

Policy and Procedures on Integrity in Research and Scholarship

Responsibility	Assistant Vice-President Academic	Review Period	TBD
Approving Body	Senate	Initial Approval Date	January 25, 2013
Advisory Body	TBD	Latest Approval Date	January 25, 2013
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Applicability: To all faculty, staff, and students at Shaftesbury Campus, and to all faculty and staff at MSC Campus. Students at MSC engaged in SSHRC-funded research with MSC faculty or staff are subject to policies of the University of Winnipeg.

All members applying for or in receipt of Tri-Council funding are additionally required to comply with the *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research* (<http://www.rcr.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/framework-cadre/>).

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1. Purpose

Research and scholarship, that is, the quest for new knowledge and understanding and the application of these, are fundamental to the life of a university. The purpose of this policy is to promote and advance a high standard of integrity in research and scholarship at Canadian Mennonite University.

2. Background

This Policy has been established to address public concerns about responsibility and accountability in research and scholarship. It outlines procedures for promoting integrity among researchers and scholars and for investigating allegations of misconduct in research and scholarship as directed by the Tri-Council Agencies (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, SSHRC; Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, NSERC; and Canadian Institutes of Health Research, CIHR).

3. Scope

This Policy and the procedures outlined herein apply to all members of Canadian Mennonite University. Within this Policy, “members” refers to Canadian Mennonite University faculty, administrative and support staff, graduate and undergraduate students, post-doctoral fellows, researchers under contract, as well as to visiting scholars. Authority for this Policy rests with the University Senate.

4. Responsibility

- a. The University expects its faculty and students to engage in an honest search for knowledge, and to maintain the highest standards of conduct in every aspect of research and scholarship.
- b. Members shall be responsible for retaining accurately recorded and retrievable research and scholarly materials. The procedure for recording and retaining original research data, and matters related to access, use, publication and ownership of primary research data and other products of research/scholarship should be outlined by the Principal Investigator or supervisor and discussed with co-researchers/students at the beginning of a project.
 - i. *Record-keeping*: Good record-keeping is important. When possible, all primary data should be recorded in clear, adequate, original and chronological form.
 - ii. *Retention of records*: Original data for a given study should be retained in the University for at least 5 years after the work is published or otherwise publicly presented (if the form of the data permit this, and if assurances have not been given that data will be destroyed to assure anonymity).
 - iii. *Access to data*: Principal Investigators and collaborators should have unrestricted access to all data and products of their collaborative research. Access does not imply either ownership of, or the unrestricted right to use, data or products.
 - iv. *Ownership*: Entitlement to ownership of primary data, software and other products of research and scholarship can vary according to the circumstances under which research/scholarship is conducted. A shared understanding about ownership should be reached among collaborators, especially between supervisors and their students, before the research is undertaken.
- c. Responsibility for the administration of this Policy is vested in the Vice-President Academic. All allegations of misconduct against members, whether arising internally or externally to the University, shall be directed to the Vice-President Academic.

- d. The primary responsibility for misconduct in research and scholarship rests with those individuals who have committed specific acts that demonstrate lack of integrity and are defined as misconduct in research and scholarship in this Policy.
- e. Principal Investigators, co-investigators and supervisors who have been negligent in directing and monitoring researchers, students or staff who have committed misconduct in research and scholarship shall share responsibility for the misconduct.

5. Promotion of Integrity in Research and Scholarship

- a. The University, through the Office of the Vice-President Academic, shall conduct information and discussion sessions annually on issues of integrity in research and scholarship.
- b. The University will ensure that copies of this Policy are accessible to all members.
- c. Recipients of all research and scholarship grants and funds administered by the University will be required to indicate in writing that they have read and agree to comply with the University's Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship before they are able to access those funds.
- d. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the University's Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship is communicated to any co-investigators, research associates, and research students and assistants, and to advise them of the importance of the policy and of the potential consequences of misconduct.
- e. It is the responsibility of department chairs, program coordinators and course instructors to ensure that the University's Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship is communicated to external advisors of student projects.
- f. The University, working through Deans and course instructors, shall endeavour to include education for students on issues of integrity in research and scholarship in the curriculum, especially in courses on research procedures and professional practice.
- g. The University considers the following to show lack of integrity, and therefore to be instances of serious misconduct in research and scholarship:
 - i. falsification, that is, the intentional misrepresentation through alteration, selective omission or manipulation of research design, data or citations;
 - ii. fabrication, that is, the invention or forging of research data or citations;
 - iii. plagiarism, that is, intentionally representing the thoughts, writings, inventions, or ideas of another as one's own;
 - iv. destruction of research records, that is, the destruction of one's own or another's research data or records to specifically avoid the detection of wrongdoing, or in contravention of the applicable funding agreement, institutional policies, regulations and professional or disciplinary standards;
 - v. abuse of confidentiality, that is, transmitting to a third party, by any means, the ideas or data of a scholar or scientist taken from private discussion, from a manuscript or funding application submitted for review, or from any other exchange of information which is explicitly stated to be, or normally assumed to be, confidential without the authorization of the originator of the ideas or data;

- vi. misappropriation, misallocation or misuse of money or other resources supplied for research or scholarly purposes or the use of funds for a purpose not authorized by the funding source;
- vii. material failure to comply with federal or provincial regulations for the protection of researchers, scholars, human participants or the public, or for the welfare of animal subjects, or material failure to meet other legal requirements that relate to the conduct of research;
- viii. failure to reveal to those who sponsor or commission work any material conflict of interest when asked to undertake reviews of funding applications, manuscripts for publication, theses, etc., or to test products for sale or distribution to the public;

A conflict of interest occurs when the personal interests of a researcher or scholar clash, or have the potential to clash, with the interests of other researchers or scholars, the University, or the interests of research sponsors. Personal interests include, but are not necessarily limited to, a business, commercial or financial interest, whether of the person involved or arising from family or marital relationships, from friends, or from former, existing or prospective business associations.

- ix. failure by those involved in contract vetting and awarding or otherwise aware of the contract to reveal to the University any material financial interest in a company that contracts with the University to undertake research, to participate in research involving the company's products or to provide research related materials or services;
 - x. failure of the author(s) of a work to include as coauthors, or to provide other appropriate acknowledgment for individuals who have made substantial contributions to the conception, design or execution of a work, to the interpretation of data, or to the drafting of a manuscript;
 - xi. failure to use archival material in accordance with the rules of the archival source
- h. Misconduct in research and scholarship does not include honest error, honest differences of opinion, conflicting data or honest differences in interpretation or judgment about data, data analyses, or research procedures and methods.

6. Identification of Misconduct in Research and Scholarship

These procedures apply to misconduct in 1) research and scholarly work; 2) training in research and scholarly activity; and 3) related research and scholarly activities.

Individuals who hold what they believe to be well-founded suspicions of misconduct in research and scholarship by a member(s) are encouraged to seek an explanation of the suspicion from the person(s) involved, in order to identify misunderstandings. If, following such explanations, misconduct is still believed to have occurred, the matter should be dealt with as follows.

7. Reporting

- a. It is the responsibility of all members of the University to report instances of alleged misconduct in research and scholarship involving members of the University.
- b. A report of the alleged misconduct in research and scholarship should be made to the Vice-President Academic, in writing and signed by the complainant. The complaint shall contain details of the alleged misconduct, including the name of the respondent, and should be accompanied by such supporting evidence as may be available. Anonymous allegations will not be accepted.

