Research Committee
Procedures for responding to Academic Misconduct in Research

Preamble

Most researchers operate according to the highest standards, and, as a result, there is generally a high level of trust between them. Individuals are naturally reluctant to entertain any suspicion about the activities of a colleague. A serious case of research misconduct may lead to the end of a research career, and may reflect badly on colleagues and on the university. If suspicion does arise it can lead to considerable agony of mind on the part of a potential whistleblower in deciding how to proceed.

Unethical behavior in research and scholarship strikes at the heart of the scholarly and educational enterprise. A shared understanding of expectations and responsibilities is, therefore, critical — not only to the quality of the research enterprise but also to the collegial life in the College of Nursing-Jeddah .

Academic misconduct is defined as:

"Any action or attempted action that may result in creating an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community" (UC Berkeley Code of Student Conduct; 2015).

Forms of Academic misconduct in Research:

Academic misconduct can take many forms, including:

- fabrication or falsification of data,
- theft of ideas or direct plagiarism,
- deliberate interference with the integrity of the work of others.

Whatever the form, academic misconduct is behavior that may lead to a variety of disciplinary actions, including, in severe cases, alteration of the status of employee, dismissal of an employee, or termination of tenure.

Modified from: Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Dealing with Academic Misconduct in Research and Scholarship
Source: http://web.mit.edu/policies/10/10.1.html Retrieved 4.9.2015

UC Berkeley Code of Student Conduct; 2015.
Source: http://gsi.berkeley.edu/media/9misconduct.pdf accessed 9.9.2015

Procedures

Reporting Academic Misconduct:

1. Someone believing in good faith that an act of academic misconduct is taking or has taken place should in most circumstances present his or her concerns to the supervisor or the Chair of the Research Committee within CON-J of the person whose work is in question. There may be circumstances in which, prior to doing this, it would be appropriate for the person who suspects misconduct to go directly to the suspected person.
2. The Chair of the Research Committee within CON-J, who becomes aware of situations of possible academic misconduct, either by their own observations or because of reports from others, has a responsibility to report them to the Dean in order to assure that the proper procedure is followed.

3. Any allegation of research misconduct must be dealt with expeditiously. If such misconduct is established there is an absolute responsibility to report it.

4. A finding that research misconduct has occurred will be dealt with openly, and all steps to correct its effects will be taken.

5. The rights of any researcher accused of misconduct must be protected by:
   - Maintaining the confidentiality of the researcher accused.
   - Avoiding suspension or termination, until evidence is provided
6. The rights of any individual reporting suspicions of such misconduct in good faith must be protected by ;
   - Maintaining the confidentiality of the individual reporting the suspected misconduct. Those involved also have a responsibility to take steps to prevent reprisal against the person bringing the allegation. <u>Reprisal at any time against the person bringing the allegation is an act of misconduct subject to disciplinary action.</u>

7. Those conducting the inquiry or investigation should, to the extent reasonably feasible, have the expertise to carry out a thorough and authoritative evaluation of the relevant information and have no real or apparent conflicts of interest bearing on the case.

8. The procedures that should be used in investigating any allegations of academic misconduct depend on the circumstances of each case.

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Guidelines

The following guidelines provide an overview of the process, which involves an initial inquiry into allegations and apparent instances of academic misconduct, followed by a more formal investigation when that is warranted. An inquiry is initial information gathering and fact finding designed to determine whether or not an allegation deserves further investigation. An investigation is a formal examination and evaluation of all relevant facts to determine if misconduct has occurred.

1. The inquiry will be concluded by the Chair of the Research Committee with a written report summarizing the process, the information reviewed, and the conclusions as to whether or not an investigation is warranted.

2. If the Chair of the Research Committee determines that there is a reasonable basis to believe that misconduct may have occurred, whether or not the evidence is conclusive, the alleged accused will be given a copy of the draft report. The report should include all information supporting the allegations. The alleged accused shall be offered the opportunity to respond to the allegations and present such information as she wishes. This information will be made a part of the record. The Chair of the Research Committee and the alleged accused may meet in person to review this information.

3. After considering the responses of the alleged accused, the Chair of the Research Committee should prepare a final report, including an accurate summary of the information offered by the alleged accused, and forward it to the Dean.

4. The Research Committee chairperson is also responsible for notifying the sponsor (if any) of a research project in which misconduct is suspected as soon as the decision has been made to undertake an investigation and for keeping the sponsor informed of the status and the outcome of the investigation.

5. In each case the investigating person or committee will conduct a full investigation in order to determine all the relevant facts. This will normally include the examination of all relevant documentation and interviews with all individuals who are involved or may have pertinent information. The investigation should be initiated promptly and should be completed as expeditiously as possible. The alleged accused should be provided with all necessary information in a timely manner to facilitate the preparation of a response and ensure an opportunity to address the charges and the supporting information in detail. The alleged accused may be accompanied to any interview, meeting, or hearing by a colleague she selected.

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6. The Dean has the authority to mitigate the effects of the misconduct by withdrawing CON-J's name and sponsorship from pending abstracts and papers and by notifying persons known to have relied upon any work affected by the misconduct.

7. If, at any point, investigation reveals the charges to be unsubstantiated, every reasonable effort should be made to restore and protect the reputation of the researcher or scholar under investigation. A report will be prepared documenting the reasons for the conclusion that the allegation is without merit. That report will be given to the Dean.

