Procedure for Submitting a Manuscript Proposal

Outline of the Preparation and Approval Process

a. Publications and presentations usually arise from individual investigators. *If you are an investigator who participated in the July 2010 NHLBI workshop at Northwestern University, please indicate this in the cover letter accompanying your manuscript proposal.*

b. The Steering Committee occasionally designates a topic and selects a writing group and its lead author.

c. Lead authors prepare a list of co-authors and obtains their willingness to participate. An ARIC author to be contacted is designated in case there are questions about the manuscript and the first author does not respond or cannot be located (can be the same as the first author but must be an ARIC investigator).

d. The manuscript proposal including the lead author and list of writing group members is submitted to the Publications Committee for approval. The study has a standardized form that is used to submit all manuscript proposals (an electronic copy is available on the ARIC Web site http://www2.cscc.unc.edu/aric/pubs-policies-and-forms, and then emailed to: aricpub@unc.edu).

Manuscript proposals approved by the Publications Committee are passed on to the Steering Committee for final approval (48 hour comment period).

e. Abstracts require Publications Committee approval before submission to a scientific meeting.

f. The writing group prepares and communicates computational specifications to the Coordinating Center, or it prepares statistical computations using the data set obtained from the Coordinating Center of ARIC Field Center. Everyone who has individual level ARIC data must be IRB approved and sign or be part of a center which signs a data distribution agreement (DMDA).

g. The Coordinating Center, when requested, prepares statistical computations according to priorities specified by the Publications Committee.

h. The working group prepares, reviews internally, and submits the completed document to the Steering Committee for review and approval.

i. ARIC primary and statistical reviewers are assigned, respectively, by the ARIC editor and by the Coordinating Center to review this manuscript and to convey to the editor the results of the review.

j. Members of the Steering Committee review the manuscript and send comments to the editor.

k. NHLBI review occurs concurrently with Steering Committee review. The ARIC editor's office submits final manuscripts for review to NHLBI.

l. The manuscript is sent to the Coordinating Center for final data verification, if the analysis was done at the Coordinating Center.

m. The manuscript/abstract is formally submitted to a journal or scientific meeting selection process. However, upon receiving Steering Committee approval to submit a manuscript to a journal, the lead author must first complete a final checklist of items to ensure all appropriate procedures have been followed.

The overall responsibility for managing the entire process lies ultimately with the Steering Committee; however, for some steps a subgroup may be given responsibility. Further, the nature of the approval process varies according to the type of document. These issues are outlined below.
3.4.3 Authorship

The authorship policy varies according to the type of publication or presentation being considered. For some publications, the author is listed as the "The ARIC Study Investigators," with the preparers clearly indicated. In other cases, the persons preparing the manuscript are listed as authors followed by the words, "for the ARIC Study Group." Similarly, for some presentations, the paper is listed as presented by someone for the ARIC Study. In other cases the individual is listed as the lead author. In all cases, however, the person who assumed the lead responsibility for a particular publication or presentation is to be listed as the first author or preparer. In addition, the phrase "ARIC Study" is to be included in the title and listed whenever possible.

The Steering Committee is responsible for resolving any conflicts or confusion that occur with respect to appropriate recognition of authorship.

3.4.4 Manuscript and Abstract Generation

Under normal circumstances, the lead author of the writing group will be listed as the first author for those manuscripts where individual recognition is appropriate or as the first preparer for those where the ARIC Study is listed as the author. The lead author also has the responsibility for listing the co-authors in the appropriate order. As indicated above, the Steering Committee serves as final arbitrator of any conflicts.

Individuals interested in preparing a manuscript or abstract on a specific topic must submit their proposals, which must include the names of the writing group members, to the Publications Committee for approval. The proposal must include a clear statement of the nature of the publication, the hypotheses to be addressed, and the types of statistical computations or data summarizations likely to be required.

The Steering Committee has the responsibility for reviewing and approving these proposals, both for appropriateness and for a priority designation. The Steering Committee also ensures that the different participating centers and groups are appropriately represented and that appropriate recognition is provided.

Once the specifications for the manuscript have been approved, the requirements for statistical computing can be formally communicated to the Coordinating Center. Requests will be processed according to the priorities specified by the Publications Committee. The Coordinating Center has representation on the writing group whenever possible and this person serves as the liaison to the writing group, both for communications about computing issues and for providing or obtaining appropriate statistical input.

