

JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY
Manual of Policies and Procedures

POLICY NUMBER: II:06

DATE: March 1990

REVISION/REVIEW DATES: May 1997, Sept 2008, Oct 2011, Mar 2015

SUBJECT: Misconduct in Research and Other Scholarly Activities

APPROVED William A. Meehan, President

PURPOSE

To ensure the highest standards of research integrity and address scholarly misconduct

POLICY

Definition - "Misconduct" means fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the academic community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research. It does not include honest differences in interpretation or judgments of data.

Guidelines

1. The credentials of all potential faculty are to be thoroughly examined by the appropriate department heads or their representatives in order to verify the claimed accomplishments of the candidate.
2. Faculty members who are in supervisory positions with regard to colleagues, visiting professors, eminent scholars, technicians, and students are expected to work closely with these individuals to provide them with appropriate guidance and counsel, to the end that these individuals continue to maintain the highest professional standards.
3. Research results should be supported by verifiable evidence. Faculty and staff should maintain sufficient written records or other documentation of their studies.
4. The faculty is encouraged to engage in free discussion of results, to share data and techniques, and to avoid secrecy in the conduct of original investigations. It should be remembered that independent confirmation of results is important in direct proportion to the significance of the results in question, and may be crucial to the establishment of new concepts.
5. Faculty members are responsible for the quality of all reports based on their own efforts or on the collaborative work of students, technicians, or colleagues, especially those which bear the faculty member's name. The word "reports" is used here to mean

manuscripts submitted for publication as well as abstracts of papers submitted for presentation at meetings. The same standards of integrity apply to abstracts as to full-length publications. No faculty member shall allow his/her name to be used on any report containing results for which that faculty member cannot assume full professional and ethical responsibility.

6. The faculty is encouraged to increase student and staff awareness of the importance of maintaining high standards in research and to discuss issues related to research ethics in formal courses, in seminars and by other informal means.
7. The University will consider complaints, charges or allegations raised by individuals or entities outside the University. It is the responsibility of any employee who becomes aware of evidence of misconduct to present such evidence in writing to the department head of the suspected individual.

Procedures to be followed

Any employee (including regular and adjunct faculty, visiting professors, eminent scholars, technicians, and students) of this University who has reason to suspect any other employee or student of misconduct with regard to the conduct or reporting of research has the responsibility of following up these suspicions by direct conversation with the employee in question or by other appropriate means. A student who is suspected of misconduct with regard to the conduct or reporting of research is subject to the University Policies and University Judicial System as outlined in the current *Student Handbook*. The investigative procedure set forth herein is the exclusive procedure to be followed when an allegation of misconduct is raised against a University employee. In the event adverse action is ultimately taken against the charged employee, such employee may follow the grievance procedure outlined in the appropriate handbook (faculty or staff).

1. Allegations of misconduct are to be made only on the basis of substantial evidence. It is the responsibility of any employee who becomes aware of such evidence to present this, in writing, to the department head of the suspected individual. Such allegations are a very serious matter and all parties involved should take measures to assure that the rights and reputations of all individuals named in such allegations and all individuals who in good faith report apparent misconduct are protected.
2. The department head to whom allegations are reported must immediately investigate the allegations. Such investigation should include an interview with the suspected individual. If the activities in question suggest misconduct, the department head must immediately notify the dean of the college who must, in turn, investigate the suspected misconduct and inform the Provost.
3. If the Provost determines that a reasonable likelihood of misconduct exists, he or she must immediately inform the President.

4. Following the Provost's informing the President, any agency or foundation supporting the research in question shall be promptly notified. Any agency will be given interim reports of any investigation should the circumstances warrant.
5. Upon being informed by the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs that a reasonable likelihood of misconduct exists, the President shall then appoint an investigating committee. The Vice Provost shall serve as Secretary to the investigating committee in an ex-officio capacity. It should take no more than thirty days from the date of the initial allegations of misconduct before the President is informed and a committee is appointed. The committee will elect its own chairman. Members of the committee will consist of a department head, a dean, and three tenured faculty members who have the expertise to deal with technical aspects of the activities in question. At least two of these faculty members must be from outside the suspected individual's department. No one making an allegation of misconduct shall be a committee member.

The President shall take precautions not to appoint any committee member who has a real or apparent conflict of interest with the outcome of the investigation. The chairman shall conduct meetings of this committee as frequently as required in order to determine whether the activities in question are indeed misconduct. All such meetings and the deliberations thereof shall be held in confidence to protect the affected individual or individuals. Those accused of misconduct shall be afforded an opportunity to appear before the committee to comment on allegations and/or findings of the committee. The committee should obtain comments from the individual(s) subject to the investigation and prepare a report which shall be submitted by the investigating Committee Secretary, through the Provost, to the President. The President, based on the committee's findings, shall determine what actions are appropriate.

6. Any involved funding agency shall be notified of the final outcome of any investigation.
7. Records documenting the inquiry will be maintained for at least three (3) years and will be available to authorized agency personnel on request.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Vice Provost is responsible for this policy.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed biennially.