

Policy Name	INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP		
Policy #	903	Category	RESEARCH
Steward	VP, External Relations	Date Approved	July 1, 2023
Next Review Date		Date Reviewed or Revised	

POLICY

The College actively supports and promotes the maintenance of the highest ethical and scientific standards of academic integrity in research and scholarship, whether conducted on campus or in the community, whether part of a teaching undertaking or as part of a contractual, collaborative project with external agencies and businesses. Employees of the College and students enrolled in a college course or program that includes applied research, or anyone engaged in applied research at the College in any capacity whatsoever, shall maintain a high standard of research integrity.

This policy sets the principles and guidelines that define integrity in applied research and scholarly activity, establishes procedures to investigate allegations of misconduct and promotes the education on and awareness of the importance of the responsible conduct of research in accordance with *The Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)*.

PRINCIPLES

1. The College expects that all research and scholarly activities involving the College will be conducted with the highest level of integrity and ethics.
2. The researcher holds the primary responsibility for maintaining a high level of integrity and ethics while conducting research.
3. Inappropriate conduct while undertaking research is unacceptable and may be cause for disciplinary action or sanctions.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, students, and participants involved in applied research projects and scholarly work at the College.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Freedom in research	Academic Freedom in research is the freedom to conduct research, to publish the results of research, to produce and perform creative works, to responsibly challenge prevailing opinion and to participate in academic or civic bodies without interference, censure or retribution from the Institute or its management.
Academic Integrity	Academic Integrity is a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Fairness, Respect and Responsibility. ¹
Academic Responsibility	Academic Responsibility relates to adherence to respect for evidence, impartial reasoning and honesty in evaluation and reporting.
Applied Research	Applied research is a systematic investigation and discovery of knowledge that results in an immediate and identifiable impact on the potential commercial, environmental, or social value of a technology.
Complainant	The person making an allegation of misconduct related to integrity or ethics of research. The complainant may or may not be directly affected by the alleged misconduct. The complainant has a right to representation.
Respondent	The researcher accused by the complainant of misconduct related to integrity or ethics of research. The respondent has a right to representation.
Research	Research is a systematic investigation to establish facts, principles or generalizable knowledge.
Research Ethics Board (REB)	The College does not presently have its own Research Ethics board. The College has entered an agreement with University of Regina and all policies, appeals and responsibilities of the board are mandated by the University of Regina.

¹ *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*, The Centre for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999

PROCEDURES

1. Academic Conduct

- 1.1 The College is committed to promoting the highest standards of conduct in research and scholarly activities and will ensure that researchers are aware of the standards of integrity, accountability, and responsibility in research through ongoing education.
- 1.2 All researchers applying for and/or holding funding from the Tri-Agencies are responsible for conducting their research and administering their funds according to the policies set out in the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research
- 1.3 All research will comply with relevant Federal or Provincial statutes in the conduct of research that are designed to protect human subjects, animal subjects, the environment and the general public
- 1.4 Researchers will never falsify, fabricate or plagiarize information in either research or scholarly activity
- 1.5 The work of others whether published or unpublished will be acknowledged through appropriate citation
- 1.6 The principal investigator will ensure the recognition of all material contributions of collaborators, including students, through appropriate co-authorship: such co-authors assuming responsibility for the integrity of their contributions
- 1.7 All research involving human subjects will seek approval from the Research Ethics Board in accordance with the Research Involving Human Subjects Policy.

2. Data Gathering, Retention and Destruction

- 2.1 The College recognizes the importance of sharing the original data with the research community and of retaining original data to respond to inquiries.
- 2.2 Data will only be used for the purposes for which it was originally collected.
- 2.3 Principal investigators and all co-research and authors will have free access to all original data and products of the research at all times subject to any limitations imposed by the terms of grants, contracts, or other arrangements for the conduct of the research.

- 2.4 Entitlement to ownership of the original data and the products of research will be clearly identified in a research agreement entered into by all researchers and the college. The research agreement will be in accord with the College policy *Intellectual Property, and Research involving Human Subjects*.
- 2.5 All primary data will be retained for a minimum period of five years following the conclusion of a project or in accordance with the granting agency or contract requirements.
- 2.6 All data will be stored in a manner to safeguard confidentiality required by College policies, ethics policies and the relevant privacy legislation.
- 2.7 Researchers will never falsify, fabricate or plagiarize information in either research or scholarly activity.
- 2.8 The principal investigator will assume primary responsibility for the integrity of the research and the retention of the primary data.
- 2.9 When leaving the College, researchers will make arrangements for the transfer and safekeeping of records, data and the products of the research in which they took part.