Prepared by Dr. Liisa Hallila and Dr. Jennifer de Beer

Discussed and recommended for approval by the Research Committee- College of Nursing Jeddah.

Approved by the Dean, CON-J, Dr. Tagwa Omar.

Signature

Date: 13/12/15

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RESPONDING TO ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Staff member suspects academic misconduct

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Reports to the Chair of Research Committee within the CON-J who informs other members of the research committee

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The Chair of Research committee establishes the validity of the reported misconduct

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If report is deemed invalid, the issue at hand is dismissed

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If validity of report is established, the Chair of the Research Committee submits a report to the accused who then has an opportunity to respond to the allegation/s .

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The Chair of Research committee through a written report informs the Dean of the CON-J and informs all parties involved

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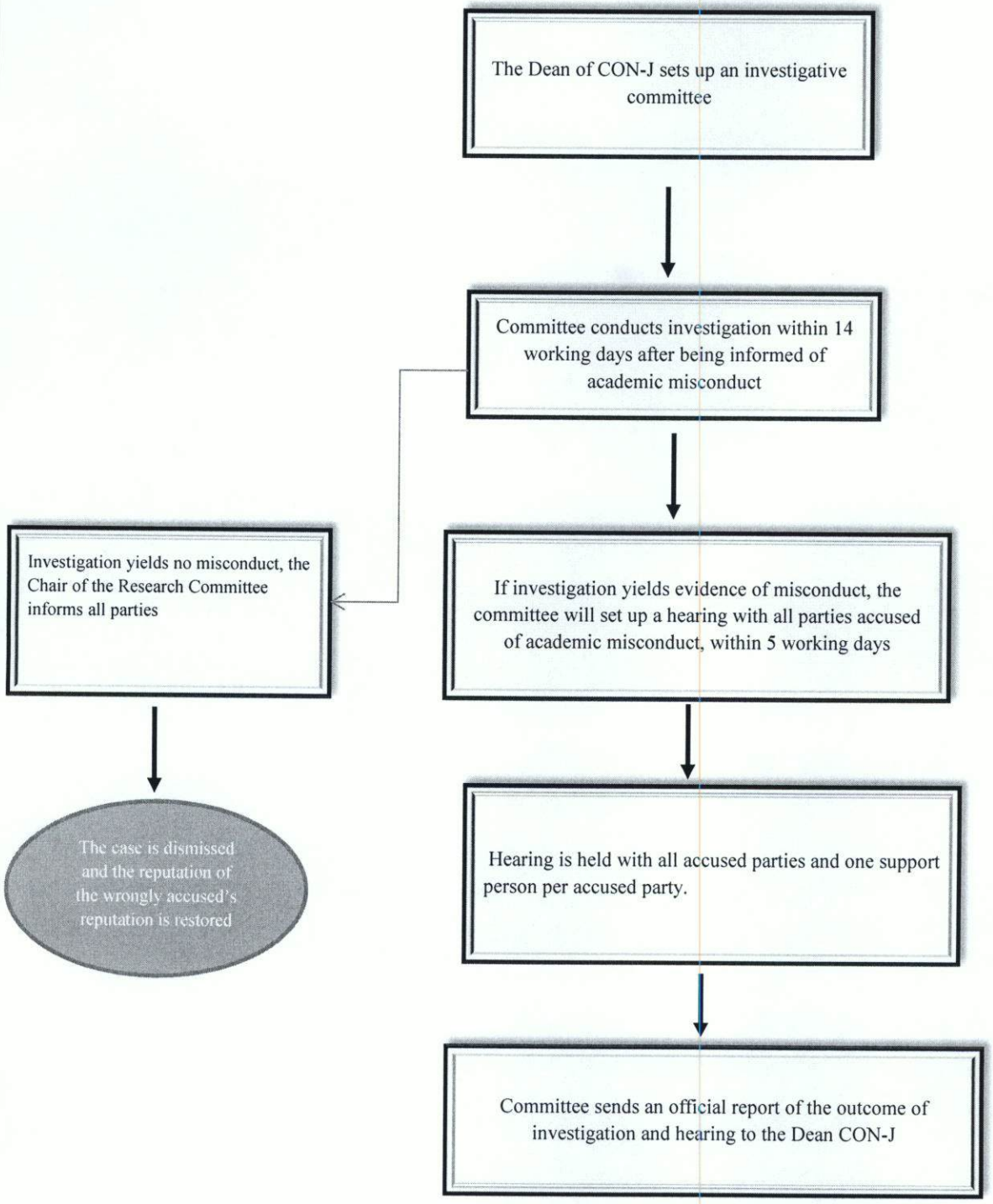
Annexure 1


The Dean of CON-J sets up an investigative committee
Committee conducts investigation within 14 working days after being informed of academic misconduct
Investigation yields no misconduct, the Chair of the Research Committee informs all parties
If investigation yields evidence of misconduct, the committee will set up a hearing with all parties accused of academic misconduct, within 5 working days
The case is dismissed and the reputation of the wrongly accused's reputation is restored
Hearing is held with all accused parties and one support person per accused party.
Committee sends an official report of the outcome of investigation and hearing to the Dean CON-J

Annexure 1