RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

Date
May 25, 1995

Number
R60.01

Date of Last
Review/Revision
January 27, 2022

Mandated
Review
January 27, 2027

Policy Authority: Vice-President, Research and International

Associated Procedure: Procedures to Address Allegations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research and scholarship are central, critical components of the University. Post-secondary research is predicated on a climate of academic freedom, where scholars may challenge convention, remain free of institutional censorship, and engage with human or animal research subjects. With such freedoms comes the personal responsibility to ensure that the work and the outcomes are informed by the principles of integrity, trust and honesty, and meet high scientific, ethical and professional standards. The trust that the public places in university scholars is based largely on respect for the integrity of the research process.

The responsible conduct of research (“RCR”) is about more than just the research process itself. RCR also pertains to applying for funding, financial management, the process of dissemination, monitoring for potential conflicts of interest or commitment, as well as maintaining a fair and equitable work environment.

Simon Fraser University is committed to encouraging these values through ongoing education of its members in the responsible conduct of research, and through the adoption of policies specifying how the research and scholarship process should be conducted. This policy sets out the responsibilities for researchers with respect to research integrity, applying for funding, financial management, and requirements for conducting certain types of research, and defines what constitutes a Breach of the policy. The procedures accompanying this policy detail the process for submitting allegations of misconduct, and the procedures to assess, investigate and address such allegations.
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1.0 PRINCIPLES

1.1 In order to maximize the quality and benefits of research, a positive research environment is required. For researchers, this implies duties of honest and thoughtful inquiry, rigorous analysis, commitment to the dissemination of research results, and adherence to the use of professional standards. The minimum standards, adopted from the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research, include:

1.1.1 Rigour: Scholarly and scientific rigour in proposing and performing research; in recording, analyzing, and interpreting data; and in reporting and publishing data and findings.

1.1.2 Record keeping: Keeping complete and accurate records of data, methodologies, and findings, including graphs and images, in accordance with all relevant agreements, policies, laws, regulations, and professional or disciplinary standards in a manner that will allow verification or replication of the work by others.

1.1.3 Accurate referencing: Referencing and, where applicable, obtaining permission for the use of all published and unpublished work, including theories, concepts, data, source material, methodologies, findings, graphs, and images.

1.1.4 Authorship: Including as authors, with their consent, all those and only those who have made a substantial contribution to, and who accept responsibility for, the contents of the publication or document. The substantial contribution may be conceptual or material.
1.1.5 Acknowledgement: Acknowledging appropriately all those and only those who have contributed to research, including funders and sponsors.

1.1.6 Conflict of interest management: Appropriately identifying and addressing any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest in accordance with the University’s policy on Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment (GP 37).

2.0 PURPOSE

2.1 This policy is intended to:

2.1.1 promote the responsible conduct of Research;

2.1.2 establish the University’s expectations for the conduct of Research;

2.1.3 assign responsibility for addressing Allegations.

3.0 SCOPE AND JURISDICTION

3.1 This policy applies all persons engaged in Research under the auspices of, or in affiliation with, the University, including Research that:

3.1.1 is conducted by University employees, postdoctoral scholars, or students; or

3.1.2 uses University equipment, facilities, space, or resources, or involves employees, postdoctoral scholars, or students;

3.2 Students engaged in Research are subject to this policy. Should such a student Breach this policy, any sanctions or actions will be addressed through the Procedures for Academic Misconduct in the University’s Policy S10.01.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Please see Appendix A for the definitions of words used in this policy and its associated procedures.

5.0 POLICY

Prohibited Conduct

5.1 No Member of the University community shall:

5.1.1 engage in Research Misconduct;

5.1.2 Breach the principles of this policy;

5.1.3 make a deliberately misleading Allegation; or

5.1.4 retaliate against anyone who invoked this policy or its procedures in good faith, or against a person who participated or cooperated in good faith in a process addressing an Allegation.
Expectations for the Conduct of Research

5.2 Each person who engages in Research:

5.2.1 is expected and required to be thoroughly familiar with and to comply with the scholarly standards and practices that are generally accepted in the academic community and their scholarly field, and to comply with those standards honestly, accountably, openly, and fairly;

5.2.2 is expected and required to familiarize those under their supervision with the scholarly standards and practices that are generally accepted in the academic community and their scholarly field;

5.2.3 is expected and required to be thoroughly familiar with and to comply with all applicable law, policies, rules, guidelines, contractual obligations, and standards, including those of Funding Organizations and funding agreements. Some common Funding Organization requirements include, but are not limited to:

a. Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research

b. The current edition of Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS); and


5.3 Failing to meet the requirements of a relevant Funding Organization or failure to comply with other applicable law, policies, rules, guidelines, contractual obligations, or standards is a Breach of this policy.

Responsibility to Report

5.4 Researchers and others play an important role in the process of addressing allegations of policy Breaches. Every person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a Breach of this policy is occurring or has occurred at the University is expected to report the matter, in good faith and confidentiality, to the University Research Integrity Officer (“RIO”).

