Research Integrity

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Research Integrity

Based on five core values defined in the Senate Academic Integrity Integrity Statement (2006):

- Honesty
- Trust
- Fairness
- Respect
- Responsibility
Why Misconduct Occurs

- Ends viewed as justifying the means
- Lack of understanding regarding expectations and rules
- Poor communication
- Difficult relationships
- Poor judgment
How to Avoid Misconduct

- Understand policies and expectations
- Establish expectations with staff, students and collaborators
- Communicate well and stay in touch
- Get advice and assistance (VPR) when challenges arise
Expectations and Policies

Expectation of highest professional ethics and scholarly integrity among researchers at Queen’s University

Research Ethics and Integrity Policies

- Internally and externally driven
- Collective Agreement, Senate or other policies
  - e.g., Conflict of Interest, Publication of Research Results, Research Involving Humans/Animals, Academic Integrity, Integrity in Research
Expectation of highest professional ethics and scholarly integrity among researchers at Queen’s University

Research Ethics and Integrity Policies

- Are evolving (becoming broader and more rigorous – rigorous – one will be judged by the norms and policies in place when the alleged misconduct took place)
Senate Policy on Integrity in Research

- Applies to faculty (including emeritus, adjunct, visiting), staff, students*, post-docs
- Consistent with existing policies/agreements
- Compliant with Tri-Council requirements
- Members of the Queen’s community are responsible for:
  - Fulfilling integrity expectations of the policy
  - Reporting suspected cases of misconduct
- Policy outlines expectations, definitions, processes for reporting and investigating potential misconduct

*except when an integrity issue relates to research associated with a course
Senate Policy on Integrity in Research

Expectations

- Carry out research in an honest search for knowledge
- Base findings upon a critical appraisal and interpretation according to scientific, scholarly and/or and/or creative principles
- Deal fairly with colleagues and students
- Adhere to University ethics policies (including research research ethics committee guidelines) and meet ethical ethical standards of granting councils
Expectations (cont)

- Make results of work accessible
- Indicate affiliation with Queen’s and properly attribute significant contributions of others
- Retain research records within personal control for a minimum of 5 years from publication/presentation (longer when required by external agencies)
Misconduct in Research or Scholarly Activity – Examples

- Fabrication* - making up data or results and recording or reporting them
- Falsification* - manipulating research materials, equipment, or equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record
- Plagiarism* - appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit
  - Failure to recognize contributions of others
- Using unpublished material of others without permission (e.g., ideas in a research grant)

* [http://ori.dhhs.gov/misconduct/definition_misconduct.shtml](http://ori.dhhs.gov/misconduct/definition_misconduct.shtml)
Misconduct in Research or Scholarly Activity – Examples

- Attribution of authorship to persons other than those who have contributed sufficiently to take responsibility for intellectual content
- Submitting for publication articles published elsewhere except where clearly indicated to be a republication
- Failure to meet relevant legal requirements for protecting researchers, human/animal subjects or the health and safety of the public or for the welfare of laboratory animals
- Failure to disclose conflict of interests
- Financial misconduct involving research funds
Reporting Allegations of Misconduct

- Expected to report to Principal suspected cases of misconduct
- If unclear whether misconduct has occurred contact VPR to request referral to confidential advisor
- Allegations related to undergraduate or graduate students will be reported to the appropriate Dean to determine if related to course work and the appropriate policy to follow
Reporting Allegations of Misconduct (cont)

- University will take measures to support individuals (and witnesses) who make allegations in good faith.
- Retaliation against Queen’s community members who make allegations in good faith should be reported to the VPR.
- University will take action against those who make unfounded allegations that are malicious/vexatious/not in good faith.
Investigative Procedure

- Onus on University to establish misconduct with most cases delegated to VPR
- VPR must inform complainant (person lodging allegation) that allegation was received and will be investigated in accordance with the policy
- VPR shall inform respondent (subject of allegation), in writing, within 15 working days of receiving allegation and invite respondent to meet with VPR or submit materials or both
- Respondent must respond within 20 working days of notification
Investigative Procedure (cont)

- Based on response and evidence provided by respondent, VPR will determine and inform respondent and complainant in writing that:
  a. sufficient evidence exists to indicate that misconduct may have occurred and a full investigation is warranted
  b. insufficient evidence to warrant proceeding with investigation

- Full investigations delegated to Investigative Committee, appointed by VPR, respondent has opportunity to comment on membership re: conflicts of interest
Investigative Procedure (cont)

- Investigative Committee will review allegation, the response and evidence and materials submitted, respondent respondent will have access to all materials received from complainant
- Complainant and respondent will be invited to appear separately before Committee to be heard and provide evidence, Committee may call witnesses
- Detailed report of testimony of complainant and witnesses will be forwarded to respondent who has 10 days to respond to report
Investigative Procedure (cont)

- Committee will submit written report of investigation to VPR within 90 days of receipt of allegation and it normally decides on a finding by consensus.
- Respondent and complainant provided copy of report to report to check for factual errors, must be submitted to VPR within 10 working days and will be forwarded to Committee for consideration.
- Finding of Committee is binding and respondent and complainant will receive copy of final report from VPR within 10 working days of receipt of final report (to the extent permitted by the Privacy Act).
Appeal

- Grounds for appeal are unfairness in process or unreasonable finding
- If the respondent is a member of an association with a collective agreement, appeal procedures will be followed. If not a member with a collective agreement then file appeal to Provost(VPA) within 15 working days of notification of finding and sanctions
Senate Policy on Integrity in Research

**Reporting**

- Findings of misconduct are forwarded to Principal and Administrative Head of respondent’s unit.
- If funded by outside agency or published or submitted for publication, VPR will inform funder or publishers within 30 days of inquiry/investigation and if outside funded access to funding is suspended until instruction from the funding agency.
- If misconduct is not supported University shall protect the reputation and credibility of accused including notifying agencies, publishers, etc. who are known to have been informed of allegation or investigation.
Privacy

- Steps taken to maintain confidentiality of process, records, findings until sanctions determined
- Records kept by VPR and protected according to Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- If misconduct is not supported all documentation concerning the allegation will be removed from the respondent’s file and destroyed
Possible Implications of Misconduct to …

- **Respondents**
  - Reported to Principal/VP (Research), Department Head
  - Investigation (witnesses)
  - Discipline
  - Reporting externally
  - Funding/publications/reputation

- **Colleagues/students**
  - Funding/publications/progress

- **University**
  - Time and effort/reputation

- **Beyond the University…**
  - Erosion of public trust/participation in research
Policy should be referenced in letters of appointment for all new research contract staff

Policy to be introduced at the new faculty and new graduate student orientation each year

At least one general education session per year, open to all members of the Queen’s community

Future work to promote an understanding of the Policy to the Queen’s community
Conclusion

- Contribute to a culture of research integrity
  - Report
  - Mentor (students, staff, new colleagues)
  - Model
- Familiarize yourself with policies, internal and external
- Keep conflict of interest in mind; avoid or disclose
- Manage relationships effectively and work to prevent misconduct (e.g., be clear on expectations regarding publication at outset of research; effective communication with colleagues, students, etc.; maintain good records and lab books)
- VPR can provide support in instances when you have difficulties with colleagues, students, etc.
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Senate approved Policy available at: