

Ethical Guidelines for SEG Publications

(Section IV.5.A.11 of the SEG Procedures Manual)

The Society of Exploration Geophysicists serves the advancement of science, industry, and society by publishing journals, meeting abstracts, books, and other publications that present the results of scientific research and ensuing applications. Each type of SEG publication follows guidelines for reviewing and accepting submitted material, and inherent in these are expectations of the SEG membership and the scientific community that the publications achieve high standards of quality and that they reflect the participants' commitment to behavior consistent with the SEG Code of Ethics. These guidelines derive from a desire to maximize benefits to society through knowledge sharing between individuals. The ethical guidelines presented here for editors, authors, and reviewers of SEG publications and staff that support them reflect a conviction that adherence to high standards is vital to the advancement of applied geophysics as a science and a profession.

These guidelines draw heavily on ethical guidelines prepared by other scientific societies, most notably the American Chemical Society, which has granted SEG permission to adopt verbatim many of the guidelines in "Ethical Guidelines to Publication of Chemical Research," last revised in May 2006. SEG also has taken some cues in the development of these guidelines from those of the American Mathematical Society, the American Geophysical Union, and the Geological Society of America.

SEG believes that most of the guidelines offered here already are understood and subscribed to by the majority of experienced geoscientists. They may, however, be of substantial help to those who are relatively new to research. Even well-established scientists may appreciate an opportunity to review matters so significant to the practice of science.

Authors

1. An author's central obligation is to present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance.
2. A submitted manuscript should contain detail and reference to public sources of information sufficient to permit readers to reproduce the work or verify its accuracy.
3. Correct attribution is essential because it encourages creativity and because it informs the community of when, where, and sometimes how original ideas entered the scientific dialog. Authors should properly cite works by others of the original hypotheses, ideas, and/or data upon which their manuscripts rely and work essential to an understanding of the present work. Except in a review, citation of work that will not be referred to in the manuscript should be minimized. Authors are obligated to perform literature searches to find, and then cite, the original publications that describe closely related work. Plagiarism is never acceptable.
4. Information obtained by an author privately, from conversation, correspondence, or discussion with third parties, should not be used or reported in the author's work except with the consent of persons from whom the information was obtained if there are any proprietary questions. Information obtained in the course of

- providing confidential services, including refereeing manuscripts, shall be treated in the same confidential manner.
5. Authors should not falsify research data or misreport results, including selective reporting intended to render an interpretation not supported by the totality of the data.
 6. Authors should make no substantive changes to their manuscripts after they have been accepted for publication unless there are compelling reasons and the editor approves the changes.
 7. Authors should organize their publications to minimize fragmentation of their reports on a particular project across multiple publications. The convenience of readers is served if reports on related studies are published in the same journal or a small number of journals.
 8. Authors should not submit for review the same manuscript or similar manuscripts describing essentially the same research or project to more than one journal unless submission is of a manuscript rejected by or withdrawn from another publication.
 9. Prior to submitting their manuscripts, authors should secure permission from owners of any material they include in their manuscripts that originates from a copyrighted source if their use of the material extends beyond fair-use provisions of the law.
 10. Authors should not submit for review previously published work unless distribution was to a small audience not significantly overlapping SEG's. In such instances, authors should disclose previous publication status to editors at the time of submission and provide copies of the work as previously published. Manuscripts that are in large part copied from previously published work also should not be submitted. However, authors are encouraged to submit enhancements and expansions of their meeting abstracts into more complete scientific expressions suitable for journal or book publication.
 11. Authorship should be limited to those who have made significant technical contributions to the work reported in the manuscript. Author order should be agreed on by all authors, as should any changes in authorship and order that occur while manuscripts are under review or revision. No individual who has made a significant technical contribution to the work reported in the manuscript should be excluded from authorship. Corresponding authors must attest to the fact that any others named as coauthors have seen the final version of the manuscript and have agreed to its submission for publication. No fictitious name should be given as an author or coauthor.
 12. Authors should not submit manuscripts with an obvious commercial intent and shall make every effort to avoid mentioning commercial products or services.
 13. Authors should reveal to editors any potential conflict of interest, e.g., a consulting or financial interest in a company that might be affected by publication of the results reported in a manuscript.
 14. Authors are encouraged to disclose major funding sources for reported research.
 15. Although criticism of the work of others may be justified, authors should refrain from personal criticism or derogatory remarks whether within their work or in correspondence with others about it.

