

Policy Title	Responsible Conduct of Research
Policy Holder	Director, Applied Research and Innovation
Policy Approver(s)	Senior Team
Related Policies	Responsible Conduct of Research Research Involving Human Participants
Related Procedures	
Appendices	
Storage Location	Website - https://www.confederationcollege.ca/policies-and-procedures
Effective Date	September 1, 2023
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Purpose

Confederation College (“the College”) is committed to promoting the highest standards of conduct in research and scholarship behaviour and ensuring that researchers are aware of the standards of integrity, accountability, and responsibility. This policy is set to govern the highest standards of research integrity, quality, and scholarship at the College, ensure compliance with the Tri-Agency Framework for Responsible Conduct of Research, and to promote the College’s expectations of conduct of research.

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) (The Agencies) developed the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research (2021) (“The Framework”). The Framework describes policies and requirements related to applying for and managing Agency funds, performing research, and disseminating results, and the processes that institutions and agencies follow in the event of an allegation of a breach of an Agency policy. The Framework is relatively broad as it applies to all research conducted by institutions that hold Tri-Agency funding, not just Tri-Agency-funded research. Thus, all researchers will be required to adhere to The Framework in the conduct of their research, irrespective of the funding source.

Scope

This Responsible Conduct of Research Policy describes the College’s commitment to promote research and scholarly activity that creates opportunities for inquiry and enhances learning for students in a manner that assures the integrity of the research process. This policy applies to all

College-sanctioned research, regardless of location, source of funds, or use of College resources. This policy addresses the conduct of and expectations for researchers with respect to research activities and provides the authority for procedures that deal promptly and fairly when integrity is brought into question.

Definitions

Research

An undertaking designed to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry or systematic investigation. It is the advancement of knowledge through scholarly, scientific and creative activity.

Scholarship

The pursuit of creation and dissemination of knowledge through research and other scholarly activities.

Allegation

A statement, provided in writing, to the Vice-President, Academic (VPA) outlining issues or claims related to perceived misconduct in research and scholarship.

Investigation

The process of gathering information for the purpose of evaluating an allegation of research misconduct.

Misconduct

Conduct and/or activities that intentionally, negligently, recklessly, or deliberately deviate from accepted standards in the execution of research adopted by the community.

Misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Scholarship/Research Misconduct:

- a. All cases of fabrication, falsification or intentional misrepresentation of research data or results
- b. Unauthorized appropriation of another's work, theft of ideas or intellectual property, or plagiarism, or forgery of documents including academic credentials
- c. Failure to appropriately recognize the substantive contributions of students, co-researchers, or other collaborators
- d. Use of the unpublished works of other researchers and scholars without permission

- e. Use of information, concepts, or data originally obtained through access to confidential manuscripts or applications for funds for research or training that may have been seen as a result of processes such as peer review without permission
- f. Failure to use scholarly and scientific rigour and integrity in obtaining, recording, and analyzing data, and in reporting and publishing results, or in “data gathering and retention” as described below
- g. Use of archival material in violation of the Copyright Act
- h. Serious deviation from appropriate research practices that are commonly accepted within the scholarly and scientific community for proposing, conducting or reporting research.

Financial Misconduct:

- a) Failure to use research funds in strict accordance with the terms and conditions of grants and contracts
- b) Failure to follow the College’s financial directives and practices
- c) Failing to disclose a financial or personal interest in any transaction chargeable to a research grant or contract
- d) Failing to inform the College of a substantial change in research activities or use of research funds
- e) Use of research resources, facilities or equipment in a manner that is inconsistent with approved research practices

Conflict of Interest:

- a) Failure to disclose existing, potential or apparent personal, financial, or business interests of the researcher, the researcher’s associates or the researcher’s family in relationship to research grants and contracts
- b) Failure to comply with the College policy on conflict of interest
- c) Failure to reveal to sponsors, research institutions, journals, funding agencies or contractors, any material conflict of interest, financial or other, that might influence their decisions on whether the individual should be asked to review manuscripts or applications, test products or be permitted to undertake work sponsored from outside sources.

Legal Breaches/Unlawful Misconduct:

- a. Failure to comply with relevant federal or provincial statutes or regulations and/or college policies, including those that apply to the safeguarding of researchers, human subjects, welfare of animals or the health and safety of the public;
- b. Failure to comply with the regulations of the relevant agency concerning the conduct of research; and
- c. Failure to meet other relevant legal requirements that relate to the conduct of research.

