



Policy and Procedure for Dealing with Research Misconduct

Manhattan College endorses the following introductory statement in the *Framework for Institutional Policies and Procedures to Deal with Fraud in Research*¹

Fraud in research undermines the scientific enterprise in ways that go far beyond the waste of public funds. Although an uncommon event relative to the large scientific literature, violations of accepted standards inevitably appear in this as in all human pursuits. Institutions engaged in research have a major responsibility, not only to provide an environment that promotes integrity, but also to establish and enforce policies that deal effectively and expeditiously with allegations or evidence of fraud.

In dealing with this problem it is important not to create an atmosphere that might discourage openness and creativity. Good and innovative science cannot flourish in an atmosphere of oppressive regulation. Moreover, it is particularly important to distinguish fraud from the honest error and ambiguities of interpretation that are inherent in the scientific process and are normally corrected by further research.

Manhattan College defines scientific or research misconduct as fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from those commonly accepted within the academic community for proposing, conducting and reporting on research. Research misconduct is to be distinguished from honest error and differences of interpretation. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Falsification or misrepresentation of data, including:
 1. Reporting experiments, measurements or other statistical analysis never performed;
 2. Manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of the research to achieve a desired result;
 3. Falsifying or misrepresenting background information, including biographical data, citation of publications, or status of manuscripts;
 4. Selective reporting, including deliberate suppressions of conflicting or unwanted data.

¹ Association of American Universities, National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, and Council of Graduate Schools, *Framework for Institutional Policies and Procedures to Deal with Fraud in Research*, Nov, 1988

- Plagiarism, being a misrepresentation of another's work as one's own.
- Abuse of confidentiality, including use of ideas and preliminary data gained from:
 1. Access to privileged information through the opportunity for editorial review of manuscripts submitted to journals, and
 2. The opportunity for peer review of proposals being considered for funding by agency panels or by internal committees, such as the Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Responsibilities

1. **Research Personnel.** Researchers are responsible for maintaining the highest ethical standards in their research. Principal investigators are responsible for:
 - a. assuring that these standards are communicated to and maintained by all who work under their supervision, directly or indirectly;
 - b. assuring the validity of all information communicated by their research groups;
 - c. assuring adequate citation of contributions from those within and outside each research group.

Co-authorship should reflect scientific involvement and responsibility for work reported. Although collaborative relationships between investigators are based on trust, some joint evaluation of data should be an integral part of the review process, even when unique laboratory procedures necessitate long-distance collaboration.

2. **Administrators.** The Provost is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy on integrity in research. The Provost will assure that appropriate review procedures are promptly implemented when allegations of research misconduct are reported. The Provost's Office will maintain accurate records and, where required, will ensure that proper and timely reporting to relevant agencies is made for any investigation of substantial misconduct.
3. **Members of the Academic Community.** Members of the academic community are responsible for reporting what they believe to be misconduct on the part of research personnel. The identity of confidential sources will be protected to the extent consistent with the needs of an inquiry or investigation. Those individuals who provide information in good faith about questionable conduct are to be protected against reprisals.

Misconduct Procedures

Once a misconduct complaint is received, a preliminary assessment will be performed to determine whether the complaint falls under the College's definition of research misconduct. If the preliminary assessment determines that the complaint warrants further review, an inquiry committee will be appointed to determine if the allegation warrants a

full investigation. If an investigation is recommended by the inquiry committee, an investigation committee will be appointed to thoroughly examine the allegation and determine whether misconduct has taken place, by whom and to what extent. The investigative committee will create and submit a report to the Provost for review and disposition.