3. Investigating and Responding to Complaints of Inappropriate Conduct in Research

Inappropriate conduct while undertaking research is unacceptable and may be cause for disciplinary actions. Disciplinary actions will reflect the severity and nature of the inappropriate conduct and may include but not be limited to:

- Verbal warning
- Special monitoring in future work
- Letter of reprimand to the individual's permanent personnel file
- Withdrawal of specific privileges
- Removal of specific responsibilities
- Suspension or steps to terminate the research appointment

3.1 Informal Inquiry into Potential Misconduct

3.1.1 Anyone who believes that there has been a breach of this policy may seek clarification, informally through the Office of the Vice President responsible for research (or his/her designate named for this purpose). Anyone receiving a complaint is required to channel the complaint to the Office of the Vice President responsible for research.

3.1.2 Such inquiries shall be kept confidential and may result in no action or a shift to a formal investigation. The Vice President responsible for research (or his/her designate named for this purpose) will review the allegations and documentation related to the potential misconduct to determine whether a shift to formal investigation is required. If the VP dismisses the complaint and the complainant wishes to pursue further, he/she must initiate a formal complaint.

3.2 Formal Investigation of Complaints

3.2.1 A formal complaint must be made in writing to the Vice President responsible for research. Anonymous allegations will not be entertained. Within ten days of receiving the complaint, the VP will establish a committee of three independent persons, with relevant experience in the area of research involved in the particular case, to conduct an investigation. No person involved in the project or program will be part of the committee. Persons external to the college may be appointed at the discretion of the VP.

3.2.2 In all proceedings and subsequent to a final decision, the College will undertake to assure that those making an allegation in good faith and without demonstrably malicious intent are protected from reprisals or harassment. False allegations made purposefully will give lead to discipline for the individual making the allegation by the College.

3.2.3 To protect agency funding, if deemed necessary, the VP may withhold research funds until matters of misconduct are resolved.

3.2.4 Within ten (10) working days of receipt of the complaint, the Committee will meet with the complainant and respondent(s) and discuss the nature of the complaint and the circumstances surrounding it. Additional interviews will be held and documentation reviewed depending on the circumstances. Complainants as well as respondents will be given an opportunity to give their version of the facts to the investigating committee, and both will be available to ensure a timely resolution to the complaint.

3.2.5 The Committee will report its findings and recommendations to the VP only, within 60 days of being established. The Committee's decision regarding misconduct is final and binding on the College.

3.3 The Report will include:

- A summary of the allegations;

- Composition of the investigating Committee and explanation of selection process;
 - Investigative methods;
 - Persons interviewed or supplying information;
 - Proposed plan to restore reputations and protect complainants that have acted in good faith;
 - Details on recommended sanctions; and
 - Other relevant details.
- 3.4 If upon reviewing the report the VP believes the complaint is without foundation, he/she will dismiss the complaint and immediately advise the complainant and the respondent with a written response outlining the reasons for this decision. Based on the findings, the VP may require the complainant, or others, to take action to protect or restore the reputation or credibility of a wrongly accused researcher. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the funding agency within thirty days of receipt.
- 3.5 If the VP determines a breach to the integrity of the research, or that the researcher has acted unethically, the VP will determine any actions or sanctions to be taken and will communicate these in writing to the respondent and to others as may be appropriate given the circumstances. Such information will be imparted to the funding agencies as soon as possible, but not later than 30 days following receipt of the report. Any related collective agreement issues or appeals open to the respondent through the collective agreement will be noted in the communiqué to the respondent and to the funding agency.

4. Privacy and Confidentiality

- 4.1 The privacy of both the complainant and the respondent will be protected as far as is possible given the need for due process in pursuing an enquiry and reporting the findings. In the case of a researcher being wrongly accused, all documents or files provided to a third party will be destroyed at the conclusion of the investigation.
- 4.2 The Office of the VP will be responsible for keeping and controlling appropriate access to records. Such records will be kept in the College's *Record Retention Policy* and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Policy*.
- 4.3 If the investigation is at the request of the funding agency, all findings and actions taken will be reported to the funding agency (within 30 days).

LEGISLATIVE AND COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT REFERENCES

N/A

LINKS TO OTHER RELATED POLICIES, DOCUMENTS, AND WEBSITES

- Research
- Research Administration
- Research with Human Subjects
- Intellectual Property

This policy has been developed with reference to similar policies from Camosun College, NAIT, Algonquin College, and Saskatchewan Polytechnic.