Governing Laws and Regulations

List all that apply

Policy Statements

General

- a) The College expects and requires adherence to the highest standards of intellectual honesty, integrity in research, appropriate methodology, ethical standards of discipline and the refusal to engage in, or to condone, instances of misconduct.
- b) The College is committed to:
 - i. Providing appropriate support mechanisms that guide and ensure research is conducted with honesty, integrity, and intellectual competence.
 - ii. Promoting and communicating practices regarding the importance of responsible conduct in research and that articulate the high level of ethical standards required in research, teaching, and other aspects of scholarship.
 - iii. Creating and maintaining a supportive research environment that protects the right of the researcher to pursue honest, responsible, and thoughtful inquiry, rigorous analysis and dissemination of research results.
- c) All College-sanctioned research aligns to the guidelines of The Framework.
- d) Researchers are required to follow best research practices honestly, accountably, openly and fairly in the search for, and in the dissemination, of knowledge.
- e) Researchers associated directly or indirectly with any agency funding agree to abide with the requirements of this policy, as well as the The Framework.
- f) Anyone conducting or involved in research at the College must read and comply with the College's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Data Gathering and Retention

Any principal investigator or co-investigator shall be able to verify the authenticity of all data, or other factual information, generated in their research, while ensuring that confidentiality is protected where required. The principal researcher shall set guidelines for how data will be recorded.

The College recognizes the importance of sharing original data with the research community. It also recognizes the importance of retaining original data to respond to inquiries.

- a) Original data should be preserved in a suitable format for a period of at least five years, or such longer periods as required by funding agencies, or funding oversight agencies, from the end of the research project
- b) Data should be stored in such a manner as to safeguard confidentiality as required by College policies, ethics policies, and relevant privacy acts
- c) Data shall not be destroyed while researchers, colleagues, readers of published results or College officials may raise questions answerable only by reference to the data
- d) Data shall only be used for the purposes it was originally collected for
- e) Principal investigators and all co-researchers must 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
- f) Entitlement to ownership of the original data and the products of research shall be clearly identified in a research agreement that shall be entered into by all researchers and the College
- g) The research agreement shall be in accordance with the College's policy on Intellectual Property
- h) When leaving the College researchers will make arrangements for the safekeeping of records, data and products of research

Authorship/Contributors

The College acknowledges the need to recognize all participants in published works.

- a) The authorship of published works shall include all those who have materially contributed to, and share responsibility for, the contents of the publication

- b) Authorship shall not include individuals who did not materially contribute to the research
- c) Students must be given appropriate recognition for authorship when they have materially contributed to the research

Responsibilities of Researchers and Principal Investigators

It is the responsibility of all individuals involved in research at the College to adhere to the highest possible ethical standards and conduct their research with scholarly and academic integrity. Researchers shall:

- a) Demonstrate good stewardship of resources by utilizing facilities, equipment, other resources and infrastructure efficiently and in co-operation with others;
- b) Utilize funds for the purpose for which they were given, in accordance with any agreements and account for expenditures in regular financial reports;
- c) Demonstrate respect for others contributing to research by following this policy and The Framework
- d) Invoke the procedures for misconduct where appropriate; and
- e) Abide by Confederation College's policies for Intellectual Property and Conflict of Interest.

Principal Investigators / Lead Researcher are responsible for overseeing all the research conducted by their students and research staff. Specifically, principal investigators shall:

- a) Ensure all research is conducted with the highest level of scholarly and academic integrity.
- b) Provide their collaborators, students, staff, and assistants with all reasonable information through training and education to prevent misconduct as defined in this policy.
- c) Actively monitor the work of students, research assistants and others, and oversee the designing of research methodology and the processes of acquiring, recording, examining, interpreting and sorting data. Simply editing the results of a research project does not constitute supervision.
- d) Hold mutually respectful discussions among all research personnel in a research unit on a regular schedule to contribute to the scholarly efforts of group members and to provide informal review.

- e) Verify the authenticity of all data or other factual information generated during the course of the research.

Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Misconduct

This policy is applicable to all allegations of breach of the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy, including without limitations:

- Scholarship/research misconduct
- Financial misconduct
- Conflict of interest
- Legal breaches/unlawful misconduct:
- Data gathering and retention
- Authorship
- Responsible conduct of research

Complaint Procedure

- a) On receipt of an allegation of possible misconduct in research and scholarship the Vice-President, Academic shall determine if it is possible to formulate a complaint in writing. Such a complaint may be formulated by any person who has reviewed the relevant documentation, including the Vice-President, Academic. If for any reason a complaint in writing cannot be formulated no further steps shall be taken against the respondent under these Procedures.
- b) A complaint in writing shall identify the person or persons who made the allegations leading to any formulation of the complaint if it appears to the Vice-President Academic that the evidence supporting the complaint might reasonably require such identification for its proper evaluation. In any event the complaint shall contain sufficient detail to enable the respondent to understand the matter that is to be inquired into.
- c) Where the documentation in support of the complaint reasonably requires knowledge of the identity of any person who caused it to be forwarded, no complaint in writing shall be valid unless it identifies that person. However, no such person shall be identified unless that person has expressly so agreed.
- d) The Vice-President, Academic shall take such steps as may be reasonable to protect against retribution or coercion of complainants, including students, staff and research assistants under the supervision of faculty members whose conduct is the subject of misconduct allegations.

Conduct of Investigation

- a) As soon as possible after a complaint has been formulated in writing, and in any event within ten days of receipt of an allegation, the Vice-President, Academic shall send a

copy of the complaint to the respondent, the President, and an-ad hoc Committee of three persons to conduct an inquiry.

- b) The Vice-President, Academic shall forthwith upon sending a complaint to a Committee to conduct an inquiry advise the respondent of the composition of that Committee and shall also advise any person who is identified in the complaint.
- c) Any objection to the composition of the Committee to conduct an inquiry shall be made to the Vice-President, Academic within seven days. The disposition of any such objection by the Vice-President, Academic shall be final.
- d) The Committee to conduct an inquiry shall consist of three experienced members with the requisite expertise to address the issues involved, and all at arm's length from both the person(s) alleging misconduct and the respondent. The Committee shall elect one of its members as Chair.
- e) The committee will conduct interviews and collect evidence as they deem appropriate to discern the facts. Persons external to the College may be appointed if necessary.
- f) The Committee shall advise the respondent in sufficient detail of the evidence being considered by the Committee and invite the respondent to meet with it and respond to that evidence orally and/or in writing. During any meeting with the researcher, the researcher is entitled to be accompanied by an advocate of the researcher's choosing.
- g) The Committee will address the allegations made and determine if they have merit and in doing so will act fairly and conduct its proceedings in a manner consistent with the principles of natural justice.
- h) The Committee shall make its final decision within two calendar months from its appointment and will report in writing to the Vice-President, Academic who will provide a copy of the report to the individuals named and to the President within five working days.
- i) In cases where the Committee determines that misconduct or breach of Research Integrity Policy has occurred, such a determination shall be cause for discipline in accordance with college policies.
- j) In the case of unfounded allegations, efforts will be made by the Institution to protect or restore the reputation of those unjustly accused.

Maintenance of Records

- a) Reports and records will be kept by the Office of the Vice-President, Academic. Access to such records will be by application to the Vice-President, Academic. The College will conform to all relevant Freedom of Information Acts in such applications.

Reporting to Granting Agencies

- a) Where a Committee identifies that an investigation is warranted, the Vice-President Academic shall inform any granting agency or sponsor of the research and scholarship in question of this fact whenever that granting agency or sponsor has so requested at the time the grant was made or as required by its policies at the time of the grant or sponsorship.
- b) Where a decision is made that misconduct is substantiated, the Vice-President Academic shall within 30 days provide the investigative report and decision regarding discipline/remedies to any granting agency or sponsor known to have provided support for the research and scholarship in question.
- c) In cases where the Agency from whom the researcher received funding requests the investigation, a full copy of the committee’s report will be forwarded to the Agency(ies) within 30 days of the conclusion of the investigation, regardless of whether misconduct is concluded to have occurred.
- d) Where misconduct is found to have occurred, the College will take immediate steps to protect the administration of funds if required.

Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in damage to internal and external relationships, financial loss, property damage, reputational harm, legal action and/or a diminished ability to achieve the mission of Confederation College.

Revision History

Version	Change	Author	Date of Change