Research Misconduct
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (SOP)

Pursuant to System Regulation 15.99.03, this SOP outlines the procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in research, scholarship, and creative work at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. The SOP details the responsibilities of the University’s Designated Officer, processes for assessing an allegation of misconduct, the conduct of an inquiry in response to an allegation, the conduct of an investigation following an allegation, and appeals of any decisions regarding misconduct.

Scientific Misconduct Standard Operating Procedures
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DEFINITIONS

Research misconduct includes fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. Research misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion.

Fabrication is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.

Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.

Plagiarism is the misappropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. Plagiarism does not include authorship or credit disputes.

GUIDANCE

This SOP follows the guidance of:

- Texas A&M University System Regulation 15.99.03 Ethics in Research, Scholarship and Creative Work
- Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi Rule 15.99.03.C1 Ethics in Research, Scholarship and Creative Work
DECIDING OFFICIAL
The Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi Deciding Official is the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

DESIGNATED OFFICER
The Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi Designated Officer is the Vice President for Research, Commercialization and Outreach (VPRCO).

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT RESPONSIBILITIES
Upon receipt of a complaint alleging scientific misconduct, the Designated Officer, or designee, shall conduct a preliminary assessment as provided in these procedures.

The Designated Officer, or designee, shall conduct the preliminary assessment. The Designated Officer, or designee, may utilize the services of other individuals and entities in order to make a complete assessment to determine whether:

(a) the allegation falls within the definition of misconduct in research, scholarship or creative work provided in this regulation;
(b) the allegation is sufficiently credible and specific to warrant an inquiry; and
(c) federal funding is involved.

When conducting an assessment the Designated Officer, or designee:
- initiates the assessment process.
- sequesters records related to the assessment.
- determines whether an assessment time extension will be allowed.
- develops an assessment report

Based on the recommendations in the final assessment report, the Designated Officer will determine if an inquiry is warranted.

INQUIRY RESPONSIBILITIES
The Designated Officer or a committee appointed by him or her shall conduct the inquiry. The Designated Officer and/or the committee may utilize the services of other individuals and entities in order to make a complete inquiry and determine whether evidence exists which would warrant an investigation. The inquiry must be completed within 60 calendar days of its initiation, unless circumstances clearly warrant a longer period.

When conducting an inquiry, the Designated Officer:
- Initiates the inquiry process.
- Appoints a three-person inquiry committee.
- Appoints an independent non-voting chairperson.
- Develops the charge to the inquiry committee and provides advice on appropriate procedures.
- Notifies appropriate institutional officials, appropriate System officials, the respondent, and if necessary, federal agencies, that an inquiry is underway.
- Sequesters research records.
- Determines whether outside expertise is needed to assist the inquiry committee.
- Determines whether an inquiry time extension will be allowed.
If the inquiry is conducted by the Designated Officer, the Designated Officer will develop an inquiry report. If the inquiry is conducted by a committee, the committee will develop an inquiry report. The Designated Officer transmits the final inquiry report to the Deciding Official and provides a copy to the respondent(s) and complainant(s). The Designated Officer will notify the respondent and complainant of the results of the inquiry and receive any comments submitted by the respondent. Based on the recommendations in the final inquiry report, the Designated Officer will determine if an investigation is warranted.

The inquiry report shall remain confidential to the extent allowed by Texas law.

**INVESTIGATION RESPONSIBILITIES**

When conducting an investigation, the Designated Officer:
- Initiates the investigation process.
- Appoints a three-person investigation committee.
- Appoints an independent non-voting chairperson.
- Develops a written charge to the investigation committee and provides advice on appropriate procedures. The Designated Officer identifies the name of the respondent, defines misconduct in research, scholarship, or creative work, and describes the allegations and related issues. The charge shall state that the committee is to evaluate the evidence and testimony of the respondent, complainant, and any key witnesses to determine whether, based on a preponderance of the evidence, misconduct in research, scholarship, or creative work occurred, and if so, to what extent, who was responsible, and its seriousness.
- Convenes an initial meeting with the non-voting chairperson, the investigation committee, and a representative of the Office of General Counsel, and provides them with advice on appropriate procedures.
- Determines whether outside expertise is needed to assist the investigation committee.
- Determines whether a time extension will be allowed.
- Accepts the investigation committee report; transmits the final investigation report to the Deciding Official and notifies the respondent(s) and complainant(s).
- Upon receipt of the final decision from the Deciding Official, notifies the complainant and the respondent of the institution’s findings and actions.

