



Policy Name	Research Misconduct
Policy Number	12000.021
Effective Date	May 23, 2017
Administrative Division	Division of Research and Federal Relations
Unit	Research Compliance
Revised Date	Click here to enter text.

1.0 Policy Statement

Jackson State University holds that misconduct in research, creative, and other scholarly activities is expressly prohibited at the University, and that all such allegations will be investigated carefully and methodically, and resolved expeditiously, while maintaining standards of confidentiality for all involved. Research misconduct is considered a serious breach of the public trust, scholarly conduct, values, and ethics. Such misconduct shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the University's responsibility for ensuring adherence to regulations that govern the responsible and ethical conduct of research. This document applies to the University's handling of allegations of research misconduct (fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results) involving:

- A person who, at the time of the alleged research misconduct, was employed by, was an agent of, or was affiliated by contract or agreement with this institution
- Any research proposed, performed, reviewed, or reported, or any research record generated from that research, regardless of whether an application or proposal for funds resulted in a grant, contract, cooperative agreement, or other form of support.

The principles outlined in this policy may be used as a framework for conducting inquiries and investigations of allegations of misconduct for research, whether funded or not.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 Allegations – any written or oral statement or other indication of possible scientific misconduct made to an institutional official.
- 3.2 Good Faith Allegations – an allegation made with the honest belief that scientific misconduct may have occurred. An allegation is not in good faith if it is made with reckless disregard for or willful ignorance of facts that would disprove the allegation.
- 3.3 Fabrication - making up data or results and recording or reporting them.
- 3.4 Falsification – manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.

- 3.5 Inquiry – gathering information and initial fact-finding to determine whether an allegation or apparent instance of scientific misconduct warrants an investigation.
- 3.6 Inquiry Committee - panel of at least 3 members to review, adjudicate as necessary, or determine whether a formal investigation of alleged misconduct is warranted.
- 3.7 Investigation – the formal examination and evaluation of all relevant facts to determine if misconduct has occurred and, if so, to determine the responsible person and the seriousness of the misconduct.
- 3.8 Plagiarism - the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.
- 3.9 Research Integrity Officer (RIO) – the institutional official responsible for assessing allegations of scientific misconduct and determining when such allegations warrant inquiries and for overseeing inquiries and investigations.
- 3.10 Research Misconduct - fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, performing or reviewing research or in reporting results.
- 3.11 Research Record – any data, document, computer file, computer disk or any other written or non-written account or object that reasonably may be expected to provide evidence or information regarding the proposed, conducted, or reported research that constitutes the subject of an allegation of scientific misconduct. A research record includes, but is not limited to, grant or contract applications, whether funded or unfunded; grant or contract progress and other reports; laboratory notebooks; notes; correspondence; videos; photographs; slides; biological materials; computer files and printouts; manuscripts and publications; equipment use logs; laboratory procurement records; animal facility records; human and animal subject protocols; and consent forms.
- 3.12 Respondent – the person against whom an allegation of scientific misconduct is directed or the person whose actions are the subject of the inquiry or investigation.
- 3.13 Retaliation – any action that is taken by the institution or an employee that adversely affects the employment or other institutional status of an individual because the individual has, in good faith, made an allegation of scientific misconduct, or of inadequate institutional response thereto, or has cooperated in good faith with an investigation of such allegation.
- 3.14 Scientific misconduct – fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the scientific community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgements of data.

4.0 Additional Information

- 4.1 Findings of misconduct require that the allegation(s) be proven by a preponderance of evidence indicating a significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community and that the misconduct committed was intentional, knowing and/or reckless
- 4.2 Anyone who has reason to suspect research misconduct, or observes anyone engaged in Research Misconduct, has the responsibility and right to report such through an oral or written statement to their department/unit head, Dean, Vice-president, and Research Integrity Officer or through the use of Ethicspoint.
- 4.3 If the complainant is unsure whether a suspected action can be defined as research misconduct, he or she may meet with or contact the research integrity officer to discuss the suspected research misconduct informally, which may include discussing it anonymously and/or hypothetically.
- 4.4 The identity of the respondent and the complainants should be limited to those who need to know in order to conduct an objective and fair assessment of the allegation.
- 4.5 If the assessment of the allegation meets the definition of research misconduct and sufficient, credible and specific evidence is identified, an inquiry can be initiated.
- 4.6 The respondent will be provided with a written summary of the allegations, a copy of this policy and a procedure guideline regarding procedures for addressing research misconduct. The name of the complainant will not be revealed to the respondent during the inquiry process.
- 4.7 The University must, on or before the date on which the respondent is notified or the inquiry begins (whichever is earlier), promptly take all reasonable and practical steps to obtain custody of all the research records and evidence needed to conduct the research misconduct proceeding, inventory the records and evidence, and sequester them in a secure manner, except that where the research records or evidence encompass scientific instruments shared by a number of users, custody may be limited to copies of the data or evidence on such instruments, so long as those copies are substantially equivalent to the evidentiary value of the instruments.
- 4.8 The inquiry process will be conducted and completed by an appointed committee within 60 days. If the inquiry takes longer to complete, the inquiry record must include documentation of the reasons for exceeding the 60-day period.
- 4.9 The committee's charge is to conduct confidential interviews of the complainant, respondent and key witnesses, examine research records and prepare a written draft of evidence reviewed, interviews conducted and should state if an investigation is warranted. The Respondent and complainant must be notified whether the inquiry found that an investigation is warranted. If an investigation is warranted the procedures for such are outlined in the University Policy and Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct.

4.10 Retaliation in any way against complainants, witness or committee members will not be tolerated. Individuals are urged to report immediately any alleged or apparent retaliation against complainants, witnesses or committee members to the RIO.

4.11 If requested and as appropriate, institutional officials shall make all reasonable and practical efforts to protect or restore the reputation of persons alleged to have engaged in research misconduct, if no finding of research misconduct is made.

4.12 If it is determined that a complainant's allegations of research misconduct were not made in good faith, administrative action may be taken against the complainant.

5.0 Employee Adherence

Employees are required to adhere to these guidelines. Willful disregard of this policy shall be considered non-compliance and may result in a formal reprimand up to and including termination. The information stated in this policy pertains and applies to applicable employees, departments and funding sources of the University.