

Strategies for when Others Misattribute Credit

Context: On January 24, 2019, UW ADVANCE held a Mentoring for Leadership Workshop on when men get all the credit for collaborative work. At the workshop, attendees brainstormed situations in which they are not given proper recognition or credit for their scientific contributions and work. Next attendees offered strategies for addressing the various situations. What follows is a summary of the situations and possible strategies to address the issues.

You are assumed to be a student or something else besides a faculty member

- Say, "Actually, I am a professor, but I'll take your confusion as a compliment."
- Include your title when you introduce yourself.
- Wear a nametag.
- Simply state you are faculty, "I am actually a professor at UW."
- Conference organizers can include titles on nametags.
- Correct that person.

Your idea is not acknowledged until it is restated by someone else

- Say, "I just said that, but it sounds better when you say it because you're a man."
- Find allies, other women in the room or men you trust to amplify your points. This can be done by having them restate your ideas. Instruct them to say "[your name] had an excellent idea, which was . . ."
- Old-girls club! If you see this happening to someone else's idea (e.g. in faculty meeting) point it out. Say "As [Colleague X] said, this is a great idea." If someone else is incorrectly given credit for a contribution, point it out.
- To document who said what, have someone take notes or record meetings to prevent people from giving credit to the wrong person.
- After you make an important point, ask someone else what they think of it. For example, state your idea and then say "Joe, do you think this would work?"
- Say "Thank you for reiterating/emphasizing my point" when someone makes the same comment/suggestion or shares the idea you already offered.
- Ask senior male colleagues to say your points if no one will listen to you. Still problematic but at least your ideas are out there if not attributed to you.

Other people attribute your work/contributions to someone else

- Men receiving undue credit should speak up and give credit to the right person.
- Ask the person receiving undue credit to speak up and correct the misunderstanding.
- Recruit allies who can direct credit to you.

You are not viewed equally in co-advising situations (e.g., guidance, blame, directions, etc.)

- Always have a pre-emptive discussion of who is the “main advisor” and makes the final decision.
- If the student’s thesis is funded by your project, ask to be their co-chair.
- Co-advising means shared responsibilities, both good and bad. The co-advisor needs to be willing to confront students about issues.
- Do a test quarter or period to see if this co-advising situation will work in the longer-term.
- Set goals and responsibilities up front.
- Don’t co-advise anyone.

You are not given equal or proper credit in co-teaching situations

- Avoid or decline repeated teaching or service assignments with your collaborators.
- Clarify roles on the website and/or syllabus.
- Ask for separate evaluations and clarify to students what each professor actually did before those evaluations.
- Seek help from on-campus resources like the Office for the Advancement of Engineering Teaching & Learning (ET&L) and the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL).
- Discuss the issue with your co-instructor ahead of time; this may help change the climate.
- Make sure that your name is on all official documents and evaluations.
- If students are differentially giving credit, ask your (male) co-teach to respond to correct the misperception that your role is subsidiary.
- Bring up your contributions and any disparities in teaching reviews with your chair.
- Ask a chair to intervene/clarify policies around shared credit for courses before you start teaching a course.

Your research, dataset, etc. is not noted or included as it should be

- Be upfront and explicit about your expectations and requirements for using your datasets/research.
- If the research could NOT have been done without your data set, you should be an author or at least be acknowledged.
- Adopt the self-promotion strategies of successful peers.
- Clarify conditions of data use and collaboration before initiating data collection.
- Ask a colleague at another university to send a note to the person who did not cite your data.
- Send the offending party your work with a note.
- Cite expectations early and often.

You are not given proper authorship credit (e.g., author order, name removed Without permission, etc.)

- Could the paper have been written without you? If NOT, you should be an author.
- Set up rules before starting project. Create written authorship guidelines and revisit them regularly, including as a team before submission.
- Discuss authorship early and often. Make an early outline of papers that may result and include authorship to prevent issues later.
- Write down contributions regardless of journal requirements.
- Initiate discussion of relative author contributions to clarify the credit you deserve.
- Establish clear rules for authorship before collaborating.
- Make an "I feel" statement about the impact of the authorship credit situation, and then go quiet to give the other party a chance to come up with a way to rectify the situation.
- Make a statement or ask question coming from genuine surprise or curiosity, like "I'm surprised that I'm not on that author list."
- Use the CREDiT model: <https://casrai.org/credit/> (explicitly lists various roles and responsibilities with respect to authorship).