



Memorandum

Research Integrity Office
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TO: Senate

FROM: Professor Abraham Fuks, Research Integrity Officer

SUBJECT: Annual Report Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct (2013-2014)

DATE: September 17, 2014

DOCUMENT #: D14-01

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

ISSUE: The Annual Report Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct (2013-2014) is submitted to Senate in accordance with the provisions of the *Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct*.

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE: According to article 10.6 of the *Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct*, the Research Integrity Officer is to provide an annual report to Senate and to the Board of Governors on the operation of the *Regulations*. The report includes the following:

- (i) the number of Research Misconduct allegations received;
- (ii) the number of Research Misconduct allegations investigated;
- (iii) a summary of the findings of the investigations conducted;
- (iv) a summary of any actions taken pursuant to the investigations.

MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL: N/A

PRIOR CONSULTATION: N/A

NEXT STEPS: The Report will be presented to the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors on October 28.

APPENDICES: Appendix A: Annual Report Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct (2013-2014)

**2013-2014 ANNUAL REPORT:
Regulations Concerning Investigation of Research Misconduct**

Introduction

The *Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct* (“the Regulations”) call for the Research Integrity Officer (“RIO”) to report annually to Senate and the Board of Governors on the application of the Regulations. This is the fifth annual report presented to Senate and the Board of Governors in discharge of this obligation.

Background

The Regulations provide for an internal process for the assessment and, where appropriate, the formal investigation of allegations of research misconduct brought against members of the University community regardless of faculty or discipline.

The tables below provide statistical information concerning allegations and their disposition for the five years the Regulations have been in operation.

The Big Picture

As is evident from Table 1, the number of allegations submitted varies from year to year. Overall, there is an increased awareness on campus of these issues, with more informal consultations and continuing training for graduate students. The nature of the allegations received varies from year to year.

Table 1: Nature of Allegations

| | 9/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | Total |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Plagiarism & Authorship | 3 | 2 | | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| Fabrication/ Falsification | | 4 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 14 |
| Ethical Miscond | 1 | | 2 | | | 3 |
| Misrep of Credentials. | | | | | | |
| Non-comp with SOP, etc.¹ | | | | | | |
| Total | 4 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 25 |

The Source of Allegations

The sources of allegations have been various as shown in Table 2. The majority of the respondents have been academic staff, though graduate students have also been implicated.

¹ Non-compliance with standard operating procedures

Table 2: Source of Allegations

| Source of Allegation | Year | | | | | Total |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | |
| Agency | | | | | | |
| Member of University | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| External | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 13 |
| Anonymous | | | | | | |
| Total | 4 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 25 |

Actions in Response to Allegations

The actions in response to the allegations received are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Actions in Response to Allegations

| Nature of Complaint | Year | Total Cases | No Prima Facie Case | Investigated |
|------------------------------------|---------|-------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Plagiarism & Authorship | 2009-10 | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| | 2010-11 | 2 | (1) ² | 1 |
| | 2011-12 | | | |
| | 2012-13 | 1 | | 1 |
| | 2013-14 | 2 | | 2 |
| Fabrication/ Falsification | 2009-10 | | | |
| | 2010-11 | 4 | 1 | (3) ³ |
| | 2011-12 | 5 | | 5 |
| | 2012-13 | 1 | | 1 |
| | 2013-14 | 4 | 2 | (2) ⁴ |
| Ethical Miscond. | 2009-10 | 1 | | 1 |
| | 2010-11 | | | |
| | 2011-12 | 2 | 2 | |
| | 2012-13 | | | |
| | 2013-14 | | | |
| Misrep. of Credentials | 2009-10 | | | |
| | 2010-11 | | | |
| | 2011-12 | | | |
| | 2012-13 | | | |
| | 2013-14 | | | |
| Non-comp. | 2009-10 | | | |

² One allegation was withdrawn after initial assessment

³ One allegation was adjudicated within a Faculty

⁴ One investigation on hold pending legal process

| Nature of Complaint | Year | Total Cases | No Prima Facie Case | Investigated |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| with SOP, etc. | 2010-11 | | | |
| | 2011-12 | | | |
| | 2012-13 | | | |
| | 2013-14 | | | |
| Totals | | 25 | 7 | 18 |

Investigations have been completed in eighteen cases and research misconduct was established in thirteen. Appropriate actions have been taken and where discipline was imposed, the sanctions ranged from reprimand to withdrawal.

Consultative Activities

In addition to the formal allegations noted above, the RIO opened three files and conducted several preliminary discussions with current or former members of the McGill community who were concerned about an issue of research misconduct, but for which no formal allegations of misconduct were submitted.

Conclusion

The RIO and University Administration would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have served on, or cooperated with, investigation committees. All recognize the critical importance of such allegations and the major impact that they can have on the academic and professional lives of respondents. The dedication that committee members have exhibited in these important roles, the integrity with which they have fulfilled their responsibilities, and the time and energy they have devoted to ensuring a fair and impartial investigation of all the issues deserve commendation.