Upon receiving the final investigation committee report, the Deciding Official may:
- uphold the findings and recommended sanction(s) of the investigation committee;
- uphold the findings of the investigation committee and impose a lesser sanction(s) than the committee recommended; or
- return the matter to the investigation committee for further consideration with instructions on the matter to be addressed.

In determining the appropriate sanction for committing misconduct in research, scholarship or creative work, the Deciding Official should consider the degree to which the misconduct:
- was intentional, knowing or reckless;
- was an isolated incident or part of a pattern of misconduct;
- had significant impact on the academic record, research subjects, other researchers, or creative artists, institutions or the public welfare.
INITIATING THE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

Upon receiving an allegation of misconduct in research, scholarship, or creative work, the Designated Officer, or designee, will have 15 working days to begin an assessment of the severity and extent of the allegations. This time limit may be extended for good cause by the Designated Officer, or designee. The extension must be documented in the record. The Designated Officer, or designee, may request any other appropriate resource person to assist in the preliminary assessment. Every effort should be made to minimize the number of participants at this stage of the process.

ASSESSING THE COMPLAINT

The Designated Officer, or designee, must assess the complaint to determine whether:

(a) the allegation falls within the definition of misconduct in research, scholarship or creative work provided in this regulation;

(b) the allegation is sufficiently credible and specific to warrant an inquiry; and whether federal funding is involved.

(1) If federal funding is involved, the Designated Officer, or designee, will assess whether the complaint falls under the agency's definition of misconduct.

POSSIBLE FINDINGS OF THE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

There is no need for an inquiry if the issue does not fall within the definition of research misconduct or if the allegation is not sufficiently specific. A general allegation that a researcher’s or creative artist’s work should be subjected to general examination for possible misconduct is not sufficiently substantial or specific to initiate an inquiry. Notification will be made to the Deciding Official that there is no need for an inquiry.

Mediation at the level of the research unit, department, or college may be an appropriate response if the allegation is the result of a misunderstanding or broken collaboration. A qualified third-party mediator will be made available if mediation is appropriate.

The Designated Officer shall inform the appropriate university official and/or law enforcement as appropriate if the allegation involves potential violations of federal or state law, system policies, or university rules other than those involving misconduct in research, scholarship or creative work.

The Designated Officer shall inform the appropriate official in that unit if the alleged misconduct involves an employee of another system member.

The Designated Officer will follow the procedures outlined herein and proceed to an inquiry if the allegation falls within the definition of misconduct in research, scholarship or creative work and the allegations are sufficiently specific to warrant and enable an inquiry. In addition, the Office of Sponsored Research Administration (OSRA) will be notified and consulted, as necessary, if the allegation warranting an inquiry involves sponsored research.
INITIATION OF AN INQUIRY
If the Designated Officer determines that the allegation is sufficiently credible and specific so that potential evidence of research misconduct may be identified and it meets the definition of research misconduct, the Designated Officer will inform the Deciding Official and initiate the inquiry process within 15 working days of the assessment completion. This time limit may be extended by the Designated Officer for good cause. The extension must be documented in the record. Conduct of the inquiry shall be consistent with System Regulation 15.99.03, section 5.1, and the provisions in University Rule 15.99.03.C1.

Inquiry Purpose
The purpose of an inquiry is to conduct an initial review of the evidence to determine whether to conduct an investigation. It does not require a full review of all the evidence related to the allegation. An inquiry's purpose is to decide if an allegation warrants an investigation. An investigation is warranted if there is a reasonable basis for concluding that the allegation falls within the definition of research misconduct and preliminary information gathering and preliminary fact-finding from the inquiry indicates that the allegation may have substance.

Sequestering of Relevant Records
The Designated Officer should, on or before the date that the respondent is notified or the inquiry begins, promptly take all reasonable and practical steps to obtain custody of all research records and evidence needed to conduct the research misconduct proceeding. The Designated Officer should inventory the records and evidence and sequester them in a secure manner. An exception to sequestering records and evidence involves research records or evidence encompassing scientific instruments shared by a number of users. Custody may be limited to copies of data or evidence on such instruments, so long as those copies are substantially equivalent to the evidentiary value of the instruments.

