

## **POLICY ON INTEGRITY IN SCHOLARSHIP**

Reported instances of scholarly misconduct appear to represent only a small fraction of the total number of research and research training awards nationwide. Nevertheless, even a small number of instances of scholarly misconduct is unacceptable, could threaten the continued public confidence in the integrity of the scientific process, and could call into question continued funding of scholarly and scientific research from Federal, State or private sources. New Jersey Institute of Technology has approved the following policy to foster an environment that discourages the misconduct in all research and to deal with forthrightly with allegations and investigations involving possible misconduct in science, scholarship and research.

### **Definitions:**

1. “Misconduct” or “Misconduct in Scholarship” means fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the scientific and scholarly communities for processing, conducting, or reporting research. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data.
2. “Inquiry” means information gathering and initial factfinding to determine whether an allegation or apparent instance of misconduct warrants an investigation.
3. “Investigation” means the formal examination and evaluation of all relevant facts to determine if misconduct has occurred.

### **Procedures:**

1. The university shall inquire immediately into an allegation or other evidence of possible misconduct. A formal allegation of misconduct in scholarship should be presented in writing to the Director of Research Policy and Information in order to initiate an inquiry. The allegation must be presented to the Director of Research Policy and Information within one (1) year of the date of the alleged misconduct or of the time the initiator should have reasonably known of the occurrence of the alleged misconduct. An inquiry must be completed within sixty (60) calendar days of its initiation unless circumstances clearly warrant a longer period. The Director of Research Policy and Information shall present to the Provost a written report that states what evidence was reviewed, summarizes relevant interviews, and includes the conclusions of the inquiry. The individual(s) against whom the allegation was made shall be given a copy of the report of inquiry. If they comment on that report, their

comments may be made part of the record. If the inquiry takes longer than sixty (60) days to complete, the record of the inquiry shall include documentation of the reasons for exceeding the sixty (60) day period.

2. The university will strive to protect, to the maximum extent possible, the privacy of those who in good faith report apparent misconduct.
3. The university shall afford to the affected individual(s):
  - a. confidential treatment to the maximum extent possible;
  - b. a prompt and thorough investigation; and
  - c. an opportunity to comment on the allegations and findings of the inquiry and/or the investigation.
4. If the findings from the inquiry provide sufficient basis for conducting an investigation, the university shall undertake such an investigation within thirty (30) days of the completion of the inquiry. The Provost shall name an ad-hoc committee to conduct such investigation of possible misconduct of scholarship. The ad-hoc committee may include individuals from the university or individuals from outside the university at the discretion of the Provost. Further, at the discretion of the Provost, the university may secure necessary and appropriate expertise to carry out a thorough and authoritative evaluation of the relevant evidence in any investigation.
5. The investigation normally will include examination of all documentation, including but not necessarily limited to the relevant research data or proposals, publications, correspondence, and memoranda of telephone calls. Whenever possible, interviews should be conducted of all individuals involved either in making the allegation or against whom the allegation is made, as well as other individuals who might have information regarding key aspects of the allegations; complete summaries of these interviews should be prepared, provided to the interviewed party for comment or revision, and included as part of the investigatory file.
6. The university shall take precautions against real and apparent conflicts of interest on the part of those involved in the inquiry or investigation.
7. The ad-hoc committee must complete its investigation within ninety (90) calendar days of its initiation unless the Provost has determined that circumstances clearly warrant a longer period. The ad-hoc committee shall present to the Provost a written report detailing its findings and recommendations. The ad-hoc committee shall prepare and maintain documentation to substantiate the investigation's findings. The individual(s) against whom the allegation has been made shall be given a

copy of the findings of the ad-hoc committee. If they comment on the findings, their comments may be made part of the record.

8. The Provost shall impose appropriate sanctions on the individuals when the allegation of misconduct has been substantiated.
9. The university shall undertake diligent efforts, as appropriate to restore the reputations of persons alleged to have engaged in misconduct when allegations are not confirmed, and also undertake diligent efforts to protect the positions and reputations of those persons who, in good faith, make allegations.

**Responsibilities and Reporting:**

1. The university will take interim administrative actions, as appropriate to protect Federal, State, or private funds and insure that the purposes of Federal, State, or private financial assistance are carried out.
2. The university will notify appropriate Federal or State agencies of actions taken as may be required under Federal or State regulations and the terms and conditions of research grants or contracts. In addition, the university will notify appropriate private or industrial sponsors or contracting entities of actions taken as may be required under the terms and conditions of research grants or contracts.
3. In addition to actions taken by the university, Federal or State agencies may undertake their own investigations and may impose their own sanctions, including the possibility of criminal sanctions.