



Senate

Policy Name	Policy and Procedures for Integrity in Research and Scholarship
Policy Number	CRP 2013-01 RESO.POL.002
Origin	Committee on Research and Publication
Authority	Senate
Date of Original Approval	September 29, 2008
Supersedes	Guidelines, Policies and Procedures for Integrity in Research and Scholarship
Last Updated	November 25, 2013
Effective from	November 25, 2013
Review/Retirement Date	2017
Responsibility for Revision	Associate Vice-President, Academic and Research
Responsibility for Implementation	Associate Vice-President, Academic and Research

DOC #	RESO.POL.002
Title	<b>POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP</b>
Document Type	Policy
Effective Date	November 25, 2013
Version	5.0
Prev. Version	4.0 –
Next Review	2017

The development of this document, Policy and Procedures for Integrity in Research and Scholarship, has benefited directly from the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#) as well as similar documents developed and made public by other Canadian universities and the national research councils. In particular, iterations presented in the research and scholarship integrity policies, procedures, and guidelines of Carleton University, Dalhousie University, Lakehead University, McGill University, St. Mary's University, University of Toronto, and the University of Western Ontario have informed the organization and content of Mount Saint Vincent University's (the Mount) policy documents. In some instances specific formulations drawn from these sources have been incorporated into this document. Similar documents developed and made public by additional universities and agencies, such as those of the University of Toronto, the Tri-Council, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Natural Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), have also been consulted through the course of developing the Mount's policies and procedures.

The Mount's Policy and Procedures for Integrity in Research and Scholarship does not supersede or replace any provisions concerning similar matters that may be incorporated within existing collective agreements or Senate policy, for example, policies, procedures and guidelines for research involving human participants. The provisions contained herein are intended to provide appropriate clarity, specifications and guidance. For purposes of consistency and clarity, the language of this document generally reflects that used in the revised [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#). The University has undertaken to define its policies and expectations with regard to academic integrity in a manner consistent with encouraging the highest standards of research and scholarship. Principles of academic integrity overlap with other areas, such as financial integrity in the use of research funds and the ethical issues involving the use of human participants or animal subjects in research, for which the University has established guidelines and requirements. This document is concerned only with research and scholarly integrity, and

does not replace any other statements from the University on other areas with which this issue may overlap.

The Mount considers adherence to the highest standards of research and scholarly integrity to be a community, departmental/program, and individual duty and responsibility. As such, the University community will not tolerate any intentional breach of policy on scholarly and/or research conduct. Such actions compromise the very foundation of confidence in University-sited research and scholarship, and threaten and tarnish the reputations of all comprising the University community. This document is designed to promote academic integrity at the Mount by providing information about the meaning of research integrity, how to foster and achieve research integrity, and the consequences of breaching research/scholarly integrity.

## 1. Definitions

- **Administrative Officer:** refers to any or all Senior Administrative appointments, including the offices of Dean, Associate Vice-President, Vice-President, and President.
- **Agency or Agencies:** Canada's three federal granting agencies: the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR); the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC); and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). **All parties:** refers in the case of a formal investigation to all persons making an allegation and all persons charged with an allegation of a breach of policy as defined herein.
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- **Breach of Policy:** refers to any conscious and deliberate action that is inconsistent with and/or in violation of integrity in research and scholarly conduct.
- **Complainant(s):** refers to any individual or group accusing one or more members of the Mount community of a breach of policy on scholarly/research conduct.
- **Conflict of interest:** refers to activities or situations which place an individual in a real, potential or perceived conflict between the duties or responsibilities related to research, and personal, institutional or other interests. These interests include, but are not limited to, business, commercial or financial interests pertaining to individuals, their family members, friends, or their former, current or prospective professional associates.
- **Granting Agencies:** refers to any agency or organization that provides grants and/or contracts for the funding of research, including the three major federal funding agencies, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), and the Canada Institute of Health Research (CIHR).
- **Independent Committee of Inquiry:** refers to the Committee appointed for and tasked with the responsibility of determining whether responsible allegations of a breach of policy on scholarly/research conduct are

substantiated. The Committee is to be composed of scholars/researchers with necessary expertise and without conflict of interest. At least one member will be external to the University.

