

Policy on Plagiarism and Duplicate Publication

American Society for Engineering Education

May 31, 2013; Revised October 2, 2014

Preamble

The American Society for Engineering Education serves the engineering and technology communities by offering professional conferences, networking opportunities, and support of research in the various fields of engineering and technology related to education. Research is disseminated to the wider community via the organization's professional publications. ASEE subscribes to the highest standards of ethical conduct, as detailed in the "ASEE Statement on Engineering Ethics Education," located on the society's website at <http://www.asee.org/about-us/the-organization/our-board-of-directors/asee-board-of-directors-statements/engineering-ethics-education>.

In scholarly publication, **plagiarism** occurs when an author copies the words, illustrations, and ideas of others without identifying the sources. Plagiarism is unethical because it represents the theft of the intellectual work of others, and the subsequent misrepresentation of that work as the author's own. An act of plagiarism not only violates intellectual property rights but is anathema to the principle of academic integrity, which is fundamental for scholarly research, writing, and publication. Inadvertent publication of plagiarized material can undermine the quality of a journal or proceedings.

When authors copy not from others but from themselves, by publishing the same article in multiple journals, the practice is called **redundant** or **duplicate publication**. Compared with plagiarism, duplicate publication is generally considered less serious, but it is still unethical. (The only exception is when reprinting has been appropriately approved and permission obtained from the original copyright holder; e.g., a keynote speech that has also been published.) Duplicate publication of the same article wastes space in journals and time of reviewers. Duplicate publication misrepresents the author's record of scholarly contributions, and it corrupts meta-analyses of multiple studies on the same subject.

This policy outlines the steps that ASEE will take in response to allegations of plagiarism and duplicate publication involving articles published in or submitted to ASEE journals, magazines, and conference proceedings, including the annual conference, section and zone meetings, and the global colloquium.

Definitions and Scope

1. The **original paper** is the paper or source from which the words and ideas were copied. The **second paper** is the paper in which the copied text later appears. This policy applies both when the second paper is a submitted manuscript and when the second paper has appeared in print.

2. This policy applies when either the original paper or the second paper has appeared in an ASEE publication, or when the second paper has been submitted to an ASEE publication.
3. In this policy, the **author** is the author of the second paper. The policy applies with equal force to *all* co-authors of the second paper.
4. **Plagiarism** occurs when the second paper copies a significant amount of text from the original paper without proper citation of the source (e.g., beyond “fair use” in copyright law). For this policy, plagiarism requires that the copying be either verbatim or nearly verbatim (with minor insignificant changes) without citing the original source. Whereas other definitions of plagiarism include close paraphrasing from an unattributed source, the strict definition in this policy enables editors to focus on the clearest cases, without expending effort to evaluate whether an instance of paraphrasing constitutes plagiarism. Note that citations are not required for ideas that are well known within the field of the paper.
5. **Duplicate publication** occurs when at least one author is in common between the original paper and the second paper.
6. For this policy, to qualify as a case of duplicate publication, the original paper must be an article in a peer-reviewed journal or peer-reviewed conference proceedings. When the original paper is on an unreviewed website or in an unreviewed conference proceedings, the submission or publication of the second paper is *not* considered duplicate publication; however, the author must notify the journal editor at time of submission as to where and when the paper was originally published. When the author republishes an original ASEE conference paper in a journal, the author or the journal first must secure a copyright release from ASEE, and the second paper must identify the original source.
7. The **Editor-in-Chief** of an ASEE publication is the editor who has ultimate responsibility for that publication. For an ASEE conference proceedings, the overall conference chair fulfills that role.

Procedure

1. An allegation of plagiarism or duplicate publication must be made by the initiator—who might be either a reviewer or reader—in writing. The allegation must include all relevant evidence, such as the original sources, and must be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief of the appropriate ASEE publication.
2. Within 14 calendar days, the Editor-in-Chief will review the allegation. If the Editor-in-Chief concurs that the allegation represents a potential instance of plagiarism or serious duplicate publication, the Editor-in-Chief will refer the allegation to an ad hoc investigation committee. If the Editor-in-Chief and the Executive Director of ASEE agree that the allegation represents duplicate publication of substantially less than 50% of the original or second paper, the Editor-in-Chief will request a correction from the author; if the author does not respond in writing within 30 calendar days, this process will continue.