Interim Protective Actions
At any time during a research misconduct proceeding, the Designated Officer shall take appropriate interim actions to protect public health, federal funds and equipment, and the integrity of the federally supported research process. The necessary actions may vary according to the circumstances of each case. Examples of possible necessary actions include delaying the publication of research results, providing for closer supervision of one or more researchers, requiring approvals for actions relating to the research that did not previously require approval, auditing pertinent records, or taking steps to contact other institutions that may be affected by an allegation of research misconduct.

TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETING THE INQUIRY PROCESS
The inquiry committee shall have 60 calendar days from the date of its original appointment to complete the inquiry process. An extension must be requested from and approved by the Designated Officer if more time is required. The extension and the reason for the extension must be documented in the record and the inquiry report. The respondent must also be notified of the extension.
NOTIFICATION OF INITIATION OF AN INQUIRY TO RESPONDENT
The Designated Officer shall notify each potential respondent that an inquiry will be initiated. The respondent(s) shall be notified as soon as is practical and no later than 5 working days as specified by paragraph 5.1.1 of the System Regulation 15.99.03. The notification is subject to Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi’s rule on protecting the complainants against retaliation and the need to maintain confidentiality.

The notification shall:
(1) identify the specific allegations;
(2) define misconduct in research, scholarship or creative work with respect to the allegations;
(3) identify whether federal funding was involved;
(4) list the names of the members of the inquiry committee (if appointed) and expert witness(es) (if any);
(5) address the respondent’s obligation as an employee of Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi to cooperate

THE INQUIRY COMMITTEE
The Designated Officer should take reasonable steps to assure that appointed members of the inquiry committee do not have unresolved personal, professional, or financial conflicts of interest with the respondent, complainant, potential witnesses, or others involved in the matter. Any such conflict which a reasonable person would consider to demonstrate potential bias shall disqualify the individual from selection as a committee member. The Designated Officer shall appoint the inquiry committee within ten working days from the initiation of the inquiry. This time limit may be extended for good cause by the Designated Officer. The extension must be documented in the record. The Designated Officer shall ensure that members of the inquiry committee are familiar with regulations and processes regarding scientific misconduct. The inquiry committee shall include three individuals employed by Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi who do not have actual or potential conflicts of interest in the case and have necessary expertise to evaluate the evidence and issues related to the allegation, to interview the principals and key witnesses, and to conduct the inquiry. The Designated Officer shall notify the respondent of the committee membership within five working days after the committee is appointed. This time limit may be extended for good cause by the Designated Officer. The extension must be documented in the record.

INQUIRY PROCESS
The Designated Officer shall share with the inquiry committee in writing, material relevant to the inquiry, including notification of the initiation of an inquiry to the respondent. The inquiry committee will normally interview the complainant, the respondent and key witnesses and examine relevant records and materials. The inquiry committee will evaluate the evidence and testimony obtained during the inquiry will determine whether there is sufficient evidence of possible research misconduct to recommend further investigation. The scope of the inquiry does not include deciding whether research misconduct occurred or conducting exhaustive interviews and analyses.

The purpose of an interview at the inquiry stage is to allow each respondent, complainant (if he or she is identifiable), or witness to tell his or her side of the story. The inquiry committee should not speculate about what happened or might have happened. The inquiry committee should not disclose information obtained from interviews unless necessary and the disclosure can be made without identifying the source of the information.
If the respondent admits to the research misconduct:

1. The respondent should be asked immediately to sign a statement attesting to the occurrence and extent of the research misconduct.
2. The admission may not be a sufficient basis for closing a case.
3. Further investigation may be needed to determine the extent of the research misconduct or to explore additional issues.
4. The Designated Officer will determine whether there is a sufficient basis to close a case after the admission is fully documented and all appropriate procedural steps are taken.

The inquiry committee shall evaluate the evidence and testimony obtained during the inquiry. The committee members shall recommend to the Designated Officer whether there is sufficient evidence of possible misconduct to recommend further investigation. The committee members may choose to consult with the Designated Officer and/or an attorney from the Office of General Counsel during the inquiry process and preparation of the inquiry process.

