



Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct

Responsible Officer:	VP – Research & Innovation
Responsible Office:	RI – Research & Innovation
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Scope:	This Policy applies to all research conducted under the auspices of any University of California (UC) Location by a person who, at the time of the alleged Research Misconduct, was affiliated with UC, including but not limited to faculty and other academic appointees, staff, students, postdoctoral scholars, and visiting scholars. This Policy applies to all research regardless of source of funding and/or sponsor. The Policy does not apply to activities undertaken in fulfillment of course requirements (unless there is an expectation of publication or dissemination of the results of such research outside of UC).

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I. POLICY SUMMARY

This Policy affirms UC's commitment to integrity in research and directs Locations to establish policies and procedures for responding to allegations of Research Misconduct. It implements the Federal Policy on Research Misconduct issued by the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) in December 2000 ("[Federal Policy](#)").¹ This Policy also intends to satisfy the research misconduct requirements of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) ("[PHS Policies](#)"),² the National Science Foundation ("[NSF Policy](#)"),³ and other federal agencies, in effect at the time of the alleged Research Misconduct.

II. DEFINITIONS

UC adopts definitions related to Research Misconduct provided in the [Federal Policy](#). For convenience, the definitions of some terms are repeated below. Where a sponsor adopts a definition that differs from the Federal Policy, UC will use the sponsor's definition for responding to allegations of Research Misconduct for research funded by that sponsor, in effect at the time of the alleged Research Misconduct.

Fabrication is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.

Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.

Location means University of California campuses, University of California managed hospitals and medical centers, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR), Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and the Office of the President.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.

Research Misconduct means fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. Research Misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion.

Research means a systematic experiment, study, evaluation, demonstration, or survey designed to develop or contribute to general knowledge (basic research) or specific knowledge (applied research).⁴

¹ [Federal Policy on Research Misconduct](#), 65 Fed. Reg. 76260 (Dec. 6, 2000).

² [Public Health Service Policies on Research Misconduct](#), 42 C.F.R. § 93.25-.511 (Sept. 17, 2024).

³ [National Science Foundation, Research Misconduct](#), 45 C.F.R. § 689.

⁴ The Federal Policy does not provide a definition for "research." This definition of research is based on the definition of "research" in the [PHS Policies, § 93.232](#).

III. POLICY TEXT

UC is committed to maintaining integrity in scholarship and research, responding to allegations of Research Misconduct, and fostering a climate conducive to research integrity in accordance with the [UC Statement of Ethical Values](#).

This Policy governs how UC responds to allegations of Research Misconduct, and subsequent federal agency requirements, including, but not limited to, the [PHS Policies](#),⁵ and the [NSF Policy](#),⁶ in effect at the time of the alleged Research Misconduct.

IV. COMPLIANCE/RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the UC research community are expected to cooperate and act in good faith in reporting suspected Research Misconduct and in responding to allegations of Research Misconduct, providing research records and other relevant information to Research Integrity Officers and other UC officials in the course of their review of allegations of Research Misconduct, participating in Research Misconduct proceedings, and refraining from retaliation or interference with a Research Misconduct proceeding.

Responsibilities

Chancellors, Laboratory Directors, the Vice President of ANR, or their designees, are responsible for the implementation of this Policy, including the consideration of initial allegations of Research Misconduct and, when necessary, initiation of formal inquiries and, if warranted, investigations. Chancellors, Laboratory Directors, the Vice President of ANR, or their designees, are also responsible for designating the individuals to serve as the Deciding Official and Research Integrity Officer at their respective Locations.

Deciding Officials are the Location-designated officials responsible for making final determinations of Research Misconduct findings. The same individual cannot serve as both the Deciding Official and the Research Integrity Officer.

Research Integrity Officers (RIOs) are the Location-designated officials responsible for compliance and implementation, including establishing appropriate procedures and documentation.

Principal Investigators and the research team must:

1. Follow all applicable institutional and U.S. government policies, requirements, and regulations regarding Research Misconduct.
2. Comply with their Location's policies and procedures implementing this Policy and any extramural contract and grant terms and conditions supporting their Research.
3. Conduct all Research in accordance with the standards of the research discipline.

