

# Memoirs of a Research Integrity Officer

Investigating Allegations of Research  
Misconduct

Implementing the Regulations

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# Process at (One) University

Implementation & Application

Modus Operandi

Lessons Learned

Issues for Consideration

# Regulations

Tri-Agency Framework

Responsible Conduct of Research

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FRQ Policy on the Responsible Conduct of  
Research

&

University Regulations Concerning Investigation of  
Research Misconduct

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Consonant with US Policies

&

QC/Can Regulations are Broad in Scope

# Research Ethics & Research Misconduct

<b>Research Ethics Boards</b>	<b>Research Misconduct Process</b>
Prior review	Response to allegations
Regulate in advance	Review after the fact
Chair, REB	Research integrity officer
Standing committee	Ad hoc committee
Community of REBs	Independent action
Non-adversarial in principle	Non-adversarial in principle
Long tradition	Newly implemented
Sanctions	Recommendations
Dissemination	Confidentiality

# The Process

“Good Faith Allegation” means an allegation that is not malicious or frivolous made by a Complainant who has reasonable grounds to believe that Research Misconduct may have occurred

# (Relevant) Complainants

Individual academic: on or off campus

Graduate student/Post doc

Journal Editor

Peer reviewer: journal or grant agency

# Research Integrity Officer

RIO shall determine whether there is sufficient evidence of possible misconduct to warrant an investigation

# Committee on Research Misconduct

One member by VP(R) consult with Dean

One member by VP(R) external to University

Two members by SG from panel—expertise

[One member by Dean of Graduate Studies]



# Committee on Research Misconduct

Determine the relevant facts and the validity  
of the allegations

Any finding of Research Misconduct by the  
Committee shall be based on a  
preponderance of the evidence

# Report

- a statement of the allegations of Research Misconduct
- a summary of the relevant evidence
- the Committee's analysis of the evidence
- the Committee's conclusion as to whether or not there has been Research Misconduct
- the Committee's recommendation as to the appropriate disposition of the case
- any other recommendations that the Committee feels are appropriate in the circumstances of the case.

# Provost

- The Provost receives the Report (and comments from Respondent) and decides whether to accept findings and recommendations
- If the Committee's finding is that the allegation of Research Misconduct is founded:
  - (i) the Provost shall take appropriate administrative action and/or institute disciplinary proceedings
  - (ii) the Committee's report can be used as evidence in any disciplinary proceedings instituted by the Provost

## Types of Allegations

	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	Total
Plagiarism Authorship	2		1	2	3	3	11
Fabrication Falsification	4	5	1	4	1	1	16
Ethical misconduct		2			2	2	6
Total	6	7	2	6	6	6	33

## Sources of Allegations

	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	Total
Agency					2	1	3
Member of University	5	3	1	1		1	11
External	1	4	1	5	4	4	19
Anonymous							
Total	6	7	2	6	6	6	33

## Actions in Response to Allegations

Type of Allegation	Total Cases	No prima facie case	Investigation or Inquiry
Plagiarism or Authorship	11	1	10
Fabrication/Falsification	16	3	13
Ethical misconduct	6	3	3
Total	33	7	26

# Lessons Learned

- RIO must be neutral in process
- RIO must be reassuring but serious
- Consultation process is valuable
  - Where a person is unsure whether a suspected incident constitutes Research Misconduct, guidance should be sought from the RIO
- Mediation process (not by RIO)

# Lessons Learned

Education is needed

- Faculty
- Students
- Mandatory
- Witness cynicism of grad students
- Need training of supervisors



# Intent of the Process

“Integrity of the scientific record”

Punishment

Prevention by exemplars

Weed out papers or perps?

An academic environment of integrity

Public duty

# Issues, inter alia

Disclosure & dissemination

to whom and to what ends?

Individual rights of privacy and due process  
and communal rights of transparency and  
presumption of validity

schadenfreude & gossip: preventable?

Unsupported allegations: when and what?

Statute of limitations

# Questions & Comments

Thank you for the opportunity