- **Independent Integrity Mediator:** refers to the Mount Professor Emeritus or Full Professor tasked to find mutually agreeable resolutions to responsible allegations of breach of policy on scholarly/research conduct against any member or members of the Mount community
- **Investigation:** A systematic process to examine an allegation, collect and examine evidence related to the allegation, and make a decision as to whether a breach of policy has occurred.
- **Named individual(s):** refers to the individual or individuals, who are accused of a breach of policy on scholarly/research conduct as described by this document and are named in an allegation.
- **Principal Investigator:** refers to the person who has primary responsibility for a research project and its administration.
- **Research:** is defined in this policy as a systematic investigation for purposes of developing perspectives, creating knowledge, gaining insights, developing generalizations, informing policy or practice, or otherwise making a positive difference in the lives of individuals and/or communities. For the purpose of this policy, research includes all forms of funded and unfunded research and creative scholarly work, representing a diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives and approaches, conducted by and within the Mount community and by people who use the Mount facilities for the creation, representation and publication of scholarly work.
- The term **researcher**, as used in this policy, includes:
  - any Mount faculty member, emeritus faculty, staff, part-time lecturers, administrators, students, visiting or adjunct scholars, post-doctoral fellows and chairs, paid and unpaid research associates and assistants, and any person in a like position, who conducts, engages with, or advances research in any capacity, or;
  - who accesses University students or staff as human research participants, or;
  - any other person who conducts, engages with or advances research as connected with the University, and/or;
  - any person who conducts research using University resources (for instance, research space, materials, equipment, or human resources).
- **Respondent(s):** refers to any individual or group within the Mount community accused of a breach of policy on scholarly/research conduct.
- **Responsible allegation:** a substantially novel allegation made in good faith, confidentially and without malice, that is based on facts which have not been the subject of a previous allegation, and which falls within one or more breaches set out in [Section 3](#) of the *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research*.
- **Scholarship:** intellectual or creative contributions as understood and expressed through academic discipline or professional field normative criteria that also ordinarily value and employ independent peer review evaluations in determining publication merit.

- **Serious breach:** Following the Tri-Agency Framework, a breach is determined to be serious based on the extent to which the breach jeopardizes the safety of the public or brings the conduct of research into disrepute. This determination will be based on an assessment of the nature of the breach, the level of experience of the researcher, whether there is a pattern of breaches by the researcher, and other factors as appropriate. Examples of serious breaches may include:
  - recruiting human participants into a study with significant risks or harms without Research Ethics Board approval, or not following approved protocols;
  - using animals in a study with significant risks or harms without Animal Care Committee approval, or not following approved protocols;
  - deliberate misuse of research grant funds for personal benefit not related to research;
  - knowingly publishing research results based on fabricated data;
  - obtaining grant/award funds from the Agencies by misrepresenting one's credentials, qualifications and/or research contributions in an application.
- **Tri-Council or Council:** refers to all or any of the three federal granting agencies: the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), and the Canada Institute of Health Research (CIHR).
- **the University:** refers to Mount Saint Vincent University.
- **University community:** all full-time and part-time faculty; all full-time and part-time staff; all full-time and part-time administrators; all full-time and part-time students (both undergraduate and graduate); and all people hired on term positions and/or casual employment positions at Mount Saint Vincent University and any person in a like position, who conducts, engages with, or advances research in any capacity affiliated with the Mount.

## 2. Preamble

The University is a primary social institution engaged in the search for and development of knowledge and understanding. Research, scholarship, and teaching are the main means through which these are sought and expressed. Academic and intellectual freedoms, including independence of inquiry, provided through and defended by the University community are essential in these pursuits. These freedoms underwrite the breadth, depth, and dynamism of the University's intellectual and educational work, assuring an open, welcoming, and supportive climate and culture of scholarly inquiry and debate. These freedoms also oblige the University to situate honesty, transparency, responsibility, and accountability within the very essence of the pursuit, representation, and communication of knowledge and understanding. Arguably, confidence in and support of the University reside, to a large extent, in the belief that integrity characterizes the conduct of research and scholarly comportment.

