

# What You Need to Know about Research Misconduct

## Columbia University | Office of Research Compliance and Training

### What is Research Misconduct?

**Fabrication** – making up data or results and recording or reporting them

**Falsification** – 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

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

### What is not Research Misconduct?

- Honest Error
- Difference of opinion
- Authorship disputes
- Questionable research practices\*

\*Can still affect the integrity and quality of research

### Who can Report Research Misconduct?

Anybody. Columbia has policies, protections and resources available for reporting research misconduct in good faith.

### Where can Research Misconduct Occur?

Publications, presentations, posters, funding applications (funded or unfunded), theses, other reports of research results (including internal reports).

### Who is Affected by Research Misconduct?

Everyone: research team, institution, research community, the public (taxpayers, patients), the overall credibility of research enterprise.

References:

<https://ori.hhs.gov/definition-misconduct>

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/handbook/appendixc.html>

## Research Misconduct Safeguards and Procedures\*\*

### Safeguards

As outlined in Columbia University's Institutional Policy on Misconduct in Research, all parties must be treated fairly and reasonably. To the extent possible, knowledge about the identity of parties is limited to those who need to know and all materials and information shall be kept confidential.

### Roles

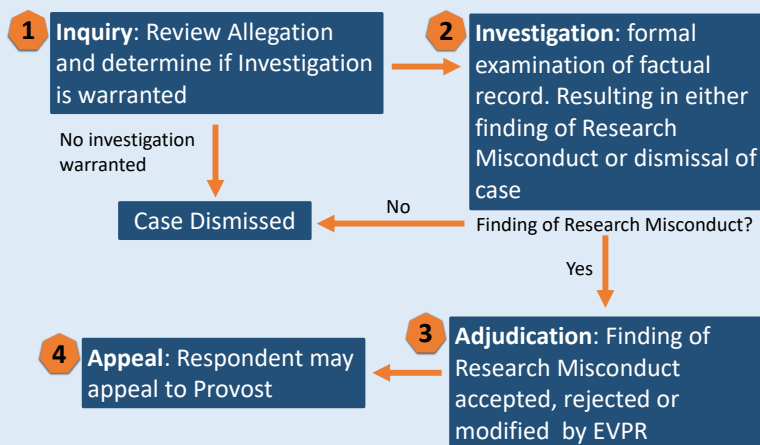
**Standing Committee on the Conduct of Research:** EVPR-appointed standing committee that oversees research misconduct process

**Ad Hoc Faculty Committees:** Appointed by Standing Committee to conduct Inquiries and Investigations

**Office of Research Compliance and Training:** Staff all committees; support process

**Research Integrity Officer:** Institutional official responsible for compliance with federal research misconduct regulations

### Key Stages Following Formal Allegation



A finding of Research Misconduct must meet three prerequisites:

- There has been a significant departure from accepted practices in the relevant research community;
- Research Misconduct has been committed intentionally, knowingly or recklessly; and
- The Allegation is proven by a preponderance of the evidence.

\*\*Based upon Columbia University's Institutional Policy on Misconduct in Research. <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/handbook/appendixc.html>

## Resources

**Office of Research Compliance & Training**  
<https://researchcompliance.columbia.edu>

**24/7 Confidential Compliance Hotline**  
<https://compliance.columbia.edu/hotline>  
 866-627-3768

**Ombuds Office**  
<https://ombuds.columbia.edu/>

**Office of Research Integrity**  
<https://ori.hhs.gov/>