The University Role in Investigating and Preventing Research Misconduct

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Overview

• How do universities investigate research misconduct?
• How do universities prevent research misconduct?
• Working together
Who Investigates Allegations?

• “...research institutions bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct and for the inquiry, investigation, and adjudication of research misconduct alleged to have occurred in association with their own institution.”
  – “Research institutions are much closer to what is going on in their own institutions and are in a better position to conduct inquiries and investigations than are the Federal agencies.”
  – PHS and NSF require assurance that grantees will follow guidelines and procedures

Who Investigates Allegations?

- “After reviewing the record of the investigation, the institution's recommendations to the institution's adjudicating official, and any corrective actions taken by the research institution, **the agency will take additional oversight or investigative steps if necessary.** Upon completion of its review, the agency will take appropriate administrative action…”

How are Allegations Investigated?

• Receipt of Allegation by Research Integrity Officer
• Assessment Phase (~30 days)
  – Relevant, sufficiently specific?
• Sequestration of Evidence
• Inquiry Phase (~60 days)
  – Eliminate those not meriting investigation
• Investigation Phase (120 - ??? Days)
  – Determine by preponderance of the evidence:
    • Significant departure from accepted practices of relevant research community
    • Committed recklessly, knowingly or intentionally
Results of Investigation

• Institutional Actions by University
  – Corrective
  – Restorative
  – Disciplinary
  – Preventive

• Administrative actions by agencies

• Potentially, criminal or civil fraud violations
Preventing Misconduct

Responsible Conduct of Research Education

- Conflict of interest
- Human and animal subjects and safe laboratory practices.
- Mentor and mentee responsibilities and relationships.
- Collaborative research
- Peer review.
- Data acquisition and laboratory tools; management, sharing and ownership.

- **Research misconduct and policies for handling misconduct.**
- Responsible authorship and publication.
- The scientist as a responsible member of society
## Preventing Misconduct
### Creating/Maintaining Research Culture

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<tr>
<th>Culture of Compliance</th>
<th>Culture of Integrity</th>
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<td>• “Doing what you have been asked or ordered to do”</td>
<td>• “A personal choice, an uncompromising and predictably consistent commitment to honour moral, ethical, spiritual and artistic values and principles” (Killinger, 2010)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Following the Rules</td>
<td>• Doing the Right Thing (when no one is looking)</td>
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The University-Journal Nexus

- We share common interest in maintaining the integrity of the scientific record
- Areas of enhanced collaboration:
  - Reporting concerns to RIOs
  - Cooperating with investigations
  - Requiring data repositories
  - Supporting recommendations for corrections or retractions
- Journal perspectives?
  - Why does the process take so long?
“...not just doing research, but doing research well! Conducting research with integrity is a matter of excellence.”

Source: U of New Mexico