

Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship

PREAMBLE



The implementation of basic ethical principles and responsibilities is essential to the effective functioning of a university. The Canadian research granting councils have recently announced that universities which receive research funding must have a policy on integrity in research and scholarship. The following policy was developed by the Laurentian University Senate Committee on Integrity in Research and Scholarship in response to this national call to universities.

The document is based on the understanding that scholarly activity includes research, theory development, teaching and learning, and the production, performance, presentation or publication of scholarly papers, works of art, or other forms of expression. It assumes the development and maintenance of a culture of equity in the University, a culture where the standarder means of determining fairness, such as the office of the Ombudsperson, the Employment Equity Office, or the Harassment Office, nor procedures such as student appeals, employee grievances, or any existing collective agreements. Instead, this Policy complements these and other Laurentian University policies and procedures, including those governing the ethics of research with human subjects, animals, biohazards, radioactive substances, occupational health and safety, and student conduct.

The general public has a legitimate interest in the maintenance of standards of scholarly conduct at the University. Therefore, Laurentian University is responsible for maintaining such standards in a way that is open to scrutiny. This University is responsible for promoting a clear understanding of the issues involved in maintaining the highest standards in research, teaching, learning and other aspects of scholarship. The University is also responsible for providing an environment that encourages recognition of ethical standards. Laurentian University must respond appropriately to allegations of misconduct involving its administrators, personnel or students. Finally, the university is accountable for assessing and reviewing policies and practices to ensure that the highest ethical standards are maintained over time. Therefore, Laurentian University faculty members, administrators, employees and students are directly responsible for ensuring that the standards listed in this document are observed.

This document is composed of Principles, Standards, Rationale for implementing the principles and standards, Dissemination of the policy, Implementation of this policy, Procedures for responding to inquiries related to integrity, Sanctions and accountability, and Review and revision. The Appendices provide Guidelines on

ownership and authorship of intellectual property and Guidelines on conflict of interest.

PRINCIPLES

The pursuit of excellence in all forms of scholarship, teaching and research occurs in the context of the following principles:

1. Accountability

Individuals involved in research and scholarship at Laurentian University are to familiarize themselves with the principles and responsibilities outlined in this document, and are held accountable for their behaviour in carrying out these activities. The University provides mechanisms to assist and support members of the University Community in their endeavours to exercise a high level of integrity in research and scholarship.

2. Social Responsibility

Individuals involved in research and scholarship at Laurentian University are responsible to the community and the society in which they work and live. They are to consider, as much as possible, the broader effects of their scholarly activities, and take steps to minimize any negative social and environmental outcomes that may arise from their work.

3. Respect for dignity of persons

Individuals involved in research and scholarship at Laurentian University are to accord appropriate respect to the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people. They are to respect the rights of individuals to privacy, self-determination and autonomy. They are to be sensitive to individual differences including those related to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socio-economic status.

STANDARDS

The primary responsibility for high standards of conduct in research, teaching, learning, publishing and other areas of scholarship rests with the individuals carrying out these activities, including administrators, faculty, students, and support staff. Therefore, Laurentian University holds them responsible for upholding the standards listed below.

1. Permission and Acknowledgement when using Information

The work of other researchers and scholars, including their expression of ideas, whether obtained formally or informally shall be used only with due acknowledgement, and only with formal permission unless publicly available. Archival material shall be used only in accordance with the rules of the archival source. Also, information obtained as a result of the peer review process must be treated as confidential by the reviewer.

2. Quality Assurance

Faculty, students and support staff are to exhibit honesty, accuracy and scholarly rigour that meets the standards of the discipline involved in obtaining, recording and analysing data, and in reporting and publishing results. They are to keep original data accessible for a reasonable period (usually five years) after study completion and publication.