3. The ad hoc investigation committee will be appointed by the Executive Director of ASEE. That committee will include an editor or associate editor from an ASEE publication who is not involved with the allegation and three other appropriate members whose expertise includes the subject matter of the papers named in the allegation.
4. The investigation committee will evaluate the written evidence and report its findings to the Editor-in-Chief within 30 days. If the committee finds clear and convincing evidence that plagiarism or duplicate publication has occurred, the report will recommend an appropriate sanction (see below).
5. If the allegation is not dismissed, the Editor-in-Chief will immediately forward the investigation committee's report to each author of the second paper, inviting each to respond in writing within 30 days. The Editor-in-Chief may ask each author to describe the various roles of each co-author concerning the incident.
6. Within 14 days of receiving all of the authors' responses, or after the 30 day response period has elapsed, the Editor-in-Chief will decide to either accept the recommended sanction or modify it as appropriate. The Editor-in-Chief will deliver the decision to the author, co-authors, and the investigation committee in writing.
7. If the second paper has multiple authors, the Editor-in-Chief may choose different sanctions for different authors, depending on their roles in the preparation of the second paper.
8. For each author who is at an academic institution, the Editor-in-Chief will send copies of the evidence, the investigation committee's report, and the sanction notification to the research integrity officer (RIO) of the author's institution. If the institution has no RIO, the Editor-in-Chief will notify the institution's academic vice president or equivalent administrator.
9. The author may appeal the decision of the Editor-in-Chief to the Executive Director of ASEE, in writing, within 30 days. Upon reviewing the evidence, the Executive Director may reduce the severity of the sanction, but may not increase the sanction. The Executive Director will then convey the decision on the appeal to the author and the institution's RIO. The Executive Director's decision is final.

Sanctions

1. **Extensive cases.** A plagiarism case is considered extensive if more than 50% of the original paper is plagiarized, or more than 50% of the second paper represents plagiarized material. In this case, all of the author's manuscripts currently under review by ASEE journals and conferences will be immediately rejected. In addition, the author will be prohibited from publication in ASEE publications for three to five years. If the second paper appeared in an ASEE journal or conference, a notice of plagiarism will be printed where appropriate.

2. **Serious cases.** A plagiarism case is considered serious if a substantial amount of either the original paper or the second paper is plagiarized. A duplicate publication case is serious if more than 50% of the original or second paper represents duplicated material. In this case, all of the author's manuscripts currently under review by ASEE journals and conferences will be immediately rejected. In addition, the author will be prohibited from publication in ASEE publications for one to three years. If the second paper appeared in an ASEE journal or conference, a notice of plagiarism or duplicate publication will be printed where appropriate.
3. **Significant cases.** A case of plagiarism is considered significant if 300 or more consecutive words are copied verbatim or nearly verbatim. A duplicate publication case is significant if a substantial amount of the original or second paper represents duplicated material. In this case, the author's manuscripts currently under review by ASEE journals or conferences may be rejected. In addition, the author may be prohibited from publication in ASEE publications for at most one year.

Additional Policies

1. **Confidentiality.** The Editor-in-Chief and others involved in carrying out this policy will maintain the confidentiality of the identities of the initiator and the author, and the confidentiality of all correspondence regarding the case and its disposition.
2. **Conflict of interest.** All editors who have a conflict of interest with the author or the author's institution will recuse themselves from this process.
3. **Diversity.** The Editor-in-Chief and others who carry out this policy will respect cultural differences in citation practices by different scholarly communities and academic disciplines.
4. **Non-retaliation.** If the initiator has brought the allegation in good faith, then there should be no retaliation against the initiator.
5. **Records.** After a finding of plagiarism or duplicate publication, if the second paper has appeared in an ASEE journal or conference proceedings, then the electronic version of the paper will be permanently marked as plagiarized or duplicated, and a reference to the source will be included.
6. **Modifications.** Minor modifications in this policy may be made at the discretion of the Executive Director of ASEE. For example, the Executive Director may extend a time period for good reasons, or appoint a substitute for the Editor-in-Chief in a case of conflict of interest.