can I submit to multiple journals at the same time?
  – Would you like to be asked to review the same paper for two venues? No and no to multiple submission. It is unkind to reviewers and editors.

• Can I submit a small upgrade to a previous paper?
  – Yes, IF you disclose/reference the previous paper and clearly differentiate the new one so people can easily decide if there is enough impact in the new one.
Disclosures

• Clearly indicate any conflicts of interest.
  – For example, if you have lots of stock in google and are publishing a paper saying driverless cars are much safer, disclose the stock holding.
    • By the way, the accident rate for driverless cars is much higher (even though they have yet to cause one) than typical drivers.

• Discuss all relevant work that you know of. You cannot skip the well known paper that has some results better than yours.
Bibliometric Manipulation

• You should cite only relevant papers of yours and others!

• Citations are measured and used as quality proxies.
  – Want more citations? Write clearly of high quality results.
    • Blog about a good paper, tweet about it, put a version on a preprint server, ...
Summary

• Use common sense with authorship
• Make sure your work is uniquely yours, all needed references exist and the work and results are correct.
• Be respectful of others time in the process.
  – If you submit, you must be willing to review 2 papers for each you put in (at least). Don’t worry about the time, it will help you write better.
• A good resource that I looked at from IEEE: https://www.ieee.org/publications_standards/publications/authors/publication_etiquette.pdf