3. Intellectual Property and Authorship

Administrators, faculty, students and support staff must understand and respect the guidelines for ownership and authorship of intellectual property. Authorship with regard to the publication of all scholarly work (including articles, oral presentations, and completed Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral theses), is to be attributed to all those, and only those, who have made a substantial scholarly contribution to, and share responsibility for, the contents of the publication. Authorship is not attributable to individuals who only provide encouragement, physical facilities, financial support, critiques, or editorial contributions. (See Appendix A.)

4. Conflicts of Interest

Researchers and scholars must reveal to potential or committed sponsors, including this or other universities, journals or funding agencies, any financial or other conflict of interest, that might influence the decisions of sponsors about whether the individual should review manuscripts or applications, test products or undertake work available through those sponsors. (See Appendix B.)

5. Financial and Research Accountability

Research funds must be used for the purpose for which they were given, and in accordance with Laurentian University policies and guidelines governing the use of and record-keeping for such funds. University and other policies on research involving human subjects, animal care, biohazards, and radioactive substances, etc. must be followed.

6. Protection of Third Parties

Researchers must ensure that third parties (those who are affected by research but do not fall within the traditional definition of "research subjects") are protected from undue exposure to physical or psychological risk (including loss of confidentiality or privacy), using the same standards for weighing risks and benefits as are used for human subjects of research. Researchers should identify potential third parties and should describe research procedures which will be implemented to ensure protection of those parties.

7. Power Imbalances

Faculty, students and support staff must recognize and ensure the protection from coercion of individuals with less power (such as research subjects, third parties, students, junior or untenured faculty, staff and technicians) participating in research, teaching, learning, publication or other scholarly activity.

8. Teaching and Learning

Recognizing the academic freedom of both teachers and students, we also recognize that whatever is taught or asserted in the teaching and learning environment as an established truth or fact, by either teacher or student, should be derived from scholarly investigation and appropriately analysed empirical information, including that from experimentation, reviews of scholarly literature, interviews, lived experience, or participant observation. In teaching and learning settings, faculty, staff and students have a mutual obligation for respectful recognition of individuals or groups, including those who have been historically marginalized. All those present share responsibility for acting with mutual respect, and for contributing to a climate of inclusion. Persons in authority should redress rather than perpetuate inequities.

¹ *The following definition of Academic Freedom appears in the LUFA Collective Agreement: Academic Freedom is the right to search for truth, knowledge and understanding and to express freely what one believes. The University as an institution and the community of its scholars have a duty to protect and defend the search for knowledge and truth by all who enquire, teach, offer professional library service and learn under its auspices. (LUFA Collective Agreement 1992-1995, p. 3.)*

RATIONALE FOR IMPLEMENTING THESE PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

Laurentian University actively encourages the application of these standards to teaching, research and other forms of scholarship, recognising that:

- Individuals must understand clearly what constitutes ethically-based behaviour in a university environment;
- Simply displaying ethical guidelines does not mean that the University Community will take them seriously;
- Individuals are not always aware that their behaviour is an infringement of guidelines, or cognisant of the potential ramifications of their actions;
- Individual interests and perspectives may influence how ethical guidelines are interpreted;
- An institutional culture which emphasizes the value of competition may encourage some members of the University Community to place productivity above issues of integrity. A university culture must be founded on ethical principles and responsibilities.

Given these underlying assumptions, Laurentian University accepts its responsibility to establish mechanisms to:

1. inform all individuals associated with research and other forms of scholarly activity about policy, standards and procedures available to address problems of integrity.
2. establish a process to facilitate the resolution of queries or misunderstandings involving no apparent violation of the Integrity Policy.
3. establish a process for identifying infractions when they occur.

4. specify and implement sanctions where appropriate.
5. ensure protection of students and others from reprisal.
6. review and when necessary revise these policies and procedures.

DISSEMINATION OF THIS POLICY

Information on this Policy and its implementation procedures must be made available to the University Community, and also to those outside the University.

Those who will be most heavily involved in providing information about the Policy, and in implementing it, (Academic Administrators, especially Deans and the staff in their offices) must understand and be committed to its implementation.