- c. The University shall take such steps as may be necessary and reasonable to
 - i. protect the reputation and credibility of members wrongfully accused of misconduct in research and scholarship;
 - ii. protect the rights, positions and reputations of members who in good faith make allegations of research and scholarly misconduct, or who it calls as witnesses in an inquiry or investigation;
 - iii. protect the privacy of the complainant(s) and respondent(s) as far as is possible.
- d. In the case of research funded by one of the Tri-Council Agencies, the University shall
 - i. advise the relevant Agency and/or the Secretariat on the Responsible Conduct of Research immediately of any allegations that may involve significant financial, health and safety, or other risks;
 - ii. fulfill further reporting requirements as set out in **Section 4.4** of the *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research*;
- b. either independently or at the Agency's request, the University may take immediate action to protect the administration of Agency funds.

8. Determination of the Facts of the Case

When applying these procedures to a specific case, persons acting on behalf of the University and others involved in the proceedings should keep in mind the following:

- the importance of the University's maintaining standards consistent with the highest traditions of research and scholarship;
- the importance of academic freedom;
- the responsibility of the University to the public, to the scientific and scholarly community and to the institutions and agencies with which the University is affiliated or has contractual arrangements;
- the necessity for the University to protect the rights and reputations of all individuals, including the person who is alleged to have engaged in misconduct and the person who has made the allegation;
- the necessity for the University to resolve allegations with care and objectivity, with ample opportunity for all interested parties to be heard and as promptly as the circumstances permit;
- the right of all members interviewed as part of these procedures to be accompanied by another member of their choice when interviewed as part of these procedures.

If the complaint is judged by the Vice-President Academic to be frivolous or otherwise lacking in substance, the Vice-President Academic may take appropriate action against the person making the complaint as per **Article 9.c.iv** of this Policy.

If the complaint is judged not to be frivolous or otherwise lacking in substance, the Vice-President Academic shall proceed as follows:

Notice

- a. Upon receipt of the written complaint from either internal or external sources and within 10 working days, the Vice-President Academic shall notify the person(s) named in a report of alleged misconduct

that a complaint has been made. The person(s) named shall be informed of the contents of the report and provided with a transcription of the written complaint from which all information identifying the person making the allegation has been removed. The person(s) named shall be invited to reply within 7 calendar days. Whether or not a reply is received, the determination of the facts of the case shall continue.

Inquiry

- b. The Vice-President Academic shall, at the earliest possible time and within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint, establish a committee made up of members who are without conflict of interest. The committee shall include the Assistant Vice-President Academic, a Dean and an external member who has no current affiliation with the University.
- c. The investigation shall be carried out with due dispatch. Normally the investigation shall be completed within 30 calendar days of its initiation. If the investigation takes longer than 30 calendar days to complete, an interim report of progress to date and an estimated date of completion shall be provided to the Vice-President Academic at 30 days. The record of the investigation shall include documentation of the reasons for exceeding the 30 calendar day period.
- d. The investigation will use the services of impartial experts as necessary and appropriate to ensure that the inquiry is thorough and authoritative.
- e. In undertaking its investigation, the committee shall
 - i. carry out a detailed examination of the facts relevant to the alleged misconduct in research and scholarship;
 - ii. establish whether or not misconduct in research and scholarship has been committed;
 - iii. identify, as far as is reasonably possible, whether or not any established misconduct in research and scholarship compromises earlier research or scholarly work of the person(s) against whom the allegation was made;
 - iv. identify the role and responsibility, with respect to any misconduct in research and scholarship, of any others involved in the research or scholarly work under question, and to report to the Vice-President Academic on any need for further inquiry respecting the role and responsibility of others;
 - v. submit a full, written, confidential report to the President and the Vice-President Academic outlining its conclusions and, ordinarily, its comments on the gravity of the offense; and
 - vi. render all documentation gathered by the committee to the Vice-President Academic for confidential safe keeping.
- f. In carrying out its investigation, the committee shall establish appropriate procedures with the following provisions:
 - i. All relevant documentation shall be examined, including but not necessarily limited to research data and proposals, publications, correspondence and memoranda of telephone calls;
 - ii. Whenever possible, interviews shall be conducted of all persons involved either in making the allegation or against whom the allegation was made, as well as others who might have information regarding key aspects of the allegation;