The Publications Committee reviews the progress that each writing group is making toward the completion of its task and makes changes required for the timely completion of each manuscript or abstract.
3.4.5 Approval Procedures

A manuscript stemming from the ARIC study is submitted to the ARIC editor, who sends copies of the manuscript to a primary reviewer, a coordinating center's statistical reviewer and Steering Committee members for their critiques. A detailed critique is expected from the primary reviewer(s). Upon receiving the critiques, two courses of action are possible: (1) If the editor deems the reviewers' suggestions to be mainly editorial in nature, he may approve the manuscript and request that the authors incorporate suggested changes to the final version, or submit in writing reasons for not doing so. No further action is needed from the Steering Committee; or (2) If, in the editor's judgment, critiques entail substantive changes, the revised manuscript must be further reviewed by the primary reviewer, the Coordinating Center's reviewer and the Steering Committee before approval is granted.

The approval procedures are presented separately for each type of publication or presentation listed in section 3.4.2.

3.4.5.1 Publication types a., b., and f.

The procedures described here are to be followed prior to submitting for publication any document describing the design and conduct of the ARIC Study or including results, based on data from all field centers and addressing the main objectives of the study. All such documents are to be processed through each of the preparation and approval steps listed above. This includes the data verification step. Abstracts are a special case of this procedure and are discussed separately later.

All papers meeting the conditions of this section (publication types a., b., and f.) are to be published under the by-line "The ARIC Study Investigators." In addition, a statement that the article was "prepared by (writing group lead author, then other members, listed in order specified by the chairperson)" is also to be included.

The above specifications for authorship apply also to abstracts submitted for presentations, whether or not they are to be published. They also apply to articles to be published in the proceedings of meetings (type f). In this case the presenter can also be identified.

3.4.5.2 Presentation types a. and b.

The same conditions apply to abstracts for presentations of type a. or b. as apply for manuscripts for these publication types except that the Publications Committee has full authority to give approval or to reject, i.e., no Steering Committee action is required.

3.4.5.3 Publication or presentation type c.

The preparation and approval procedures for publications and presentations of results based on data from all field centers which do not address one of the main objectives of the ARIC Study are identical to those which do address one of these objectives. However, the listing of the authors can be different. For these publications, it is permissible for individual investigators to be listed as authors. The order of this listing follows guidelines consistent with those for other papers. Namely, the working group chairperson is listed as the lead author with the other authors listed in the order that the lead author designates. Following the name listed, the words "for the ARIC Study Group" are added.
3.4.5.4 Publication or presentation type d.

The ARIC Study discourages the publication or presentation of results based on data from a single field center, other than those from a single field-center based ancillary study, and from a collection of field centers that is less than the full data set. Should this appear desirable for some reason, the nature of what is to be prepared and presented or published will be submitted to the Publications Committee by way of manuscript proposal, clearly indicating therein, that the proposal incorporates plans for a manuscript using less than a full data set. The Publications Committee will accept or reject the proposal or pass it on to the Steering Committee for decision if this is felt to be the best course of action. However, even if approved by the Publications Committee, the proposal (as with all manuscript proposals) will still require Steering Committee ratification.

3.4.5.5 Publication or presentation type e.

Publications or presentations describing methodology developed to meet the needs of the ARIC Study are to be prepared and approved by the same procedures as those based on data collected by the study.

3.4.5.6 Presentation type g.

For those presentations for which the formal submission of an abstract is not required and for which no proceedings are to be published, the invited or otherwise designated presenter is to submit a letter containing information equivalent to that of a typical abstract to the Publications Committee for review and approval. The Publications Committee will treat the letter in the same way that it treats an abstract.

If an abstract is subsequently required, it should be submitted for review as other abstracts are. In a similar fashion, if it should be decided later to publish the proceedings, then the document detailing the presentation is to be submitted for review as are other publications.

3.4.5.7 Press releases and media discussions type i.

In general, scientific findings from ARIC made available to the media will involve those findings being presented at scientific meetings and being published in the scientific literature. Such presentations and publications require prior clearance as noted above. In some circumstances, media discussions and press releases may be appropriate to clarify scientific findings for the lay public, but they should not be used as forums to release new information. Investigators are requested to keep the Project Office informed of contacts with representatives of the major national media and of major national media coverage of information that they have supplied. If a situation arises in which it appears desirable to release to the media new information not otherwise cleared for presentation or publication, or if such has been cleared for scientific presentation or publication, but this has not yet transpired, prior clearance from both the Steering Committee and the Project Office is required.

Release of general descriptive information about the ARIC Study for local use (such as a local newspaper, university newsletter or state medical society journal) does not require prior approval. Use of centrally prepared materials for such purposes is encouraged. A copy of any resultant article should be sent to the Project Office.