V. PROCEDURES

Each Location must implement policies and procedures for responding to allegations of Research Misconduct that are publicly available and that include:

⁵ [Public Health Service Policies on Research Misconduct](#), 42 C.F.R. § 93.25-.511 (Sept. 17, 2024).

⁶ [National Science Foundation, Research Misconduct](#), 45 C.F.R. § 689.

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- procedures for assessment, inquiry, and investigation;
- conflict-of-interest and confidentiality safeguards;
- timelines for each stage of the process; and
- standards of proof and burden of proof.

The process of making a final determination of Research Misconduct findings by the Deciding Official is separate from the process for imposing sanctions or discipline. For sanctions or discipline when the allegation of Research Misconduct has been substantiated, Locations must refer to other relevant UC Policies, depending on the type of Respondent, such as:

- For students, corrective action/discipline is governed by the [Policy on Student Conduct and Discipline \(PACAOS 100\)](#).
- For policy-covered staff employees, corrective action/discipline is governed by [Personnel Policies for Staff Members 62 \(Corrective Action\)](#), [63 \(Investigatory Leave\)](#), and [64 \(Termination and Job Abandonment\)](#); [Personnel Policies for Staff Members II-64 \(Termination of Appointment\)](#), which applies to Senior Management Group (SMG) employees; and as applicable, other policies and procedures.
- For academic personnel, corrective action/discipline is governed by [Academic Personnel Manual - 015 \(The Faculty Code of Conduct\)](#) and [APM - 016 \(University Policy on Faculty Conduct and the Administration of Discipline\)](#); [APM - 150 \(Non-Senate Academic Appointees/Corrective Action and Dismissal\)](#) and, as applicable, other policies and procedures. This Policy does not supplant disciplinary processes described in the APM or in the Academic Senate's Bylaws or regulations.
- For represented employees, corrective action/discipline is governed by collective bargaining agreements.

When extramural funds are involved, local guidelines and procedures must comply with the conditions of the award, including applicable Federal regulations or policies.⁷ Such Federal regulations may require specific reports to the sponsoring agency. Locations may develop different policies and procedures to address situations in which allegations of Research Misconduct arise in the context of non-federally-funded research, including non-extramurally-funded research.

VI. RELATED INFORMATION/RESOURCES

- [University of California Regents Policy 1111: Policy on Statement of Ethical Values and Standards of Ethical Conduct](#)
- Office of Science and Technology Policy, [Federal Policy on Research Misconduct](#) (Dec. 6, 2000)
- Some Federal agency policies on Research Misconduct

⁷ For PHS and NSF, these are the Public Health Service Policies on Research Misconduct (42 CFR, Part 93) and the National Science Foundation regulations on Research Misconduct (45 CFR, Part 689), respectively.

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- Health and Human Services Department, [Public Health Service Policies on Research Misconduct](#), 42 CFR, Part 93
- National Science Foundation, [Research Misconduct](#), 45 CFR, Part 689
- Dept. of Energy, [Allegations of Research Misconduct](#), 10 CFR, Part 733, and [Research misconduct](#), 2 CFR § 910.132
- Dept. of Agriculture, [Research Institutions Conducting USDA-Funded Extramural Research; Research Misconduct](#), 2 CFR, Part 422
- NASA, [Research Misconduct](#), 14 CFR, Part 1275
- [The Office of Research Integrity \(ORI\) website](#)
 - [ORI Sample Policy & Procedures](#)
- Other research-related University policies that may overlap with this Policy:
 - [Use of Animals in Research and Teaching](#)
 - [Protection of Human Subjects in Research](#)
 - [Research Data and Ownership Policy](#)
 - [Academic Personnel Manual](#), such as [The Faculty Code of Conduct \(APM-015\)](#) and [University Policy on Faculty Conduct and The Administration of Discipline \(APM-016\)](#)
 - [Personnel Policies for Staff Members](#), such as [PPSM-62: Corrective Action](#)
 - [Policy on Student Conduct and Discipline \(PACAOS 100\)](#)

VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Not applicable.

VIII. REVISION HISTORY

March 19, 2026: Revised to conform with updated Public Health Service Policies effective Jan. 1, 2025 (issued Sept. 17, 2024); changed policy name.

June 19, 1990: Issued as a new policy.