Material on Integrity in University Handbooks and Guides

Appropriate information about the Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship should be incorporated into the Undergraduate Student Handbook, the Graduate Studies Handbook, the Laurentian University Calendar and the School of Graduate Studies Calendar. The Policy will also form part of the Guidelines for the Preparation and Administration of Research Grants and Contracts, published by the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

Workshops to members of the University Community

The Faculties will develop and deliver workshops about issues and problem-solving involving integrity to new and existing members of the following groups, in conjunction with existing orientation sessions and with classes on research methods:

Academic and other administrators who will be involved in the process of advising and performing the tasks related to implementation of the Policy:

- Faculty and support staff
- Undergraduate students
- Graduate students

Student Associations and Faculty, Staff and other Employee Associations

The Student and Employee Associations and Unions play a vital role in the dissemination of information about the Policy. They will in some cases serve as the first source of advice for those who are considering approaching a Dean or Director. As such, knowledge and commitment to the Policy on the part of associations and their representatives are very important. Information from these sources will complement the printed text available in their handbooks and elsewhere.

Dissemination outside the Laurentian University Community

Persons outside the University Community also need to have access to information about this Policy. They may have questions about the Policy,

disputes with the University or persons from the University Community, or allegations about the conduct of persons from the University Community. For those who are involved as subjects of research, the consent form they sign should inform them about how to contact the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Personnel at the University Switchboard should also be informed about how to direct callers to sources of information on the Policy.

Educational materials development

Written materials, slides or videos should be developed or collected, based on sources from ethics committees of various disciplines such as the Educational Psychological Association, Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, or the Canadian Nurses' Association.

Conferences on Integrity Issues

Conferences in which papers and case studies about integrity issues are presented, from the perspective of community groups, agencies, business, industry, educational institutions, health institutions and the university should be promoted.

Scholarly Publication Related to Integrity Issues

Publication of papers in professional and scholarly journals about integrity issues should also be encouraged.

PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO INQUIRIES RELATED TO INTEGRITY

The University will attempt to protect the reputation of all those involved, as well as the reputation of the University at all stages of any inquiry related to integrity. When an inquiry is finished, if allegations of misconduct have been substantiated, appropriate officials or research funding sources will be notified. At that time, it may also be appropriate to publicize the findings.

Introduction

These procedures have been designed to encourage informal discussions and interventions in order to resolve problems efficiently, without confrontation or unwarranted penalty, and to maintain privacy of information as much as possible.

Laurentian University will promote compliance with this Policy, and will ensure that impartial and informal advice on this Policy can be accessed easily. Laurentian University will also ensure that violations of the Policy will be dealt with fairly and expeditiously. Therefore, University officials will act appropriately whenever a violation of the Policy occurs.

1) Information/Advice

Anyone who wishes to obtain information or advice on the interpretation or application of the Policy should direct their inquiries to the Dean of the relevant faculty or the Director of Graduate Studies and Research.

In the case where a problem involves more than one faculty, the Dean/Director who is approached initially should consult with the Dean/Director of the other

faculty on the resolution of the matter. When the Deans/Directors are in disagreement on the resolution, the Vice-President Academic may be called upon to deal with the matter.

Requests of this sort may arise from individuals within the University Community, individuals outside the University Community, funding agencies, etc. They may also come from the University through its administrators.

It is contemplated that from time to time individuals will require advice for their personal information, will seek dispute settlement between themselves and another member of the University Community, or will have concerns with respect to the conduct of another member of the University Community as it relates to this Policy. It is the responsibility of the Dean/Director at this point to determine the basis of the query and to direct the individual accordingly.

- When the individual requests information about this Policy or its implementation, the Dean/Director should provide assistance to the individual directly or should refer the individual to another resource within the University.
- When the individual identifies a conflict or misunderstanding between themselves and another member of the University Community, (e.g. another faculty member, administrator, student, or researcher), and there is no serious infraction of the Policy, the Dean/Director will direct the individual to an appropriate faculty member who is prepared to act as a mediator between the individuals involved.
- When, in the opinion of the Dean/Director the matter could be resolved by communicating with the person who has allegedly violated the Policy, the Dean/Director shall do so as quickly and as privately as possible. The individual making an inquiry may request anonymity and the Dean/Director shall make every reasonable effort to provide privacy. The Dean/Director will inform the individual making the inquiry that anonymity will be respected as much as possible.