### **3. Principles of Practice**

Mount Saint Vincent University is committed to excellence in research and education, expressing the highest standards of research and scholarly integrity. As such, the Mount expects all members of the University community to comport themselves with respect to the highest standards of behaviour in the conduct of research and scholarship. These standards would include, but are not limited to, attributes such as:

- 3.1. complete representation of all contributions to research and publication, including student contributions, through authorship credit and/or formal acknowledgement;
- 3.2. employment of the unpublished work of others only with formal permissions and due and appropriate acknowledgement of published sources;
- 3.3. adherence to the peer assessment confidentiality provisions, expectations, and responsibilities with respect to the information, ideas, plans, and identities contained in manuscripts, research proposals, funding applications that one may be asked to review and assess;
- 3.4. careful development and planning of research protocols wherein the methods of data collection, sharing, and storage and the methods of analyses and collaborative oversight are specified and shown as appropriate to the research to be undertaken;
- 3.5. employment of scholarly rigour in proposing and performing research as well as in recording, analyzing, interpreting and publishing research-based material;
- 3.6. appropriate use of research funds and resources (e.g., space, equipment, research time);
- 3.7. employment of ethically appropriate and respectful relations with human and animal participants in research;
- 3.8. adherence to the University's research regulations, as well as the various research ethics and administrative requirements associated with accessing and utilizing funds from granting agencies in support of research;
- 3.9. respect for any agreements undertaken with research, community, organizational, and University collaborators and participants; and,
- 3.10. respect for one's own discipline's established ethical research conduct principles.

### **4. Duties Pertaining to Authorship**

The determination of authorship credit often represents particular and special challenges. This section is intended to provide clarification and guidelines respecting the meaning of authorship and the assignment of authorship credit. It must be understood that the right to authorship is based on an intellectual or creative contribution that is definitive and attributable to the research work. Research and scholarly collaborators should establish, as early as possible, how the attribution of authorship and allocation of copyright are to be assigned.

#### **4.1. Attribution of authorship**

The following rules govern the attribution of authorship:

- 4.1.1. authorship is attributed to all those persons who have made significant intellectual contributions to the work and who share responsibility and accountability for the results;
- 4.1.2. an administrative relationship to the investigation does not, in itself, qualify a person for authorship credit;
- 4.1.3. the order of the names in a journal publication represent the importance and quality of the respective contributions of the signatories unless the rules of the journal or the custom of the discipline or author partnership specify otherwise;
- 4.1.4. the attribution of authorship is not affected by whether researchers were paid for their contributions or by their employment status.

With the rise of **collaborative** research, multi-authored publications have become increasingly common. Consequently, the determination of entitlement to and the order of authorship attribution have become more challenging and difficult. There are, however, some considerations that should be taken into account. Among these are:

- 4.1.5. when appropriate, one author should be identified as being responsible for the validity of the entire manuscript or authored object;
- 4.1.6. all authors listed must have been involved actively in the research activities leading to the production of the authored work. Each is expected to have made a significant intellectual or practical contribution, understand the significance of the work presented, and be able to share responsibility for the content of the authored work;
- 4.1.7. all authors listed should have seen and approved a manuscript or other research-based material before presentation or submission;
- 4.1.8. the concept of “honorary authorship” is unacceptable.

**4.2. Duties of the principal author(s)**

The author who submits a manuscript for publication or presentation at scholarly meetings accepts the responsibility of having included as co-authors all persons who are entitled to co-authorship, and none who is inappropriate. Additionally, the submitting author(s) must make a reasonable attempt to send a draft copy of the manuscript and obtain consent from each co-author, including the order of names. Other contributions must be indicated in a footnote or an “Acknowledgements” section, in accordance with the standards of the discipline and/or the publisher.

**4.3. The duty to acknowledge sources of funding**

All public and private funding sources (e.g., grants, contracts and gifts, including endowed income supporting themed research chairs) used in the conduct of research must be acknowledged in resulting publications and dissemination.

**4.4. Copyright**

The allocation of copyright is governed by University policy, collective agreements, and the law.

#### **4.5. Student-professor collaborations**

4.5.1. Researchers should discuss with students and research assistants the nature of the collaboration, including conditions of authorship, before the research has begun or before they become involved in it. The student research trainee shall be informed of the *Mount Policy and Procedures for Integrity in Research and Scholarship*.

4.5.2. A student must be granted due prominence on a list of co-authors of any multiple-authored presentation and/or article that is based primarily on the student's own dissertation/thesis/project, according to the normative practice in the discipline.

