



# Memorandum

**Research Integrity Office**  
3647 Peel Street  
Room 105  
Tel: 514-398- 4400 ext. 0279

**TO:** Senate

**FROM:** Abraham Fuks, Research Integrity Officer

**SUBJECT:** Annual Report Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct

**DATE:** September 20, 2012

**DOCUMENT #:** D12-03

**ACTION**  INFORMATION  APPROVAL/DECISION

**REQUIRED:**

**ISSUE:** An annual report submitted to Senate and to the Board of Governors in accordance with the provisions of the *Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct*.

**BACKGROUND & RATIONALE:** This report is submitted in accordance with the *Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct*. Article 10.6 states:

Once per academic year, the RIO shall make a report to Senate and the Board of Governors, which report shall include:

- (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:** Presentation to the Board of Governors as required by the *Regulations*.

**APPENDICES:** Appendix A: *2011-2012 Annual Report: Regulations Concerning the Investigation of Research Misconduct*

**2011-2012 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 third 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 three years the Regulations have been in operation – together with the two years preceding the introduction of the new process, during which research misconduct allegations were addressed under faculty specific or ad hoc processes.

**The Big Picture**

As is evident from Table 1, the number of allegations submitted has increased over the past five years. This is likely the result of increased awareness on campus of these issues, more informal consultations and more training for graduate students. The nature of the allegations received varies from year to year.

**Table 1: Nature of Allegations**

	2007	2008	09/10	10/11	11/12	Total
<b>Plagiarism &amp; Authorship</b>			3	2		5
<b>Fabrication/ Falsification</b>	2	1		4	5	12
<b>Ethical Miscond</b>			1		2	3
<b>Misrep of Credentials.</b>		1				1
<b>Non-comp with SOP, etc.<sup>1</sup></b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>

**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 this past year one of the respondents was a graduate student.

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<sup>1</sup> Non-compliance with standard operating procedures

**Table 2: Source of Allegations**

Source of Allegation	Year					
	2007	2008	09/10	10/11	11/12	Total
Agency		1				1
Member of University		1	2	5	3	11
External	1		2	1	4	8
Anonymous	1					1
<b>Total</b>	2	2	4	6	7	21

**Disposition of Allegations**

The disposition of the allegations received are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Disposition of Allegations**

Nature of Complaint	Year	Total Cases	No Prima Facie Case	Investigated
Plagiarism & Authorship	2009-10	3	1	2
	2010-11	2	(1) <sup>2</sup>	1
	2011-12			
Fabrication/ Falsification	2009-10			
	2010-11	4	1	(3) <sup>3</sup>
	2011-12	5		5
Ethical Miscond.	2009-10	1		1
	2010-11			
	2011-12	2	2	
Misrep. of Credentials	2009-10			
	2010-11			
	2011-12			
Non-comp. with SOP, etc.	2009-10			
	2010-11			
	2011-12			
<b>Totals</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>

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

<sup>2</sup> One allegation was withdrawn after initial assessment

<sup>3</sup> One allegation was adjudicated within a Faculty

**Consultative Activities**

In addition to the formal allegations noted above, the RIO opened two files and conducted a preliminary discussion 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 this very important role, 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.