

## 13.13 Policy on Scholarly Misconduct

### Purpose

To provide guidance in addressing alleged research misconduct by faculty, staff, and students affiliated with the University of Northern Iowa.

### Policy Statement

Scholarly integrity is basic to the academic enterprise. It is the responsibility of all scholars, as teachers and mentors, to model integrity in all of their scholarly endeavors throughout their professional careers. Therefore, misconduct in scholarship is a concern of the entire University community. This policy and associated procedures will normally be followed when an allegation of possible misconduct in scholarship is received by an institutional official. Particular circumstances in an individual case may dictate variation from the normal procedure deemed in the best interest of the University of Northern Iowa (and any federal agency that may have potential funding involved). Any change from normal procedures also must provide fair treatment to the subject of the inquiry or investigation. Any significant variation should be approved in advance by the Executive Vice President and Provost of the University of Northern Iowa.

1. This policy applies to intentional misconduct associated with funded or unfunded scholarship by faculty and staff that has occurred within the 8 years prior to an allegation, subject to the subsequent use, health or safety of the public, and grandfather exceptions in 42 CFR § 93.105(b), when applicable. However, if an inquiry or investigation committee determines that it is necessary to broaden the scope of the inquiry, older material may be subject to examination.
2. Ordinarily, student research misconduct is covered under Policy 3.01 and Policy 3.02, but if in the judgment of the Research Integrity Officer, there is significant evidence of academic misconduct not adequately covered by 3.01 and 3.02, this policy may apply. (For example, this might include a published paper based largely on work conducted while a student at UNI).
3. For the purpose of this policy, *scholarship* refers to activities which are intended to generate and/or contribute to the knowledge base or creative works in a disciplinary field or general community external to the institution (e.g., research and creative activities). This does not typically include activities primarily intended to contribute to teaching and learning in one's own classroom (e.g., curriculum development or service learning projects) or activities typically undertaken to fulfill institutional responsibilities, unless those activities may result in dissemination beyond the university.
4. **Scholarly misconduct** means fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other behaviors and practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the academic community for proposing, undertaking, or disseminating research and other forms of scholarship. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments. Scholarly misconduct is an intentional or knowing act of deception or a flagrant disregard of commonly accepted research or ethical practices.
  - a. **Fabrication** is making up of data or results and/or having them recorded or reported.
  - b. **Falsification** is manipulating scholarly materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the works are not accurately represented.
  - c. **Plagiarism** is intentionally or knowingly representing the works of another as one's own. Plagiarism includes both the theft or misappropriation of intellectual property and the substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work. The theft or misappropriation of intellectual property includes the unauthorized use of ideas or unique methods

obtained by a privileged communication, such as a grant, manuscript review or intellectual property disclosure. Substantial unattributed textual copying of another's work means the unattributed verbatim or nearly verbatim copying of text, or extensive paraphrasing of texts, which materially mislead the ordinary reader regarding the contributions of the author.

5. When federal funding or an application for funding is involved, notification of the sponsor may be required, such as when a misconduct allegation moves beyond an inquiry into a formal investigation by the institution, or in special circumstances at any point following an allegation.
6. Officials or representatives of the University should be vigilant for signs of scholarly misconduct, even if concerns within the University community do not result in complaints by individuals. For example, the University may conduct its own inquiry based on concerns which come to the attention of university officials even in the absence of specific complaints.
7. All employees or individuals associated with the University of Northern Iowa must report observed, suspected, or apparent scholarly misconduct to the Research Integrity Officer (see <https://rsp.uni.edu/research-misconduct>). Observed, suspected, or apparent scholarly misconduct by UNI students must be reported to the Research Integrity Officer, Dean of Students, or Provost. If an individual is unsure whether a suspected incident falls within the definition of scholarly misconduct, he or she may call the Research Integrity Officer to discuss the suspected misconduct informally.
8. The University's **Deciding Official** in regard to research misconduct is the institutional official who oversees the process described in this policy and makes the final determination on allegations of research misconduct and any responsive institutional actions, except on those delegated to other institutional officials. The Deciding Official at the University of Northern Iowa is the Executive Vice President and Provost or the Provost's designee.
9. The **Research Integrity Officer** (RIO) is the institutional official responsible for assessing allegations of scholarly misconduct and determining when such allegations warrant inquiries, and for overseeing inquiries and investigations. The RIO is appointed by the Provost and is responsible for maintaining and disseminating detailed procedures necessary to effectively administer this policy. The RIO will receive allegations and facilitate the inquiry, investigation, and administrative processes, and will attempt to ensure that appropriate documentation and communications take place.

### Summary of Procedure

1. Upon receiving an allegation of scholarly misconduct, the Research Integrity Officer will immediately assess the allegation to determine whether the allegation falls under the definition of scholarly misconduct, there is sufficient evidence or information to warrant an inquiry, and any federal support or federal application for funding is involved. If the allegation is not scholarly misconduct as defined in this policy, the matter will be referred back to the individual faculty or staff member, Department Head, Dean, or Divisional Vice President, as appropriate to the circumstances. If the allegation does involve scholarly misconduct, this policy will apply and the results of any inquiry, investigation, and recommendations will be provided to the Deciding Official, who will involve the senior university official or unit that oversees the individual faculty or staff member, as appropriate.

2. After determining that an allegation falls within the definition of scholarly misconduct, the Research Integrity Officer shall have all original (drop “research”) records and materials relevant to the allegation immediately secured.
3. If the Research Integrity Officer determines that the allegation provides sufficient information to allow and warrant specific follow-up, s/he will initiate the inquiry process, including the appointment of an inquiry committee. In initiating the inquiry, the Research Integrity Officer should identify clearly the original allegation and any related issues that should be evaluated. The purpose of the inquiry is to make a preliminary evaluation of the available evidence, which may include testimony from the respondent, complainant, and key witnesses, to determine whether there is sufficient evidence of possible scholarly misconduct to warrant an investigation. Upon completion of the inquiry, the Deciding Official will determine whether or not an investigation should be conducted. If so, an investigation committee will explore the allegations and the evidence in depth, and determine specifically whether misconduct has been committed, by whom, and to what extent.
4. In the event the investigation determines that misconduct has occurred, the Deciding Official, in consultation with the RIO, will determine whether law enforcement agencies, professional societies, professional licensing boards, editors of journals in which papers or reports have been published, collaborators of the respondent in the work, or other relevant parties should be notified of the outcome of the case. The Research Integrity Officer is responsible for the University's compliance with all notification requirements of funding or sponsoring agencies.
5. Each inquiry and investigation will be conducted in a manner that will provide fair treatment to the respondent(s), protection for the complainant, and confidentiality to the extent possible without compromising public health and safety, or the inquiry or investigation.

### **Further Information**

For additional information on the policies and procedures pertaining to research integrity and misconduct, refer to <http://rsp.uni.edu/research-compliance> and <https://rsp.uni.edu/research-misconduct>.