#### **4.6. Data recording, data ownership, and data retention**

4.6.1 Data recording should follow the normative procedures established within disciplinary research practice and expectations, and comply satisfactorily with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS) as well as the *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research*, and as verified by the University Research Ethics Board (UREB). 4.6.2 Ordinarily, research data are operationally controlled and available for the exclusive use by the individuals and/or teams who generate them through the course of research processes. Research teams would be well-advised to develop formal 'Researcher Protocols' from the outset of their collaboration wherein all of the terms and conditions pertaining to access to and use of data gathered throughout the collaboration are specified. Additionally, Mount-affiliated researchers and research teams, engaging in contract and/or contracted services research, need to be alert to contract provisions pertaining to data sharing, release, and ownership which may compromise intellectual freedom, intellectual property rights, and provisions of collective agreements.

4.6.3 Research data generated with the support of public funds, such as awards from the Tri-Council are subject to the expectation that, once the researcher or research team is finished with the data, they may be placed within a data archive or repository that provides public accessibility. Such public release of data requires that researchers and research teams must prepare the data respecting the UREB and Tri-Council provisions concerning attributes such as participant confidentiality and risk. Otherwise, researchers and research teams must inform themselves about and comply with any provisions respecting data storage, retention, and sharing that may be specified within the terms and conditions of research funding.

#### **4.7. Applying for and holding Tri-Council funding**

4.7.1. Applicants and holders of Tri-Council grants and awards shall provide true, complete and accurate information in their funding applications and related documents and represent themselves, their research and their accomplishments in a manner consistent with the norms of the relevant field.

4.7.2. Applicants certify that they are not currently ineligible to apply for, and/or hold, funds from NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR or any other research or



research funding organization world-wide for reasons of breach of responsible conduct of research policies such as ethics, integrity or financial management policies.

4.7.3. Principal funding applicants must ensure that others listed on the application have agreed to be included.

#### **4.8. Management of Tri-Council Grant and Award Funds**

Researchers are responsible for using grant or award funds in accordance with the policies of the Tri-Council, including the [Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide](#) and Agency grants and awards guides; and for providing true, complete and accurate information on documentation for expenditures from grant or award accounts.

#### **4.9. Tri-Council Requirements for Certain Types of Research**

Researchers must comply with all applicable Tri-Council requirements and legislation for the conduct of research, including, but not limited to:

- [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans](#);
- [Canadian Council on Animal Care Policies and Guidelines](#);
- Agency policies related to the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Act](#);
- Licenses for research in the field;
- [Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines](#);
- [Controlled Goods Program](#);
- [Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission \(CNSC\) Regulations](#); and
- Canada's [Food and Drugs Act](#).

## **5. Research and Scholarly Conduct**

Consistent with the spirit and substance of the University as a self-regulating community of scholars, professionals and students, every member of the University must be prepared to accept responsibility for assuring adherence to the highest standards of academic integrity in research and scholarly activity. This is expressed through the following practices:

- 5.1. Each member of the community must be willing to invoke the approved procedures, specified in Section 7 below, in any case where there is a reasonable suspicion and evidence of a breach of policy on research and/or scholarly conduct.
- 5.2. The community's members must respect those colleagues who do fulfill their individual responsibility by invoking the approved procedures for behaving responsibly in circumstances that are difficult for all concerned.
- 5.3. Finally, the community's members must respect the principles of fairness, so as to protect researchers and scholars from malicious or spurious allegations.

Mount Saint Vincent University will not tolerate any intentional breach of policy in the pursuit of research and scholarly objectives, and will take appropriate measures to maintain research and scholarly integrity. Further, it will take seriously accusations of policy breaches. To this end, the Mount will act, as quickly as possible, to determine their validity and to invoke the appropriate procedures. In so

doing, the University will seek to protect the integrity of academic research and scholarship and the rights of all of its members. At the same time, the University recognizes that not all actions that fail to meet the highest standards of research and scholarship constitute a breach of policy. **A breach of policy in relation to research and scholarly activity is related to and involves a conscious and deliberate deception or action.** Even in such instances, it is recognized that a breach of policy on research and scholarly conduct may express degrees of seriousness. Conversely, misconduct in relation to research and scholarly activity shall not include any matter involving honest differences of opinion and/or honest errors of judgement. Finally, the Mount is committed to resolving issues in a collegial, equitable, transparent, accountable, and timely manner.

