



DEFINING

✓ **What it is:** Scholarly misconduct is **research misconduct** (i.e., fabrication, falsification, plagiarism) or any other practice that seriously deviates from practices commonly accepted in the discipline or in the academic and research communities.

- Fabrication: intentionally generating research data or results that are fictitious in some regard, and recording or reporting these data or results as being genuine.
- Falsification: manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting research data or results in a way that deviates from common practice in the field, such that the research purposely is not accurately represented in the research record.
- Plagiarism: representing another person's ideas, processes, results, words, images, or other creative works as one's own without giving appropriate credit.

Scholarly misconduct can take many forms, including, but not limited to:

- Improprieties of authorship: the improper assignment of credit that is not in accordance with accepted standards in the relevant discipline, such as inclusion of individuals as authors who have not made a substantial contribution to the published work, exclusion of individuals as authors who have made a substantial contribution to the published work, or submission of multi-authored publications without the concurrence of all authors;
- Abuse of confidentiality/misappropriation of ideas: the improper use or appropriation of information obtained from scholarly exchanges and other types of confidential access, such as from review of grant applications or manuscripts; service on peer review panels, editorial boards, or University committees; and information obtained from publishers, foundations, and organizations that run conferences or engage in other scholarly activities;
- Deliberate misrepresentation of qualifications: misrepresentation of experience or research accomplishments to advance a research program or to obtain external funding;
- Deliberate material failure to comply with federal, state, or University requirements affecting research: violations involving the use of funds or resources; data management; care of animals; human subjects; investigational drugs; recombinant products; new devices; radioactive, biologic or chemical materials; or the health and safety of individuals or the environment; and
- Violation of generally accepted research practices.

✗ **What it isn't:**

- Unintentional error
- Differences in interpretation/judgment of data/results
- Appropriative practices in the Creative Arts
- Other forms of authorship disputes
- Student academic dishonesty (in academic courses or exercises)



ADDRESSING

Federal regulations and institutional policy require the university to take certain steps to address allegations of scholarly misconduct. The University of Maryland Policy and Procedures Concerning Scholarly Misconduct set forth the process that we follow. This step-wise approach has specific requirements for proceeding beyond each stage identified below and affords the parties involved various due process rights. More information can be found at <https://faculty.umd.edu/main/resources/research-and-scholarly-misconduct>.

Assessment

Inquiry

Investigation

Final Resolution

As an academic community, we also address scholarly misconduct by working to prevent it. This can be achieved through training in the responsible conduct of research ("RCR"), understanding what leads people to commit misconduct, knowing the red flags, and modeling good behaviors.



REPORTING

All members of the academic community are expected to report suspected scholarly misconduct.

✓ Do:

✉ **Report!** It's best to report the information that you have suggesting that scholarly misconduct may have occurred to the institution's **Research Integrity Officer** ("RIO") in writing, ideally via e-mail to rio@umd.edu. You can also call **301-405-6803** or submit a report via [EthicsPoint](#), the University's online compliance reporting system.

🕒 **Be specific.** Provide as much information as you can about the issue, why you think it represents potential scholarly misconduct, what it impacted or where it appeared (e.g., a publication, presentation, or grant application), and who was involved. Only sufficiently specific allegations can be addressed.

? **Know that you can report anonymously or ask not to have your identity disclosed.** The institution will act on anonymous allegations and will honor requests for confidentiality to the extent possible. However, keep in mind that others may discern the source of a complaint regardless. Also note that the inability to seek additional information from an anonymous complainant can impede the progress of the process to review the allegations – for instance, if additional specificity is required to make the complaint actionable.

🏠 **Know that you're protected.** The institution will make diligent efforts to protect individuals who report allegations in good faith. Conversely, there can be consequences for making an allegation in bad faith.

🗣️ **Ask questions.** If you're not sure whether an issue might constitute scholarly misconduct or if you want more information about how an allegation would be handled if you raise it, you can speak with the RIO. Hypothetical situations can be discussed.

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✗ Don't:

🔍 **Don't conduct your own investigation!** Looking into the matter on your own could unintentionally impact the evidentiary value of potential sources of information. Pass on what you already know and let trained, authorized officials handle the rest. That is how we'll have the best chance of figuring out whether misconduct occurred and addressing it accordingly.

🕒 **Don't wait.** Timely reporting is crucial to ensuring that misconduct is addressed quickly and before critical evidence may become unavailable. Sitting on your concern could allow ongoing misconduct to continue or could hinder the institution's ability to thoroughly investigate.

🗣️ **Don't talk about it with other people.** It's critical to maintain confidentiality, especially early in the process. A potential respondent becoming aware of an allegation before the RIO can act could impact the institution's ability to sequester valuable evidence. In addition, as allegations of scholarly misconduct can have serious implications for an individual's career, it's important that they're handled appropriately and only by authorized, trained individuals. Finally, the process operates with a presumption of innocence that must be respected. Remember: the issue about which you're concerned may be the result of a simple mistake or might not actually constitute misconduct. The term "research misconduct" in particular has a specific and consequential legal meaning. To tell others that an individual committed misconduct could not only be incorrect, but could also violate the spirit of our process, which is designed to incorporate confidentiality and fairness. Other parties who could be impacted, such as co-authors and journals, will be notified as necessary and appropriate.

🗣️ **Don't be discouraged by silence.** When allegations are received, a number of important steps, potentially involving many parties, need to take place. A variety of factors can impact how quickly the matter proceeds, as well as what you might hear back and when. Don't assume that silence means inaction! You've done your part by reporting your concerns, and you will be contacted as necessary and appropriate thereafter.