**INQUIRY REPORT**

*Contents of Inquiry Report*

The final report should be completed within 60 calendar days after the appointment of the committee. The written inquiry report must state:

1. the names and titles of the committee members;
2. the name and position of the respondent;
3. all allegations and the source and amount of support, for example, grant numbers, grant applications, contracts, allegations; and all relevant dates;
4. a summary of the inquiry process used;
5. a list of the research records and evidence reviewed, transcripts or recordings of any interviews, and copies of all relevant documents reviewed;
6. a description of the evidence in sufficient detail to demonstrate whether an investigation is warranted; and
7. the committee's recommendation as to whether an investigation is warranted or whether any other actions should be taken if an investigation is not warranted. The Office of General Counsel shall review the report for legal sufficiency before finalizing and providing it to the respondent or the Designated Officer.

The final report will be submitted for review by the Office of General Counsel.

*Comments on the Report by the Respondent*

Within five working days of the respondent’s receipt of the report, the respondent shall provide comments, if any, to the inquiry committee. This time limit may be extended for good cause by the Designated Officer. The extension must be documented in the record. The comments will become part of the final report and record.

The inquiry committee may respond to the respondent(s) comments and revise the report as appropriate based on those comments.

**FINAL DECISION BY THE DECIDING OFFICIAL**

The Deciding Official, in consultation with the Designated Officer, shall determine whether findings from the inquiry provide sufficient evidence of possible misconduct to justify conducting an investigation within five working days of receiving the final report.
**Decision to Investigate**
The Designated Officer will notify the President, the Office of General Counsel, and appropriate federal funding agencies (if involved) within the prescribed time in federal regulations if the Deciding Official concludes from the inquiry report that an investigation will be conducted. A copy of the final inquiry report and relevant rules, policies and procedures will be forwarded with the notification.

**Decision Not to Investigate**
The case can be closed if an investigation is not warranted. The Designated Officer will send a copy of the final inquiry report and the institutional decision to the federal agency if the inquiry was begun at the request of a federal funding agency, or if a federal funding agency requests a copy of the final inquiry report.

If the committee recommends other actions, and no investigation, the Deciding Official in consultation with the designated officer shall decide whether to accept the recommendation(s), and so inform the President, Office of General Counsel, and appropriate federal funding agencies of these actions.

The University must keep sufficiently detailed documentation of inquiries to permit a later assessment of the reasons why the institution decided not to conduct an investigation. The university must keep the records in a secure manner for at least 7 years after the termination of the inquiry, and upon request, provide them to other authorized organizations or to the appropriate University and federal agency officials.

**Restoration of the Respondent's Reputation and Research Capabilities**
The Designated Officer may recommend to the Deciding Official, and the respondent may request, that any reasonable, practical, and appropriate steps to restore the reputation of persons alleged to have engaged in research misconduct, but against whom no findings of research misconduct are made, be taken by the University.
INITIATION AND PURPOSE OF AN INVESTIGATION

After reviewing findings of the inquiry committee, if the Designated Officer determines that an investigation is warranted, the investigation shall be initiated within the maximum time allowed by System Regulation 15.99.03 (30 calendar days). Conduct of the investigation shall be consistent with System Regulation 15.99.03, sections 5.2 and 6, and the provisions in University Rule 15.99.03.C1.

TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETING THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS

The committee shall have the maximum time allowed by System Regulation 15.99.03 to complete the investigation process (180 calendar days). If more time is required and federal funding is involved, the University must request a time extension from the funding agency. If no funding agency is involved, the Designated Officer may extend the time period by written notice delivered to the respondent.

RESPONDENT NOTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATION INITIATION

The Designated Officer will notify the respondent of the initiation of an investigation within five working days of the initiation of an investigation.

The notification shall include:

1. a copy of the inquiry report;
2. the specific allegations;
3. the sources of research funding;
4. the definition of research misconduct;
5. the procedures to be followed in the investigation and
6. the documents required by System Regulation 15.99.03.

THE INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

Committee Membership

The Designated Officer shall appoint a non-voting chairperson and a committee with no less than three-members. All other procedures to be followed for appointing the investigation committee are the same procedures that apply during appointment of the inquiry committee.

