



Memorandum

Research Integrity Office
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TO: Senate

FROM: Professor Christina Wolfson, Research Integrity Officer

SUBJECT: Annual Report Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct (2015-16)

DATE: September 21, 2016

DOCUMENT #: D16-01

ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

ISSUE: An annual report 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.

PRIOR CONSULTATION: N/A

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS: N/A

IMPACT OF DECISION AND NEXT STEPS: The Report will be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors on October 28, 2016.

MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL: N/A

APPENDICES: Appendix A: *2015-2016 Annual Report: Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct*

**2015-2016 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 seventh 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 past six academic years.

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

							Total
	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	
Plagiarism & Authorship	2		1	2	3	3	11
Fabrication/ Falsification	4	5	1	4	1	1	16
Ethical Miscond		2			2	2	6
Misrep of Credentials.							
Non-comp with SOP, etc.¹							
Total	6	7	2	6	6	6	33

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							
	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	Total
Agency					2	1	3
Member of University	5	3	1	1		1	11
External	1	4	1	5	4	4	19
Anonymous							
Total	6	7	2	6	6	6	33

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	Investigation Or Inquiry only
Plagiarism & Authorship	2010-11	2	(1) ²	1
	2011-12			
	2012-13	1		1
	2013-14	2		2
	2014-15	3		3
	2015-16	3		3
Fabrication/ Falsification	2010-11	4	1	(3) ³
	2011-12	5		5
	2012-13	1		1
	2013-14	4	2	(2) ⁴
	2014-15	1		1
	2015-16	1	0	1
Ethical Misconduct	2010-11			
	2011-12	2	2	
	2012-13			
	2014-15	2	1	1
	2015-16	2	0	2
Totals		33	7	26

² One allegation was withdrawn after initial assessment

³ One allegation was adjudicated within a Faculty

⁴ One investigation on hold pending legal process

Investigations and/or inquiries have been completed in twenty-six cases and research misconduct was established in eighteen. 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 seven 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 and advisors, both faculty and students, 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. The RIO would like to extend his own gratitude to the University and its members for the opportunity to have served in this capacity and for their cooperation and support.