## 6. Breaches of Research Policy

A conscious and deliberate breach of policy is a violation of the principles of intellectual honesty and academic freedom, and includes activities such as the misappropriation of writings, research, and discoveries. Specifically, conscious and deliberate breaches of research/scholarly integrity include, but are not limited to:

- 6.1. fabrication of data, and/or falsification of results;
- 6.2. failure to include as authors all those who have made a significant intellectual contribution to the research, including students;
- 6.3. the inclusion as authors those who have not made a significant intellectual contribution to the research and publication (so-called 'honorary authorship' is unacceptable);
- 6.4. failure to recognize, by due acknowledgement within publications and research dissemination activities, the substantive contributions of others;
- 6.5. failure to recognize all sources of research funding support;
- 6.6. selective reporting of data, including the purposeful omission of conflicting data, with the intent to falsify results or to mislead the reader;
- 6.7. plagiarism involving the appropriation and employment of another's words, information, creative work, intellectual property, and/or ideas without public provision of credit, citation, and/or other forms of acknowledgement;
- 6.8. taking advantage of one's privileged position through the unauthorized use of information, such as violation of confidentiality in peer review of unpublished papers, research proposals and other funding applications;
- 6.9. the use of unpublished work such as data, manuscripts and/or proposals of other researchers and scholars without their permission;
- 6.10. the use of archival materials in violation of the rules of the archival source respecting use and publication;
- 6.11. deliberate misrepresentation of the work of others;
- 6.12. the extensive use of others' (e.g., individuals, publishing houses, incorporated business) published material such as papers, articles, editorial cartoons, and intellectual property without their explicit permission (usually in written form);
- 6.13. disposing of intellectual property without due benefit to those entitled to some return (e.g., royalties, patents, commercialization);

- 6.14. conscious and deliberate violation of research protocols, memoranda of understandings, publication and dissemination agreements, including undertakings with research participants agreed to and specified within official research documents such as signed Letters of Consent;
- 6.15. intentional failure to comply with relevant federal or provincial statutes or regulations for the protection of researchers, human subjects, or the public or for the welfare of animals in research, or intentional failure to satisfy other legal and research ethics requirements that relate to the conduct of research and scholarship (ignorance of or disagreement with same do not constitute an absence of intent);
- 6.16. failure to comply with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) for Ethical Conduct For Research Involving Humans*, as outlined in the Mount policies, procedures and guidelines, failure to comply with the *Canadian Council on Animal Care: Policies and Guidelines*, for investigators conducting animal research, failure to comply with the *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research*, or failure to comply with the University's policy on Conflict of Interest in Research;
- 6.17. deliberate destruction of one's own research data in order to avoid detection of wrong doing;
- 6.18. tampering with or the destruction of the research process and/or the data of others;
- 6.19. the intentional misuse of funds and resources (e.g., space, equipment, communications) designated for research and scholarship purposes;
- 6.20. engaging in verbal and/or physical behaviours intended to intimidate colleagues and/or community members for the purpose of obtaining favourable decisions and/or compliances;
- 6.21. falsification or misrepresentation of credentials; or other intentionally misleading practices in proposing, conducting, or reporting research, including failure to reveal to subjects that they are participating in a research process;
- 6.22. failure to reveal to the sponsors any material conflict of interest when asked to undertake reviews of research grant applications, manuscripts for publication, and/or to test products for sale or distribution to the public;
- 6.23. failure to reveal to the University any material financial interest, direct or indirect, in a company that contracts with the University to undertake research, particularly involving the company's products. Material financial interests include ownership, substantial stock holding, a directorship, significant honoraria or consulting fees, but does not include minor stock holding in a large publicly traded company;
- 6.24. failure to reveal to the University any professional conflict of interest in a company or organization that contracts with the University to undertake research.

