





# What's News in Research?

## Research Collaboration: Opportunity or Peril?

By Christopher Francklyn, Ph.D.

“Like any project involving two or more people, collaborations are rich in potential benefits, but bring with them a set of attendant risk.

The most important advantage is that an effective partnership is simply the best way to bring multiple scientific approaches and perspective to bear on a complex problem. When fully executed, a multi-pronged approach will increase the likelihood that:

1. reviewers will be more excited about the project, and
2. that the resulting discoveries will have a higher impact than those with a single approach.

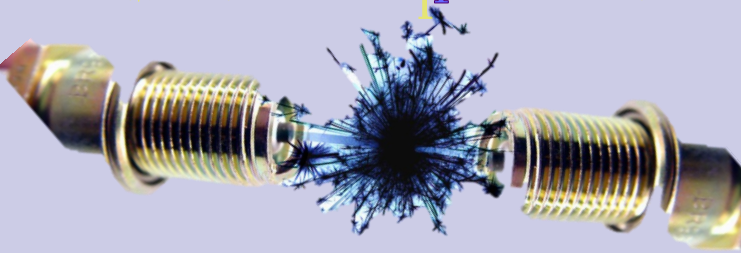
With a strong and effective collaborator, you have access to another scientific mind to help you shape experiments, interpret data and validate/challenge your most provocative ideas. With more people and a broader technical arsenal, you will be able to try multiple approaches simultaneously, and thereby increase the tempo of discovery. For an early stage investigator, collaborating with a more established [investigator]—potentially at a more prestigious institution—could increase your odds of completing the proposed aims, thereby laying the groundwork for a successful renewal. Lastly, a stimulating partnership is an outstanding opportunity to expand your knowledge base and grow as a scholar.

Naturally, there are no guarantees that this joint undertaking will be successful because collaborations can also involve pitfalls, traps and potential risks. The most important: by working with another PI, you will have to surrender at least some control over the project's [programmatic] direction.

...Partnerships also have to be balanced regarding the degree of the participants' motivation. If the project represents a major effort for one party, but a tertiary interest for the other, than the first may become disappointed if the pace of the work falls short of expectations.”

*For remainder of article contact **Therese Kurilla**.*

collaboration-cooperation-association-teamwork-partnership-alliance



**Debra L. Fetherman, Ph.D.**

**Research Spotlight**

**Dr. Debra L. Fetherman**, Assistant Professor in the Exercise Science and Sport Department, has both clinical and community experience as an exercise physiologist developing exercise and health programs for a variety of individuals and groups. Dr. Fetherman's research interests include health behavior change. Currently Dr. Fetherman's research includes, **ROYAL CHOICES, LIFE CHOICES** which is a partnership between the Athletic Department and the Exercise Science and Sport Department at the University of Scranton. The program will initially involve athletic administrators, student-athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, undergraduate students, health education/exercise science faculty, staff and students. **The purpose is to empower student-athlete leaders working together to promote healthy life choices concerning alcohol use throughout the University campus and surrounding community.** Project administrator, Dr. Fetherman, applied for the NCAA CHOICES grant to continue developing this student-athlete alcohol education program. As the outreach expands strategic collaborations hope to be developed with other academic departments and Student Affairs as well as school and community-based youth programs in the Scranton area. ROYAL CHOICES, LIFE CHOICES is multi-dimensional. The program will also incorporate opportunities for joint research projects, student experiential learning while serving the community.

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