



Responsible Conduct in Research Case Study:

The Other Side of Collaboration: Maintaining the Balance of Power

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Chris and Pat have left Dr. Know's lab and are now assistant professors in different departments of the same university. Chris comes up for tenure this year while this is Pat's second year. They are co-PIs on a large federal grant and have agreed to include each other as co-authors on publications. They created a list of probable publications and authors at the beginning of the project.

Pat is upset upon finding out that Chris has published a conceptual paper on this project without including Pat as a co-author. Pat consults with a friend in the department, Lee, who advises Pat to talk with Chris; Pat does so. Chris is surprised by Pat's response and reasons that the paper was based on the research performed by Chris before the grant was funded and they entered into this new collaboration. Pat is not convinced by this explanation, because parts of the paper are identical to the proposal they co-authored, and similar to one of the proposed papers they outlined when setting their terms for collaboration. Pat and Chris agree that Pat will be included on all future publications pertaining to the project. A year later, Pat opens a journal to see another paper about the project that is solely authored by Chris.

What are the issues that should be "put on the table" as valid issues for discussion, compromise, or negotiation?

If Chris and Pat decide to have a conversation, are there ways in which each of them might approach this discussion that are more or less helpful as a means to resolution?

What courses of action are open to Pat?

Are there institutional responsibilities or roles in this situation?

Should Lee or other colleagues be involved in the discussion?

If Pat and Chris decide to terminate their collaboration, how do they negotiate their mutual interests in this research for the duration of the grant? For future research on these ideas?