

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY, AND ARTISTIC WORK COMMITTEE
REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

PRESENTED BY: Steven Rayan; chair, Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee

DATE OF MEETING: November 17, 2022

SUBJECT: **2021-22 Report of Allegations and Breaches under the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy**

COUNCIL ACTION: **For Information Only**

SUMMARY:

The Tri-Agency Framework on Responsible Conduct of Research mandates annual reporting on the total number of allegations received involving Agency funding, the number of confirmed breaches and the nature of those breaches. Previously breaches of the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy were reported through the annual report of the Vice-President Research to RSAW, but starting in 2019 they have been reported separately.

The attached report outlines the number of breaches and allegations under the Responsible Conduct of Research Policy for the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. RSAW reviewed this report at its meeting on November 3, 2022.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Responsible Conduct of Research Policy: 2021-22 Report on Allegations and Breaches
2. Responsible Conduct of Research - Allegations, investigations & Breaches 2013 to 2022

Responsible Conduct of Research Annual Report July 2021 - June 2022

The Responsible Conduct of Research Team is led by Dr. Darcy Marciniuk, Associate Vice President Research and the University of Saskatchewan contact for the Secretariate on Responsible Conduct of Research (SRCR). Dr. Marciniuk works with Dr. Trevor Crowe, Research Integrity Officer and Dr. Diane Martz, Responsible Conduct of Research Specialist.

The Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Policy requires an annual report to be provided to Council documenting the numbers of allegations received, the numbers of those proceeding to a hearing, and the numbers and nature of findings of a breach of this policy.

From July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, the Associate Vice-President Research dealt with the following investigations under the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Policy:

1. one (1) new allegation of a breach in which the Inquiry found the allegation did not meet the criteria for a responsible allegation and did not proceed to a hearing.
2. one (1) new allegation of multiple breaches in which the Inquiry found that the allegations either fell outside the jurisdiction of the RCR Policy or did not warrant an investigation and consequently did not proceed to a hearing.
3. one (1) new allegation of a breach in which the Inquiry found the matter had been handled under another University policy or other comparable proceeding.
4. one (1) new allegation of a breach in which the respondents (2) acknowledged they had breached the RCR Policy. This allegation, the identity of the respondents and the recourse imposed by USask were required to be reported to the SRCR and the granting agency. SRCR and the Panel on RCR are currently investigating this allegation and the Agency will impose their own recourse in addition to that imposed by USask.
5. one (1) ongoing RCR investigation is currently in litigation (ongoing since 2012). This investigation remains an open file at SRCR.

The confirmed breaches include (case involved multiple breaches):

1. Falsification,
2. Failure to comply with applicable policies, laws or regulations for the conduct of Research including, but not limited to Canadian Council on Animal Care guidelines and policies

The recourse included:

- Animal Care education, lab training and service on a relevant university committee.

Historical Data of Allegations, Appeals, Investigations & Breaches during the period 2013 to 2022 is available in Appendix 1.

RCR Activity Update:

1. The revised RCR Policy took effect July 1, 2021.
2. The RCR Website was launched in September 2022. The website is available at <https://vpresearch.usask.ca/research-support/responsible-conduct-of-research/responsible-conduct-of-research.php>. The website is a work in progress and we appreciate feedback and suggestions to improve the website.

3. In addition to the work of handling Inquiries, Hearings and reporting to the SRCR and the Tri-Agencies, the Team has also served as a resource to members of the University and answered many questions that have not reached 'allegation' status. This is a positive indication that the required central point of contact for RCR at USask is becoming better known and also provides opportunities to support and educate the University community and potentially prevent breaches of the RCR Policy.
4. Dr. Trever Crowe was appointed as Research Integrity Officer in September 2021. The Research Integrity Officer is a USask Faculty Member who works as part of a team to promote and support the responsible conduct of research at the University of Saskatchewan. The Research Integrity Officer provides guidance, information and education to researchers, staff, students and administrators regarding the interpretation and implementation of the USask Responsible Conduct of Research Policy and the TriAgency Framework on Responsible Conduct of Research.
5. The RCR Team participates on the RCR Forum with other Canadian Institutions receiving funding from the Tri-Agencies.
6. In the coming year, the RCR Team will focus attention on RCR Education. We are discussing:
 - a. the best way to provide RCR education for Postdocs with the Postdoctoral Fellow Advisory Committee of the College of Graduate and Post Doctoral Studies,
 - b. renewing face to face RCR workshops for students and
 - c. the development of additional online resources for members of the University.

Appendix 1: Responsible Conduct of Research - Allegations, Appeals, Investigations & Breaches 2013 to 2022

Time Period	New Allegations Received	Appeals	# of Inquiries	Breaches Acknowledged*	# Hearings	No Breach	Confirmed Breaches	# of cases involving breaches	# Reported to the Tri-Agencies	In Progress/Ongoing
07/2013 - 06/2014	3		N/R	N/A	3	1	3 plagiarism 1 redundant publication	2	N/R	1 ongoing
07/2014 - 06/2015	3		N/R	N/A	3	Not reported	3 plagiarism 1 redundant publication	Not reported	N/R	1 ongoing
07/2015 - 06/2016	9		N/R	N/A	2	7 plus 1 from previous year	Not reported	0	N/R	2 in progress, 1 ongoing
07/2016 - 06/2017	1		N/R	N/A	1	0	Not reported	0	N/R	1 ongoing
07/2017 - 06/2018	6		N/R	N/A	2	2	Not reported	0	N/R	1 ongoing
07/2018 - 06/2019	4	1	N/R	N/A	3	3	Not reported	0	N/R	1 in progress, 1 ongoing
07/2019 - 06/2020	12		11	5	1	1 from previous year	failure to comply with relevant policies (ethics) for the conduct of research (2), misrepresentation in a funding application (2), plagiarism (1), falsification of data (1), Fabrication of data (1).	6	1	3 in progress, 1 ongoing
07/2020 - 06/2021	1	1	3 (1 inquiry closed)	0	4	2	inadequate acknowledgement (1), invalid authorship, (2), plagiarism (2)	2	2	1 ongoing
07/2021 - 06/2022	3 (1 involving 3 respondents)	0	5 respondents	2 respondents	0	0	falsification (2), failure to comply with applicable policies, laws or regulations for the conduct of Research including, but not limited to Canadian Council on Animal Care guidelines and policies (2)	2	2	1 ongoing

Data extracted from RSAW Committee Annual Reports to Council; June 2013 to June 2019.

*Acknowledgement of a Breach not offered as an outcome prior to 2019.