

## *MONTANA TECH*

### *POLICY TO ASSURE THE INTEGRITY OF RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY*

#### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to assure the integrity of research and scholarly activity conducted at Montana Tech and by Montana Tech employees and students, to protect both the person alleging research misconduct and the person whose research practices are being questioned, and to comply with federal regulations for institutional management and oversight of research.

#### **II. Policy**

Research and scholarly activity by and at Montana Tech must be conducted responsibly, ethically, and in a manner consistent with the highest standards and commonly accepted practices within the scientific, engineering, and academic communities. Allegations of research misconduct will be investigated promptly, systematically, and in a way that protects both the person providing notification of the alleged misconduct and the person whose research practices are being questioned from undue publicity and impairment of reputation until the matter has been fully investigated and resolved.

#### **III. Scope and Application**

This policy and the referenced [procedures](#) apply to all individuals at Montana Tech engaged in research or other creative activities whether or not their work is supported by federal funding. This policy defines research misconduct and provides guidelines for evaluating allegations expeditiously and responsibly.

This policy applies to activities associated with the collection, analysis, and reporting of all types of research: theoretical, computational, experimental, field-based, basic, and/or applied, being done by researchers employed by, enrolled at, or utilizing facilities of Montana Tech. "Researchers" include faculty; research personnel; individuals holding postdoctoral, affiliate, or adjunct appointments; graduate students; undergraduate students; high-school students and teachers; and any other individuals who are doing research at Montana Tech. This policy does not apply to other areas or types of academic integrity or misconduct.

#### **IV. Definition of Research Misconduct**

Research misconduct is significant misbehavior that improperly appropriates the intellectual property or contributions of others, that intentionally impedes the progress of research, or that risks corrupting the scientific record or compromising the integrity of scientific practices. Such behaviors are unethical and unacceptable in proposing, conducting, or reporting research, or in reviewing the proposals or research reports of others.

Research misconduct includes fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism associated with planning, proposing, performing, analyzing, reporting, and reviewing research and other scholarly activity, along with other willful violations of accepted research practices or administrative requirements or regulations associated with research. It does not include differences of opinion, interpretation or honest error. Violation of criminal or civil law in the course of conducting or reporting research is a crime and would normally be handled as such, rather than as research misconduct.

- a. Fabrication is inventing or making up any research data or reporting on experiments that were never performed.
- b. Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes; adjusting data or measurements; or selectively choosing data to report, such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- c. Plagiarism is the act of taking ideas, results, processes, analyses, words, or interpretation from another person and presenting them as one's own.
- d. Violation of administrative requirements, such as:
  - i. Applying for federal funding while under federal suspension or debarment, or knowingly utilizing as a co-principal investigator, investigator, technician, or consultant a person, who is suspended or debarred.
  - ii. Failure to maintain a record of primary data with the intent to deceive, e.g. destroying laboratory notebooks, survey forms, microscope reference slides, computer or other machine printouts with the intent to deceive.
  - iii. Failure to report known or suspected acts of misconduct or knowingly withholding or destroying evidence crucial in an investigation of misconduct.
  - iv. Abuse of confidentiality when gathering or reporting data, e.g., releasing data gathered during privileged communication.
  - v. Use of honorary authorships, without the person's consent, and/or with the intent to deceive.
  - vi. Being in a position of authority over a researcher and demanding to be listed as an author of a publication without having contributed to the research covered by the publication.

## V. Responsibilities and Requirements

The Vice Chancellor for Research (VCR) is Montana Tech's Research Integrity Officer (RIO) responsible for ensuring that Montana Tech:

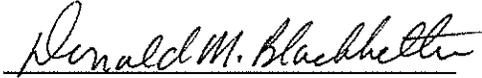
- a. Fosters a research environment that promotes the responsible conduct of research.
- b. Provides responsible research training, discourages research misconduct, and deals promptly and fairly with allegations or suspicions of possible research misconduct.
- c. Complies with this Research Integrity Policy and files the required annual reports on research integrity with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Research Integrity (ORI).
- d. Takes appropriate action in response to allegations or suspicions of research misconduct to protect the person reporting the allegation; to protect the person whose research practices are being questioned; to investigate the allegation or suspicion fairly and promptly; to protect public health, sponsor funds and equipment, and the integrity of the research process; to document the investigation and its results; and to provide the required reports to sponsor(s), if any, on the questioned research.
- e. In the case of an anonymous allegation of research misconduct, conducts a "Pre-inquiry" to determine if there is sufficient evidence of alleged misconduct to warrant initiation of an Inquiry with no named complainant.
- f. If warranted, appoints an impartial committee and oversees its fair and prompt Inquiry to determine within 60 days whether a full investigation is warranted.
- g. If warranted, appoints an impartial committee and oversees its fair and prompt Investigation to determine within 120 days whether the "preponderance of the evidence" indicates that misconduct occurred, considering both action and intent. For misconduct to be confirmed, the preponderance of the evidence must support the conclusion that the acts or practices in question were serious deviations from those

commonly employed in the United States for proposing, conducting or reporting research and other creative activities.

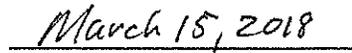
All employees, students, and other individuals associated with Montana Tech are responsible for reporting observed, suspected, or apparent misconduct in research to the VCR/RIO. If an individual is unsure whether a suspected incident falls within the definition of research misconduct, he or she should contact the VCR to discuss the suspected misconduct informally.

## VI. MODIFICATIONS TO THIS POLICY

Any proposed modifications to this policy shall be submitted to the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) for their consideration. Changes proposed by the RAC will be forwarded to the Faculty Senate for review and approval, and finally to the Chancellor for his/her approval.



Chancellor,  
Montana Tech



Date