## **7. Policies and Procedures for Addressing Allegations of Breaches of Policy**

### **7.1. Guiding Principles**

Policies and procedures respecting allegations of breaches of policy on research and scholarly conduct must reflect a balanced approach. Also, the University must be diligent in providing the opportunity to access information and learning opportunities as an essential step in assisting community members to define what constitutes proper practice and to ensure that integrity in research and scholarship is maintained. These principles are designed to reflect a number of important values, and to balance those values appropriately where they come into conflict. The guiding principles are:

- 7.1.1. While we all have a fundamental commitment to integrity in the conduct of research and scholarly activity, there will be diversity of perspectives across disciplines with respect to the attributes and qualities of research and scholarly conduct.
- 7.1.2. We need policies that are sensitive to the reality that integrity breaches in relation to research and scholarly activities can vary widely in both nature and cause. This means that the policies and procedures must allow realistic responses to a continuum of culpability that might range from an honest but mistaken view of the propriety of a particular practice, through behaviour that reflects various degrees of carelessness or negligence, to the extreme case of calculated misrepresentation, plagiarism, or fraud.
- 7.1.3. We need procedures that ensure fairness to those whose integrity is brought into question. In particular, privacy and confidentiality for such persons must be assured, where appropriate, to minimize the damage that can be done by aspersions on research and scholarly integrity that are ultimately not substantiated. A related value that the procedures must reflect is that of speedy investigation and disposition of complaints, so that scholarly reputations are not damaged by clouds of suspicion.
- 7.1.4. There is a need to protect those who set the process in motion or otherwise assist in dealing with complaints. This should involve appropriate assurances of confidentiality within the institution, together with institutional reaffirmation of the impropriety of any form of retaliation against those persons. When necessary, we must strive for a balance that recognizes that the values of confidentiality and anonymity may have to yield to the equally important value of integrity in any case where evidence of a breach of policy on research and scholarly conduct can only be evaluated by clearly identifying the source of the allegation.

### **7.2. Procedures**

The policies and procedures specified below have been developed with the above-mentioned principles, and their underlying values, in mind.

- 7.2.1. Whenever possible the Mount encourages adoption of informal resolution processes as a means to address perceived breaches of policy on research and scholarly conduct. Formal notification of misconduct may be communicated to any Mount academic administrative officer. Such messages should then be communicated to the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research). Allegations of a breach of policy on research/scholarship shall be made in writing, signed (optional), dated and directed to the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research). Anonymous allegations will be accepted as above. If the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) is the Respondent(s), then the Vice-President (Academic) shall appoint a designate. The Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research), when notified of an allegation, will first undertake to determine whether the allegation of a breach of policy is responsible in that it is a substantial novel allegation made in good faith, confidentially and without malice, is based on facts which have not been the subject of previous allegations, and which falls within one or more breaches set out in Section 6 of this policy. This judgement will be made in confidential consultation with members of the Committee on Research and Publications (CRP) and the Chair of the University Research Ethics Board (UREB). Depending on the outcome of the consultation, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will either invoke approved procedures as specified below, or notify the complainant(s) in writing that the allegation of breach of policy is not considered to be justified or responsible, and that no further action will be taken. The Respondent will be notified of the allegation and informed of the process undertaken to determine whether the allegation is considered to be a responsible one.
- 7.2.2. The Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research), may consult in confidence and without identifying the parties involved, with members of the Committee on Research and Publications (CRP) at any time during an investigation. This is to determine the particulars of conduct norms and practices of the academic discipline(s) involved and for advice on an appropriate course of action. By virtue of their role on the CRP, members are bound by a signed confidentiality agreement.
- 7.2.3. In the case of research that is funded by a Tri-Council Agency, an allegation of a serious breach of policy that may involve significant financial, health, safety or other risks shall be reported immediately in writing by the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) to the Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research (SRCR). In these circumstances involving financial, health, safety or other risks the University may independently, or at the Agency's request, take immediate action to protect the administration of Agency funds, including freezing grant accounts or requiring oversight on expenses charged to the grant account.