Using an informal approach, the Dean/Director shall bring the concern raised to the attention of the person who has allegedly contravened the Policy, clarify the nature of the issue and provide advice on how the Policy should be interpreted and applied. In many cases, it is hoped that such a meeting between the Dean/Director and the individual will result in satisfactory resolution. The outcome of this informal meeting and the satisfactory resolution of the issue will be communicated to the individual who made the original inquiry.

2) Formal Procedures

- Occasionally, an alleged violation of the Policy will be serious or complex enough that a formal review is warranted. For example, some allegations

may require a complex review of financial records or a detailed review of research methodology or results. In such cases, the Dean/Director shall notify the individual alleged to have breached the Policy that an allegation exists, and shall designate one or more persons to review the situation.

The reviewer(s) may be internal or external to the University, as appropriate to the case. The reviewer(s) should be an independent fact-finder(s) who may have expert knowledge, and who can approach the question without preconceived notions of the outcome. The reviewer(s) shall not act as an advocate or representative of any party.

The reviewer(s) must meet as necessary with the person alleged to have violated the Policy and identify any matters which require a response. The person alleged to have violated the Policy will have the option to be accompanied by advisors, such as peers, student council or union representatives, or even legal counsel, at this and subsequent meetings. Specific allegations should be formulated by the Dean/Director or the Reviewer in writing and the responding individual should then be given reasonable opportunity to properly respond to them. The reviewer(s) may meet with others as required and may review documents or materials as required. The responding individual should be allowed access to all available information bearing on the case. (The format of the information may be altered from the original if necessary to maintain privacy of the provider.)

- The reviewer(s) shall complete a report of their findings and submit it to the Dean/Director for action, and may make recommendation for or against further action. The review shall normally be completed within six weeks after the reviewer(s) has been appointed.
- Following receipt of the reviewer's report, the Dean/Director shall
 1. summarize the report to protect privacy of individuals and deliver a copy of the summary to the subject of the review and to the person whose inquiry originated the review; **and, if necessary**
 2. take whatever remedial and/or disciplinary action is appropriate and is authorized under the governing collective agreement. (Such disciplinary action is subject to grievance in the normal course. If the person subject to disciplinary action is a student, the disciplinary action is subject to appeal under the Code of Student Conduct.); **or**
 3. if a suspension or a discharge is contemplated, convene a hearing at which the allegations of violation of the Policy shall be heard. At such a hearing the parties shall be the University and the student/employee who has alleged to have violated the Policy. (See note above regarding the option to have advisors present). The matter will be heard before a single adjudicator, external to the Laurentian University Community, who shall be chosen by the

- Vice-President Academic, taking into account the particular requirements of the case, in consultation with the bargaining units, student associations, or employee associations when appropriate.
4. The adjudicator will decide on whether and/or to what extent the allegations of violation of the policy are substantiated, and may make recommendations for action to the Vice President Academic, who will decide on the course of action to follow.

In all cases, the University shall take reasonable steps to protect persons providing information about violations of the Policy against acts of retribution. This is particularly important if a power differential exists between the person providing information and the person who has been alleged to have violated the Policy. The University shall take responsibility to provide legal defence in the event that anyone who has provided this information without malice or bad faith, becomes the object of litigation as a result.

After a final decision about the allegation has been reached, a record of the proceedings and findings, in cases where misconduct has been found, will be maintained in a confidential file kept by the Office of the Vice President Academic. Only where the Vice President or designate has concluded that a record of the proceedings should be kept in an employee's personnel file or a student's file will there be an additional copy inserted in those files. In these cases, the employee or student will be informed that the material related to misconduct has been placed in those files.

SANCTIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Listed below are some possible sanctions of varying degrees of severity. These or other sanctions should be chosen on the principle of appropriateness to the infraction(s):

1. monitoring of an individual's research activities by a Dean/Director for a specified time; and/or required completion of educational programs related to these guidelines.
2. monitoring of an individual's teaching activities by a Dean/Director for a specified time; and/or required completion of educational programs related to these guidelines.
3. an appropriate financial penalty for a specific purpose, e.g to reimburse the University for the costs of an audit or for improper expenses, in compliance with Collective Agreements;

4. written record of the proceedings and findings in the personnel file of an employee or the student file of a student either permanently or for a limited period of time;
5. temporary suspension of responsibilities in the case of a university employee or of enrollment in the case of a student.
6. public disclosure of the infraction;
7. dismissal in the case of a university employee or expulsion in the case of a student;

If the University is found to be responsible for the infraction, the same type of sanctions may be applied to the administrative officers responsible for the said infraction.

The University affirms the Guidelines of the Granting Councils on Integrity, and will inform them and other appropriate organisations when a determination of misconduct has been made.

The University shall take all reasonable steps to repair any damage that may have resulted from misconduct on the part of its employees, students or administrators, and to repair any damage that the person alleged to have contravened the Policy's reputation for scholarly integrity may have suffered by virtue of an unfounded allegation. The University will also undertake disciplinary action against persons proven to have made allegations of misconduct in malice or bad faith.

REVIEW AND REVISION

Experience with procedures and policies may indicate the need for revision and refinement. Therefore, administrative procedures should be established to facilitate review and revision.

Annually, the Director of Graduate Studies and Research, or another authority appointed by the Senate to oversee Integrity in Research and Scholarship will report to Senate on the following:

1. number of queries/disputes/allegations handled at both informal and formal levels;
2. the nature and number of cases in which there has been a finding of misconduct;
3. type of sanctions employed;
4. the educational activities carried out to promote integrity in research and scholarship;
5. number of attendees at educational activities;
6. nature and number of requests for information regarding integrity issues from within and outside the University;
7. whether assessors or negotiators are external or internal to the University.

This information will help the University to evaluate and revise the Policy and enhance integrity in research and scholarship activities.

Table:

Procedures for responding to inquiries related to integrity

Informal Procedures		
Information or advice	Dean/Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides information requested, or • Directs individual to appropriate faculty member who will serve as mediator, or • Communicates with individual who has allegedly violated policy, clarifies issue and provides advice on interpretation of policy.
Formal Procedures		
Initial step	Dean/Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifies person that allegation exists. • Designates independent reviewer (individual or panel).
Review (Normally within six weeks)	Reviewer or Review Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers to person written allegations. • ²Meets with person to identify matters requiring response. • Meets with others and reviews documents or materials as required. • Submits report of findings and recommendation for/against further action to Dean/Director.
Report and action	Dean/Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizes report to protect privacy of individuals. • Delivers summary to subject of review. • Delivers summary to person initiating inquiry. • If necessary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ takes remedial/disciplinary action appropriate and authorized under collective agreement etc.; ○ If suspension or discharge is contemplated, convenes hearing at which parties are the University and the person alleged to have violated policy.
Suspension/Discharge Procedure		
External Review	Vice President Academic	Chooses person outside University Community to hear allegations (in consultation with bargaining units, student associations, employee associations as appropriate).
External Review Process	Person chosen to hear allegations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenes hearing at which allegations heard (The parties are University and person alleged to have violated policy). • Makes final decision as to culpability. • Reports on decision to Vice President Academic
Final Decision	Vice President Academic	Final decision on sanctions.

² *At all meetings with the person alleged to have violated the policy, the person shall have the option to be accompanied by advisors, such as peers, student*

council or union representatives or even legal counsel.

Appendix A.

Guidelines for ownership and authorship of intellectual property¹.

