



# WHITMAN COLLEGE

## **Policies on Research Safety and Ethics**

Whitman College is strongly committed to ensuring that all research conducted by Whitman faculty and/or students be held to the highest standards of ethics and safety. The Whitman College Faculty Handbook outlines the official College policy on faculty and student research, including the procedures for handling allegations of research misconduct and for fulfilling the research ethics training requirement.

### **Whitman College policies on research involving vertebrate animals, humans, or recombinant and/or synthetic nucleic acids**

The College believes in the ethical care and treatment of animal and human subjects to be used in biological, biomedical and behavioral research, and has established policies to ensure that College and national regulations are followed. These include an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee and an Institutional Review Board. In addition, through its Institutional Biosafety Committee, the College takes great care to assure that biosafety standards are followed, to ensure the health and safety of the campus. These are described in the Faculty Handbook.

#### Animal Care and Use

All research proposals involving vertebrate animals must have their research protocol approved by the Whitman Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Whitman's IACUC is approved by the federal Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>). New protocols that involve animals should be submitted to the current Chair of the Committee, who will distribute them to the members of the committee for approval.

#### Institutional Review Board

All research conducted by Whitman College faculty or students involving human participants, regardless of its funding source, must be submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review. Federal guidelines for this review process can be found under Academic Offices on the Provost and Dean of the Faculty web page and at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/index.html>.

#### Institutional Biosafety Committee

Protocols for research conducted by faculty and/or students using recombinant and/or synthetic nucleic acids must be approved by the Whitman Institutional Biosafety Committee (constituted as needed). Most federal agencies follow the National Institutes of Health policies (found at <https://osp.od.nih.gov/biosafety-biosecurity-and-emerging-biotechnology/>) and guidelines, be found at <https://osp.od.nih.gov/biotechnology/nih-guidelines/>. Any faculty member planning to conduct recombinant DNA research at Whitman College should contact the Provost and Dean of the Faculty's office or the Office of Grants & Foundation Relations for further guidance.

### **Whitman College Procedure for Handling Cases of Research Misconduct**

Whitman College is committed to maintaining high standards of integrity in research and scholarship, whether funded or not.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) requires that institutions have a written policy on research misconduct in order to be eligible for research funding. While there is less than

total unanimity on what constitutes misconduct in research, the categories of fabrication, falsification, plagiarism, and “other serious deviations” that appear in the annual HHS questionnaire are sufficient to cover the full range. All research trainees must also receive instruction in the responsible conduct of research (Whitman’s procedure is described below in its RCR Training Procedure).

Anyone who suspects possible research misconduct should report it to his/her supervisor. Supervisors should transmit the allegation to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (who is the College’s Research Integrity Officer), who will then conduct an informal inquiry. If the supervisor is the one suspected of research misconduct, the employee should report directly to the Associate Dean. The allegations and the results of the inquiry will be submitted in writing to the Provost/Dean of the Faculty, who shall determine whether a formal investigation is warranted. If an investigation is deemed necessary, the Provost shall form a panel of three (chaired by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs). The panel must complete its work within 120 days unless there are unusual and extenuating circumstances, and will submit its conclusions in writing to the Provost. The Provost will review the case, and on the merits of the findings, recommend appropriate action to the President of the College. The person against whom the allegations were lodged shall receive copies of the written reports of the inquiry and investigation and shall have the right to appeal the decision to the president. Following any appeal, the President’s decision is final.

In all cases regarding possible misconduct of researchers holding federal, state, or private grants, the College will follow the guidelines issued by the respective agencies or foundations and will submit written notification, etc., as required.

The College will furnish copies of this policy to each faculty member who receives a research grant at the same time the faculty member receives instruction on the College’s Responsible Conduct of Research training policy. The Research Misconduct policy will be published in Whitman’s Faculty Handbook, the Grants & Foundation Relations website, and the Whitman College Grants Manual. Students involved in research will also receive a copy. Faculty or staff who direct research projects will be responsible for monitoring and assuring the integrity of the research conducted under their direction and will set high standards in this regard.

The College encourages anyone who observes research misconduct to come forward with his or her concerns. In the initial phases of inquiry, the responsible official will maintain confidentiality of an individual who comes forward with allegations. Once a formal investigation is conducted, however, such confidentiality may not be guaranteed. The institution will seek to protect the complainant against retribution but is also committed to due process and fairness toward the accused.

For further detail, please consult the federal Public Health Service Policies on Research Misconduct, effective June 2005 (<https://ori.hhs.gov/sample-policy-procedures-responding-research-misconduct-allegations>).