Initial Meeting

The Designated Officer will convene an initial meeting with the non-voting chairperson, the investigation committee, and a representative of the Office of General Counsel and provide them with advice on appropriate procedures. The committee shall develop an investigation plan at the initial meeting. The committee shall complete the plan as soon as reasonably possible.

The investigation plan will include:

1. an inventory of all previously secured evidence and testimony;
2. a determination of whether additional evidence should be secured;
3. a list of who should be interviewed;
4. a proposed schedule of meetings, briefings from experts, and interviews;
5. anticipated analyses of evidence (scientific, forensic, or other); and
6. a plan for the investigation report.
Changes in the Scope or Respondents
During the investigation, if additional information becomes available that substantially changes the scope of the investigation or would suggest additional respondents, the committee shall notify the Designated Officer.

The Designated Officer shall take appropriate actions consistent with system regulations and university rules.

INVESTIGATION PROCESS
Consistent with system regulation 15.99.03, Sections 6.1 through 6.5, the investigation will normally involve examination of all documentation, including, but not limited to: relevant research records; computer files; research proposals, manuscripts, publications, and presentations; and correspondence, memoranda, and notes of telephone calls.

Whenever possible, the investigation committee should take testimony from the complainant(s), the respondent(s), and other individuals who might have information regarding aspects of the allegations.

All members of the investigation committee shall be present for all testimony.

The respondent should be permitted to attend meetings in which testimony is being given and to have present either legal counsel or an advocate of his or her choosing. All testimony must be recorded. Testimony should be in depth and all significant witnesses should be heard by the investigative committee. Each witness should have the opportunity to respond to inconsistencies between his or her testimony and the evidence or other testimony, subject to the need to take reasonable steps to maintain the confidentiality of the testimony of the respondent or other witnesses.

If the respondent admits to the misconduct, he/she should be asked immediately to sign a statement attesting to the occurrence and extent of the misconduct, acknowledging that the statement was voluntary and stating that the respondent was advised of his/her right to seek the advice of counsel. The committee shall consult with a representative of the Office of General Counsel on the specific form and procedure for obtaining this statement. The admission may not be used as a basis for closing the investigation unless the committee has adequately determined the extent and significance of the misconduct and all procedural steps for completion of the investigation have been met. The committee may ask the Designated Officer or a representative of the Office of General Counsel to consult with federal funding agencies, when appropriate, to decide if an admission has adequately addressed all the relevant issues such that the investigation can be considered complete. The investigation shall not be closed unless the respondent has been appropriately notified and given an opportunity to comment on the investigative report. If the case is considered complete, it should be forwarded to the Deciding Official with recommendations for appropriate institutional action and then, if necessary, forwarded to any federal funding agency.

INVESTIGATION REPORT
Deliberations
Consistent with the standards set forth in System Regulation 15.99.03, section 6.7, the committee shall consider all relevant evidence to determine whether research misconduct has been shown by a preponderance of the evidence. The committee shall also consider whether the respondent has presented evidence of honest error or differences in interpretations or judgments of data.
Contents of the Investigation Report
The report shall provide a detailed analysis of the evidence that either supports or does not support a finding of research misconduct. The analysis shall be consistent with the definition of research misconduct as stated in System Regulation 15.99.03, as well as the definition of research misconduct that is part of any applicable federal regulation. The analysis shall demonstrate how a consideration of the evidence led to the report’s findings. The report shall include sufficient background information to ensure full understanding of the issues.

The report shall describe the facts leading to the University’s investigation, including (1) a chronology of the research at issue; (2) the persons involved in the alleged misconduct; (3) the role of the complainant; (4) any associated grant applications or publications; and (5) any public health issues.

The report shall summarize (1) the University’s inquiry and investigation processes, including the composition of the committees; (2) the persons interviewed, noting any inconsistencies between individual statement and the credibility of each; (3) the evidence secured and reviewed; (4) the rules and procedures used; and (5) other factors that may have influenced the proceedings.

The report shall provide references to appropriate sources. All relevant dates, allegations and the source and basis for each allegation, relevant funding sources, names of experts used, and any additional misconduct issues that arose during the inquiry and/or investigation stages should be included. Copies of significant evidence shall be appended to the report.