- 7.2.4. In the case of research that is funded by a Tri-Council Agency, once it is determined that an allegation is responsible, if the SRCR was copied on an allegation, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) shall write a letter to the SRCR confirming whether or not the university is proceeding with an investigation.
- 7.2.5. In circumstances where the allegation of a breach is considered not to be responsible, a formal letter to the complainant(s) will describe the process by which such decision was taken and make appropriate reference to policy-informed reasons for the decision. This letter of notification will constitute closure to the file and no further action will ensue.
- 7.2.6. Once it is determined that an allegation is responsible, and before initiating the Mount's formal procedures, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will communicate the decision to both the Complainant and the Respondent, and discuss options for informal and formal procedures of the investigation to determine the validity and/or resolution of the allegations. If the allegation is judged to be a responsible allegation but not to involve a serious breach of policy, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will initiate one of the following options, which will normally be implemented within five (5) working days:
- 7.2.6.1. Conversation with the Respondent to discuss the allegation and decide on a mutually agreed upon course of action which would be communicated to the Complainant. In the case of an anonymous allegation that is judged not to involve a serious breach of policy, this option will be exercised without communicating results to the Complainant; or
- 7.2.6.2. Contact the Respondent and Complainant to arrange an informal discussion and resolution facilitated by the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research). Normally, this would involve a meeting with the Respondent and the Complainant together with the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research). If both parties do not agree to a joint meeting, then the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will meet individually with the Respondent and Claimant with a goal of resolution within a reasonable period of time. If resolution is achieved, this will be communicated in writing to both parties. This letter of notification will constitute closure to the file and no further action will ensue. If resolution is not achieved, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will initiate the procedures outlined in Article 7.2.7 of this policy document.
- 7.2.7. If the allegation is judged to be a responsible allegation and to involve a serious breach of policy, or if informal resolution (Article 7.2.6) is not achieved, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research), at her/his discretion will then ask the Complainant(s) and the Respondent(s) whether they will welcome mediation. If all parties

agree, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will nominate a Professor Emeritus appointee or senior Full Professor, either from the Mount or, in the event that a Mount appointee is unavailable, from another University, to assume the responsibilities of an Independent Integrity Mediator for the purposes of seeking resolutions that may address allegations of a breach of policy on research and scholarly conduct. The nominee will not be affiliated with either of the parties involved or the parties' academic department(s). All parties to the allegation must agree with the nomination. The Independent Integrity Mediator will be nominated ordinarily within five (5) working days following the initial judgement of the allegation.

- 7.2.8. The Independent Integrity Mediator shall employ best efforts for arriving at mutually agreeable resolutions ordinarily within ten (10) working days.
- 7.2.9. In circumstances where mutually agreeable resolutions have been achieved, the Independent Integrity Mediator will communicate this outcome in a brief written report ordinarily within five (5) working days to the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research). The report shall include: a copy of the allegation, a summary of the process employed to arrive at a resolution, and a statement describing the mutually agreeable resolution achieved. In the event of satisfactory mediation outcomes, all parties are required to sign a document agreeing to the resolution. No further action will ensue.
- 7.2.10. In circumstances where mutually agreeable resolutions have not been achieved, the Independent Integrity Mediator will communicate this outcome in writing ordinarily within five (5) working days to the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research). This statement shall include: a copy of the allegation, a summary of the process employed to arrive at a resolution, a statement describing the outcome, and any other pertinent information about the unsuccessful mediation. Once in receipt of this communication the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will invoke the Mount procedures, beginning with 7.2.13.
- 7.2.11. If all parties do not agree to mediation of a responsible allegation, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will invoke a formal investigation as beginning with 7.2.13.
- 7.2.12. Allegations originating with external agencies, institutions, or individuals in appropriate positions of authority (e.g., journal editors) shall be treated as formal complaints.
- 7.2.13. When mutually agreeable resolutions to a responsible allegation have not been achieved, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will strike an Independent Committee of Inquiry within a reasonable period of time of the Independent Integrity Mediator's communication. This Committee will be composed of three (3) members all of whom will be scholars who have the necessary expertise and who are without conflict of interest, real or perceived.

At least one member will be external to the University with no current affiliation. A Committee Chair will be designated by the members of the Committee.