- iii. Complete summaries of interviews shall be prepared, provided to the interviewed party for comment or revision and included as part of the investigatory file;
 - iv. The committee shall request and examine all information it deems necessary to complete the investigation;
 - v. The committee shall consult with such external experts as it may deem necessary and appropriate to ensure the investigation is thorough and authoritative.
- g. A confidential written report of the investigation shall be made to the Vice-President Academic and shall include a statement of what evidence was reviewed, summaries of relevant interviews, and a conclusion as to whether or not misconduct in research and scholarship has been committed by one or more person(s).
 - h. If the investigation finds any indication of possible criminal activity, the committee will immediately consult the Vice-President Academic who will, in turn, determine what further action to take, including contacting the funders and the appropriate authorities.
 - i. The person(s) against whom the allegation was made shall receive a copy of the report of the investigation and have the opportunity to add written comments. The person(s) who made the allegation shall be advised in confidence and in writing of the conclusions of the investigation.
 - j. If, as a result of the investigation, the allegation is not supported, the University shall act as described in **Article 9.c**.
 - k. The investigative committee (the Assistant Vice-President Academic, a Dean and an external member) shall complete its activities with due dispatch, normally within 60 calendar days of being appointed. If the committee determines that it will not be able to complete the investigation in 60 calendar days, it shall submit to the Vice-President Academic an explanation for the delay, which includes an interim report on the progress to date and an estimated date for completion of the report.

9. The University's Response to the Investigation's Findings

Misconduct may be committed with varying degrees of deliberation. It should be recognized that the border between carelessness and negligence, on the one hand, and intentional dishonesty on the other hand, might be very narrow or difficult to draw precisely. The result in either case is objectionable, but the appropriate response to carelessness and negligence should be distinguished from (and be lesser than) the response to misconduct.

- a. If it has been established that misconduct in research and scholarship has been committed by one or more person(s), the President shall take appropriate disciplinary action.
- b. If it has been established that misconduct in research and scholarship has been committed by one or more person(s), the University shall, through the office of the President,
 - i. send each of those person(s) the portion of the report of the committee that pertains to him/her;
 - ii. invite those persons to comment on the report;
 - iii. notify external sponsors of the research or scholarship in question of the decision and any comments of those person(s) upon the report;

- iv. send to the person(s) who made the allegation those portions of the report of the committee that address their role and opinions in the investigations;
 - v. notify any immediate research collaborators and appropriate administrators of the decision and arrange for the continuance or discontinuance of research or scholarship currently in progress;
 - vi. take appropriate remedial measures with regard to any publications or reports invalidated by the misconduct in research and scholarship;
 - vii. take appropriate actions to prevent future misconduct in research and scholarship;
 - viii. make appropriate public statements; and
 - ix. retain all documentation substantiating the findings for a minimum period of 7 years.
- c. If the allegation of misconduct in research or scholarship against one or more persons(s) is *not* established, the University shall, through the Office of the President,
- i. send each of those person(s) the portion of the report of the committee that pertains to him/her;
 - ii. invite those persons to comment on the report;
 - iii. send to the person(s) who made the allegation those portions of the report of the committee that address their role and opinions in the investigation;
 - iv. take appropriate action against person(s) making allegations that were found to be malicious;
 - v. remove all documentation concerning the allegation from the member's file and, at the sole discretion of the member, destroy the documentation or transfer it to the member;
 - vi. provide written notification of the decision to all agencies, publishers or individuals who were informed by the University of the investigation;
 - vii. make appropriate public statements; and
 - viii. take appropriate action on any other related concerns.

10. Appeal

A member of the University adversely affected by any decision under or consequent upon the procedures outlined in **Article 9** of this Policy may appeal the decision in accordance with the University's appeal process.

11. Review

This Policy shall be reviewed triennially. The Assistant Vice-President Academic shall be responsible for ensuring such review takes place.

12. Acknowledgments

This Policy is based on the policy developed and approved by the University of Winnipeg and the University of Calgary.