

Kalamazoo College Institutional Policies and Procedures Relating to Ethical Standards in the Conduct of Research

We are grateful to Bryn Mawr College for allowing us to use their policy as a starting point for our own.

An underlying principle of all research is the quest for truth. The credibility of research must be above reproach if the public trust is to be maintained. Any compromise of the ethical standards required for conducting research cannot be condoned. While breaches in such standards are rare, they must be dealt with promptly and fairly by all parties in order to preserve the integrity of the research community and of the College.

“Misconduct,” as used herein, is defined as:

Fraudulent or improper practice in conducting research or reporting the results of research, including intentional falsification or fabrication of data, plagiarism, or intentional misrepresentation of data collection and analysis, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the scientific or scholarly community for proposing, conducting, or reporting research. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgment of data.

Serious misappropriation of research funds, including but not limited to diversion of such funds to personal or non-college use. The term “serious misappropriation,” as used herein, is not contemplated to include minor deviations within budget categories, nor funds expended under reasonable circumstances within the scope and goals of the originally proposed research.

If research misconduct is suspected, the following procedures apply:

1. Allegations of misconduct should be reported immediately in writing to the Provost. All such allegations shall be signed. The confidentiality of those who, in good faith, report apparent misconduct will be protected to the extent possible.
2. Upon review, the Provost (or in lieu of the Provost a designated member of the faculty or the Associate Provost) shall conduct a preliminary inquiry (which shall include informal consultation with the accused) into the circumstances of the allegations and determine whether there are sufficient grounds to indicate that these have validity. The Provost (or his or her designee) shall attempt to complete this initial inquiry within 60 days, after which a written report shall be prepared which states what evidence was reviewed, summarizes relevant interviews, and includes the conclusions of the inquiry. The individual against whom the allegation was made shall be given a copy of the full report of inquiry.
3. If the Provost finds sufficient evidence to suggest that the allegations may be true, and after consulting with the Director of Faculty Grants, the Provost shall appoint, within 30 days, an investigative body of impartial experts to conduct the formal examination and evaluation of all facts to determine whether misconduct has taken place. The Public

Health Service's Office of Scientific Inquiry or other appropriate agency shall be notified that a formal investigation is being initiated.

4. At the time the investigative body is appointed, the Provost shall inform in writing the individual about whom allegations have been made that an investigation is to be conducted and shall present to him/her a statement of the allegations. This statement shall include information on the nature of the allegations and the focus of the investigation and shall inform the person being investigated of the opportunity to defend his/her conduct and provide comments and other relevant information to the investigative body. In addition, the Provost will provide the individual with a full report of findings from the informal investigation as well as a statement indicating that the investigation and adjudication of the alleged misconduct will be limited to the formal charges laid out in the statement of the allegations. The same individual shall be informed of his/her right to be represented in preparing and/or giving his/her response in this and all subsequent phases of the investigation.
5. The investigative body shall conduct a formal examination and evaluation of all relevant facts to determine whether the allegations of misconduct are valid. The investigative body may call witnesses, examine research data (both published and unpublished), and seek expert opinion both inside and outside the College to aid in the scientific or scholarly audit.
 - a. The investigative body shall attempt to complete its investigation within 120 days. If an extension of the investigation period is needed, such an extension must be approved by the Public Health Service's Office of Scientific Integrity or other appropriate agency, if required by that agency. All parties involved in the investigation shall strive to maintain confidentiality of information.
 - b. Interim administrative actions, as appropriate to the allegations, may be taken prior to the completion of the investigation if such actions are necessary to protect the welfare of human or animal subjects of research or to prevent the inappropriate use of funds.
6. Having completed its investigation, the investigative body shall submit its findings of fact and recommendations in writing to the Provost.
 - a. If the investigative body's findings fail to confirm an instance of misconduct, all participants in the investigation, including the Director of Faculty Grants shall be so informed in writing by the Provost. Diligent efforts will be undertaken, as appropriate, to restore the reputation of the individual alleged to have engaged in misconduct.
 - b. If the investigative body has reason to believe that unfounded charges have been brought with malicious or dishonest intent, the investigative body shall recommend consideration of the appropriate action by relevant faculty committees and by the administration.
 - c. If the investigative body finds that the allegations are substantiated and that misconduct has occurred, the accused shall have the right of appeal. If the appeal does not alter the decision of the investigative body, the following actions shall be taken by the Provost:
 - i. The agency sponsoring the research shall be informed of the findings of the investigation.

- ii. Publishers and editors of journals shall be informed if manuscripts emanating from fraudulent research have been submitted or published.
- 7. The institution will maintain, for a minimum of three years, after Public Health Service or other appropriate agency acceptance of the final report, all documentation accruing from the investigative actions of the institution.