- 7.2.14. This Committee will be appointed for and tasked with the responsibility of determining whether allegations of a serious breach of policy on scholarly/research conduct are substantiated. The Committee will be provided with copies of all pertinent documents and will be enabled by the University to engage in a thorough and equitable investigation of the alleged breach.
- 7.2.15. Once struck the Committee must complete its investigation within a reasonable period of time, and communicate the findings of its investigation and recommendations in a written report to the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research). This report shall include: a copy of the allegation(s) (signature optional); a summary description of the investigation process; the written response, if any, of the Respondent(s); and, the finding as to whether the allegation(s) has been upheld with a statement of reasons for the finding. All documents and materials examined through the course of the Committee investigation are to be returned to the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research).
- 7.2.16. Should the Committee conclude that the allegation is not substantiated, no reference to the complaint shall be placed or retained in the personnel file of the Respondent(s). In cases of unfounded allegations, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research), on behalf of the University, will provide the unjustly accused with a letter that formally acknowledges this outcome and that affirms the meritorious attributes of the accused's reputation and research conduct. Should the Committee find that the allegation of a breach in policy on research and scholarly conduct is substantiated and formal action is warranted, the Respondent shall have an opportunity to appeal the decision by recourse through the President's office. The decision to appeal must be communicated in writing to the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) within 30 days of the Committee's decision. In the event of an appeal, any formal action related to the outcome of the investigation will be paused until the outcome of the appeal.
- 7.2.17. Should the Committee find that the allegation of a breach in policy on research and scholarly conduct is substantiated, and the Respondent chooses not to appeal the decision, if the Respondent(s) is a member of the bargaining unit represented by Mount Saint Vincent University Faculty Association (MSVUFA), the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) shall inform the member's Dean or University Librarian and Vice-President (Academic) of the Committee's findings, and provide to the Dean or University Librarian all materials included under Article 7.2.15. In such cases, the provisions of Article 34 of the Collective Agreement shall apply.



- 7.2.18. Should the Committee find that the allegation of a breach in policy on research and scholarly conduct is substantiated, and the Respondent chooses not to appeal the decision, if the Respondent(s) is not a member of the Mount Saint Vincent University Faculty Association, but is either a member of another Mount union or representative organization or not covered within an existing University-representative organization contract (e.g., a contract employee), the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) shall inform the Respondent's immediate supervisor and Director, Human Resources, and provide to the Director, Human Resources all materials included under Article 7.2.15. In the case of unionized employees, relevant Collective Agreement articles shall apply. In the case of non-unionized employees, relevant University policy and procedures shall apply.
- 7.2.19. Should the Committee find that the allegations of a breach in policy on research and scholarly conduct are substantiated, and the Respondent chooses not to appeal the decision, and If the Respondent(s) is a Mount student, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) shall inform the Registrar and Dean of the student's academic program, and provide to the Dean all materials included under 7.2.15. In such cases, the Academic Offences Policy and Procedures will apply.
- 7.2.21. In the case of research that is funded by a Tri-Council Agency, once an investigation and appeal, if any, are completed, the University shall prepare a report for the Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research (SRCR) on each investigation it conducts in response to an allegation of policy breaches related to a funding application submitted to an Agency or to an activity funded by a Tri-Council Agency. Subject to any applicable laws, including privacy laws, each report shall include the following information:
- the specific allegation(s), a summary of the finding(s) and reasons for the finding(s);
  - the process and timelines followed for the inquiry and/or investigation;
  - the researcher's response to the allegation, investigation and findings, and any measures the researcher has taken to rectify the breach; and
  - the institutional investigation committee's decisions and recommendations and actions taken by the Institution.

The Institution's report should not include:

- information that is not related specifically to Agency funding and policies; or
- personal information about the researcher, or any other person, that is not material to the Institution's findings and its report to the SRCR.

7.2.21.1. Inquiry letters and investigation reports should be submitted to the SRCR within two and seven months,

respectively, of receipt of the allegation by the Institution. These timelines may be extended in consultation with the SRCR if circumstances warrant, and with monthly updates provided to the Agency until the investigation is complete.

- 7.2.21.2. The Institution and the researcher may not enter into confidentiality agreements or other agreements related to an inquiry or investigation that prevents the Institution from reporting to the Agencies through the SRCR.
- 7.2.21.3. In cases where the source of funding is unclear, the SRCR reserves the right to request information and reports from the Institution.

## 8. **Promoting Integrity in Research and Scholarship**

The Mount fosters research and scholarship integrity, through the office of the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) by encouraging faculty, departments, programs, and other community members to discuss and to debate the meaning and importance of research and scholarship integrity. Materials pertaining to and information concerning research and scholarship integrity are circulated within the University community, and available on the Research Office website. Additionally, the Associate Vice-President (Academic & Research) will draw attention to the Mount's guidelines, policies, and procedures for integrity in research and scholarship through various communication channels. All departments and programs are encouraged to engage faculty, students and staff in educational processes respecting discipline and professional standards of practice for and understanding of research and scholarly integrity.