5.5 To protect a person who makes a good faith Allegation from Retaliation, the RIO will act in accordance with the protection of identity principles contained in the University’s Protected Disclosure Policy (GP 41).

University’s Response to Allegations of Research Misconduct

5.6 An Allegation under this policy will be addressed in accordance with the procedures of this policy established and maintained by the Vice-President, Research and International.

5.7 Allegations made under this policy may vary in their source, accuracy, intent, and motivation and have the potential to cause harm to the individuals involved, to the University, and to research and scholarship in general. The University will therefore assess and, where appropriate, investigate Allegations promptly and fairly, utilizing the principles of Procedural Fairness.
5.8 With no prejudice to the outcome of the assessment or investigation, the University may independently, or at the request of a Funding Organization, take immediate action to protect the administration of research funds. Such actions could include freezing grant accounts, requiring a second authorized signature from an institutional representative on all expenses charged to the researcher’s grant accounts, or other measures as appropriate.

Consequences

5.9 Intent will not be considered in assessing and investigating allegations. Intent will, however, be considered in recommending sanctions or actions.

5.10 Individuals found to have Breached this policy may be subject to sanctions or discipline or other action under this or other University policies and procedures, applicable collective agreements, and applicable law.

6.0 EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

6.1 The University will actively promote awareness and education of the importance of the Responsible Conduct of Research through a variety of measures, including dissemination of written materials, and through workshops and seminars.

7.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Researchers are responsible for complying with this policy.

7.2 Researchers are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the principles of Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) and for the application of these principles to foster a positive and constructive research working environment. Researchers with oversight roles are responsible for providing training for students and other researcher personnel in RCR.

7.3 Every person who has reasonable grounds to believe that a Breach of this policy is occurring or has occurred is expected to report it, in confidence, to the Research Integrity Officer.

7.4 All Members of the University community, including Complainants and Respondents, are expected to cooperate with the Research Integrity Officer and, if one is constituted, the Investigation Committee.

7.5 The Vice-President, Research and International is responsible for implementing this policy and for fulfilling the University’s reporting obligations to Funding Organizations in relation to Breaches of this policy.

8.0 REPORTING

8.1 Subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the University will report annually, or as otherwise required, to Funding Organizations about breaches of this policy to fulfill the University’s legal, contractual, or other obligations to the Funding Organization.

9.0 RELATED LEGAL, POLICY AUTHORITIES AND AGREEMENTS
9.1 If an Allegation involves research supported by the Public Health Service (“PHS”) of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, the PHS policies on research misconduct as outlined in the US Federal Code of Regulations (42 CFR Part 93) will be consulted and followed to the extent possible. Policy R60.01 will prevail when its requirements are more stringent than the US Federal Code of Regulations.

9.2 Existing University contracts (such as a collective agreement) or applicable legislation (such as British Columbia’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) will prevail when there is a conflict with the US Federal Code of Regulations, or with other external policies or regulations of Funding Organizations, or the laws of other jurisdictions.

9.3 The legal and other University Policy authorities and agreements that may bear on the administration of this policy and may be consulted as needed include but are not limited to:

9.3.1 *University Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 468

9.3.2 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 165

9.3.3 Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment (GP 37)

9.3.4 SFU’s Information Policies (I 10)

9.3.5 Ethics Review of Research Involving Human Participants (R 20.01)

9.3.6 Treatment of Animals in Research and Teaching (R 20.03)

9.3.7 Radiation Safety (R 20.04)

9.3.8 Student Academic Integrity Policy (S 10.01)

9.3.9 Student Conduct Policy (S 10.05)

9.3.10 Collective agreements and human resources and employment policies.

9.3.11 *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research*


9.3.13 *Canadian Council on Animal Care* Policies and Guidelines

10.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

10.1 The information and records made and received to administer this policy are subject to the access to information and protection of privacy provisions of British Columbia’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the University’s Information Policy series.

10.2 Subject to 10.1, the University will protect the privacy of the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s) as far as is possible.
11.0  RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF RECORDS

11.1  Information and records made and received to administer this policy are evidence of the University’s actions to [describe actions]. Information and records must be retained and disposed of in accordance with a records retention schedule approved by the University Archivist.

12.0  POLICY REVIEW

12.1  This policy must be reviewed every five years and may always be reviewed as needed.

13.0  POLICY AUTHORITY

13.1  This policy is administered under the authority of the Vice-President, Research and International.

14.0  INTERPRETATION

14.1  Questions of interpretation or application of this policy or its procedures shall be referred to the President, whose decision shall be final.

15.0  PROCEDURES AND OTHER ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

15.1  Appendix A contains the definitions applicable to this policy and its associated procedures.

15.2  Appendix B contains examples of Research Misconduct.

15.3  The procedures for this policy are: Procedures to Address Allegations.