Editors

1. Editors should give unbiased consideration to all manuscripts offered for publication, judging each on its merits without regard to race, gender, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship (except as may be required by applicable laws), sexual orientation, political philosophy, seniority, or institutional affiliation of the author(s).
2. Editors should process manuscripts with all reasonable speed.
3. Editors should respect the intellectual independence of authors and should refrain from personal criticism or derogatory remarks.
4. Editors should avoid situations of real or perceived conflict of interest. If faced with such a situation, an editor should pass editorial responsibility to another editor.
5. Editors should not disclose any information about a manuscript under consideration to anyone other than those from whom professional advice is sought.
6. Editors should not use or disclose unpublished information, arguments, or interpretations contained in a manuscript under consideration except with the consent of the author(s).
7. Editors are obligated to enhance the quality of the publications they serve through constructive criticism of submitted manuscripts and have a secondary obligation to filter out substandard contributions.
8. If an editor is presented with convincing evidence that the main substance or conclusions of a published work is erroneous, the editor is encouraged to facilitate publication of an appropriate work pointing out the error and, if possible, correcting it.

Reviewers

1. Because reviewing manuscripts is an essential step in the publication process, every geoscientist has an obligation to do a fair share of reviewing.
2. A chosen reviewer who feels inadequately qualified or lacks the time to judge a manuscript should promptly decline to the editor to review the manuscript.
3. A reviewer of a manuscript should judge objectively the quality of the manuscript, with due regard to the maintenance of high scientific and literary standards. Reviewers should respect the intellectual independence of the author(s), refraining from personal criticism or derogatory remarks.
4. A reviewer should avoid situations of real or perceived conflict of interest when the manuscript under review is closely related to the reviewer's work in progress or work published. If in doubt, the reviewer should return the manuscript promptly without review, advising the editor of the conflict of interest or bias.
5. A reviewer should not evaluate a manuscript authored or coauthored by a person with whom the reviewer has a personal or professional connection if the relationship would bias judgment of the manuscript.
6. Reviewers should treat manuscripts sent for review as confidential documents. Manuscripts should neither be shown to nor discussed with others. Reviewers may identify and recommend individuals who could add value to manuscripts as additional reviewers, but reviewer assignment must be left to editors.

7. Reviewers should not use or disclose unpublished information, arguments, or interpretations contained in a manuscript under consideration, except with the consent of the author(s).
8. Reviewers are obligated to enhance the quality of the publications they serve through constructive criticism of submitted manuscripts and have a secondary obligation to help filter out substandard contributions.
9. Reviewers should explain and support their judgments adequately so that editors and authors may understand the basis of their comments. Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument had been previously reported should be accompanied by the relevant citation.
10. Reviewers should be alert to failure of authors to cite relevant work by other scientists.
11. Reviewers should call to the editor's attention any substantial similarity between a manuscript under consideration and any manuscript published in or submitted concurrently to another publication.

Staff

All SEG staff members involved in Society publications should act in full support of and in concert with ethical guidelines for SEG authors, editors, and reviewers. This includes acting with similar levels of discretion, fairness, speed, objectivity, and absence of conflict of interest expected of authors, editors, and reviewers. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that the staff follows these guidelines.

Punitive action

In cases in which authors, editors, or reviewers are deemed to have acted in a manner grossly and knowingly in conflict with these guidelines, the SEG Editor may take punitive action up to suspension of the individual's SEG publication privileges for up to three years. SEG editorial committees and boards may make requests of the Editor for punitive action, as may any individual who thinks such actions might be warranted. Suspensions levied by the Editor may be appealed by the accused to the Publications Policy Committee. Publications Policy Committee decisions may be appealed to the Executive Committee by either the Editor or the individual whose actions are under review. The President may elect to have a publications ethics case reviewed and adjudicated according to the process specified in the SEG Bylaws for alleged Code of Ethics violations. All such matters should be handled in confidence.

(Approved by EC, August 2010)