Definition

Intellectual Property is the expression of ideas and can exist in a multitude of forms, including poems, inventions, computer programs, books, articles, essays, reports, plays, music scores, videos, etc.

2. Ownership

Ownership of intellectual property is vested in the author/creator, unless that person has been specifically employed to create a work and ownership as defined by the terms of a contract. Ownership may be formalized through copyrighting, patenting or registry. Terms of publication may alter ownership.

3. Shared benefits

Where institutional support (financial or other) has directly aided in the creation of intellectual property, material benefits will be shared between the creator and the institution. Although they may have received scholarships or other awards relating to their studies, students are nevertheless assumed to be the sole creators of the theses and dissertations which they have produced.

4. Authorship -- acknowledgement of contributions

In accordance with the Intellectual Property and Authorship standard on page 3, faculty, students, staff, assistants, technicians and administrators must acknowledge legitimate contributions to the creation of intellectual property. Technical support should be acknowledged as a courtesy.

5. Ownership of intellectual property in team or collaborative work

When intellectual property is created collaboratively, difficulties may arise as to ownership. Attempts should be made early in the collaboration process to establish criteria for acknowledgement of contributions (issues of first author, order of names and type of acknowledgement).

6. Ownership of data in team or collaborative work

Just as authorship needs to be clarified in team or collaborative work, so too does ownership of and access to data. It is recommended that teams attempt to establish at the outset rules and procedures for the use of data, particularly in the case where a member who has contributed has left the team or the University, or joins a project already in progress.

7. Resolution of misunderstandings and disputes

To resolve disputes regarding intellectual property, an informal process will be attempted via the offices of the appropriate Dean/Director of the Library, or the Director of Graduate Studies and Research.

Appendix B.

Guidelines on Conflict of Interest

A potential conflict of interest situation arises when an employee or student of Laurentian University is in a position to use research, knowledge, authority or influence to which they have access as a function of their relationship with the university, for personal gain or benefit (financial or otherwise). It is also a conflict of interest when a family member of an employee or student of the university is in a position to obtain personal gain or benefits.

The credibility of research and scholarship can be undermined by even the appearance of conflict of interest. Laurentian University requires that employees and students acknowledge and disclose potential or real conflicts of interest in which they find themselves.

Research granting councils, publishers, and other interested parties must also be informed by employees or students when a conflict of interest might affect or might be perceived to affect the impartiality of a reviewing process.

Procedures

Researchers must reveal potential or real conflicts of interest to their immediate supervisors, and also to co-researchers and to sponsors, as soon as they become aware of these conflicts, and discuss with these people ways in which the conflicts may be managed. Supervisors must consider whether a conflict of interest can be managed or whether it must be disallowed. They must also follow up on their assessment, and periodically update their knowledge of the conflict situation.

Examples of conflict situations

Favouring of outside interests for personal gain

- Entering into research contracts with companies employing a faculty member or a member of that faculty member's immediate family.
- Directing research toward developments of potential benefit to private firms in which the researcher has an interest.
- Influencing the purchase of equipment or materials from a company in which the person has a personal interest.

Inappropriate use of University personnel, resources, assets, or good name:

- Faculty/Staff requiring students supervised by them to undertake work of personal benefit to them or a company in which they have an interest.
- Unauthorized and unreimbursed use of University property or resources for the benefit of themselves or a company in which they have an interest.
- Participating in the review or hiring process when the university employee has a marital, familial or intimate relationship with the person being hired.

- Utilizing the name of the University when presenting ideas, implying that the ideas represent the University's position, or identifying publicly with the University when carrying out private, non-University business.

Inappropriate use of information:

- Use of privileged information acquired as a result of University-supported activities for private gain (for instance, in obtaining a contract for a company in which one has a financial interest).
- Unreasonable delay of publication of research results or premature announcement of research results for personal gain.

Other Potential Conflicts

- Conflict between the goals of research funded by two different sources.
- Conflict between Codes of Ethics for research and those for practice within a particular profession.