The report shall also summarize each claim that the respondent raised in his/her defense against the misconduct allegations and cite the source of each claim. Any inconsistencies among the respondent’s various claims shall be noted. The report shall not consider claims that do not address the allegations at issue.

Determinations of the Committee
The committee shall determine the type of research misconduct the respondent committed. The report shall indicate the extent and seriousness of the misconduct, including its effect on previous research findings, research subjects, and the laboratory or project in which the misconduct occurred. If the committee determines that the respondent committed research misconduct with respect to any issue, the report shall (1) thoroughly document the commonly accepted practice of the relevant scientific community at the time the misconduct occurred; (2) indicate the extent of the respondent’s deviation; and (3) why the respondent’s behavior is a serious deviation from that standard. If the committee concludes that an honest error or difference of scientific opinion occurred with respect to any issue, the report shall describe the evidence supporting that finding.

Findings and Recommendations
The investigation report will concisely state the findings of the committee for each issue identified. The final investigation report shall make separate findings regarding whether or not each issue constitutes research misconduct. The committee will recommend sanctions commensurate with the misconduct, level of intent, and whether it was an isolated event or part of a pattern. Recommended sanctions and actions may include, but not be limited to:
- withdrawal or correction of all pending or published abstracts and papers emanating from the research or creative work where the misconduct was found;
- removal of the responsible person from the particular project;
- letter of reprimand to be placed in the individual’s personnel file;
- special monitoring of future work;
- required training in compliance and ethics in research, scholarship, and creative work;
- reduction in pay.
reduction in academic or employment rank
probation
loss of research equipment and/or space
termination of employment and/or expulsion from the university
restitution of funds

Transmitting the Draft Investigation Report
Once the committee has completed the investigation report, the draft will be transmitted to the Designated Officer. A copy will also be transmitted to the Office of General Counsel to review for legal sufficiency. The Office of General Counsel will review the document and transmit it back to the Designated Officer. After the Office of General Counsel's comments have been incorporated, the Designated Officer will transmit a copy of the final report to the respondent. The respondent will be allowed the maximum time (10 days) prescribed by System Regulation 15.99.03 to review and comment on the draft report. The time limits may be extended for good cause by the Designated Officer with approval of the Designated Officer. The extension must be documented in the record.

The respondent shall be instructed to submit any comments to the Designated Officer for consideration by the investigation committee. If the respondent submits comments, the investigation committee may revise the report as necessary to address the respondent's comments.

Transmitting the Final Investigation Report
After all comments have been received and the necessary changes have been made to the investigation committee's report, the Designated Officer shall transmit the final report with attachments to the Deciding Official and to necessary federal funding agencies.

ADJUDICATION BY THE DECIDING OFFICIAL
Consistent with System Regulation 15.99.03, the Deciding Official shall render a final decision on the committee's findings within 15 calendar days after receipt of the final report.

Upon receiving the final investigation committee report, the Deciding Official may:
uphold the findings and recommended sanction(s) of the investigation committee;
return the matter to the investigation committee for further consideration with instructions on the matter to be addressed.

In determining the appropriate sanction for committing misconduct in research, scholarship or creative work, the Deciding Official should consider the degree to which the misconduct:
was intentional, knowing or reckless;
was an isolated incident or part of a pattern of misconduct;
had significant impact on the academic record, research subjects, other researchers, or creative artists, institutions or the public welfare.

The Deciding Official's decision, reasons, and sanctions will become the final University report. The Designated Officer shall transmit the final University report to the respondent within 10 working days of the Designated Officer receiving the decision from the Deciding Official. This time limit may be extended by the Designated Officer for good cause and must be documented in the record.
The Deciding Official may also exonerate the respondent and instruct the Designated Officer to develop and implement plans to restore the respondent’s reputation and research capabilities and to protect the good faith complainant against retaliation.

The Deciding Official will instruct that appropriate actions be taken if the allegations of research misconduct are substantiated.
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**APPEAL**

Any resulting sanctions or actions following a decision that the respondent engaged in research misconduct will be handled in a manner consistent with System policies and regulations and University rules.

**CONTESTING A TERMINATION DECISION**

If the sanction is termination, the respondent may appeal the decision in accordance with System policies, regulations and University rules and procedures.