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**POLICY**

Aurora College (the “College”) will maintain the highest possible ethical standards in all of its research activities.

**PRINCIPLES**

Aurora College is committed to:

1. Maintaining the highest possible standards of integrity, accountability and responsibility in the conduct of any research done by Aurora College staff, students, and affiliates; and
2. Following fair and effective procedures to deal promptly and confidentially with questions of integrity in research and scholarship.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Misconduct in research** includes but is not limited to:

- Fabrication and/or falsification of research data;
- Plagiarism, theft of ideas or intellectual property, or misuse of another’s work;
- Failure to acknowledge the input of others such as students, co-researchers, research assistants and staff;
- Use of unpublished work of others without permission;
- Violation of copyright, patent, or trade-mark laws;
- Failure to comply with terms and conditions of research grants and/or contracts;
- Use of College resources, facilities and equipment for purposes other than that which has been properly approved by the College;
- Failure to account for or misapplication or misuse of funds and equipment acquired for support of research;
- Failure to comply with relevant federal or provincial/territorial statutes or regulations or other agency and College policies for the protection of researchers, human participants, or the health and safety of the public, or for the welfare of animals; and
- Failure to reveal any material conflict of interest to the College, sponsors or to those who commission the research.

Misconduct in research does not include honest errors or differences in research methodologies, interpretations, or judgments of data.

**Non-compliance:** Failure to follow applicable guidelines and regulations governing human participant or animal subject research; failure to follow the protocol approved by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) or Animal Care Committee (ACC); or failure to follow stipulations imposed by the REC or ACC as a condition of approval (modified from the Canadian Association of Research Ethics Boards’ definition).

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## **PROCEDURES**

The following procedures apply to Aurora College staff, students, and affiliates unless noted otherwise.

### **1. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Principal Investigator(s)**

1.1. The Principal Investigators(s) will:

- Maintain the highest possible ethical and scientific standards of academic integrity.
- Adhere to all relevant Aurora College policies and procedures.
- Comply with the *Tri-Agency Framework Responsible Conduct of Research*, if applying for or in receipt of Tri-Agency funds.<sup>1</sup>
- Provide collaborators, students, staff, and assistants with all relevant information to prevent misconduct in research as defined in this policy (e.g. Aurora College policies, terms and conditions of research grants, federal or territorial statutes, and regulations).
- Seek and obtain approval from the appropriate College authorities before engaging in any research (see Policy I.02 *Research Administration*).
- Seek and obtain approval from the REC before engaging in any research involving human subjects (see Policy I.04 *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects*).
- Seek and obtain approval from the appropriate committee and/or authority before engaging in any research involving biohazards, ionizing radiation, or animals (see Policy I.05 *Care of Animals in Teaching and Research*).
- Be aware of and responsive to all pertinent ethics principles and policies that apply to the research, when engaging in research with human or animal subjects.
- Comply fully with the approved research protocols in the conduct of the research.
- Oversee the design of research methodology and the processes of acquiring, recording, examining, interpreting and storing data and monitor the work of students, research assistants, and others.
- Verify the authenticity of all data or factual information generated in his/her research.
- Take reasonable precautions to limit the effects of the research, including social, psychological, physical, and environmental impacts.
- Deal fairly with all issues related to intellectual property such as:
  - a. Protecting the College's interest in the research;

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<sup>1</sup> Tri-Agency and Tri-Council are interchangeable and refer to the three federal research funding agencies consisting of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR); the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC); and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

- b. Determining authorship amongst the research team regarding all publications, prototypes, patents and/or other products;
- c. Providing appropriate recognition to staff, students, administrators, and other researchers for their contribution to research; and
- d. Considering the legal and ethical implications resulting from the authorship of research results.

**Researcher(s)**

1.2. The Researcher(s) will:

- Maintain the highest possible ethical and scientific standards of academic integrity.
- Adhere to all relevant Aurora College policies and procedures.
- Undertake research that adheres to the relevant ethical requirements and maintains the sanctity of human life.
- Undertake research that adheres to the relevant animal care standards and values and respects the well-being of animal subjects.
- Report any concerns or misconduct regarding the research to the Vice President, Research.
- Protect the reputation of the College when undertaking research activities.

**Aurora College**

1.3. The College will:

- Promote Tri-Agency standards of integrity, accountability and responsibility in research and scholarship.
- Educate all those involved in the collection, recording, citing, and reporting of scientific or scholarly material on the expectations for the highest standards of integrity.
- Ensure staff, students, and affiliates have been provided with and are aware of all relevant research related policies and procedures prior to undertaking research.
- Establish appropriate institutional security safeguards for information while it is currently in use by researchers, and for any long-term retention of information. These safeguards should include physical, administrative, and technical measures.
- Investigate any allegations of misconduct in research in a fair, unbiased and timely manner.

**2. Data Collection and Preservation**

2.1. Researchers will use scholarly and scientific rigour and integrity when collecting, recording and analyzing data and when reporting and publishing results.

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**Accessing Archives**

- 2.2. Archival material will be used in accordance with the rules of the archival source.

**Primary Research data**

- 2.3. Subject to any limitations imposed by the terms of grants, contracts or other arrangements for the conduct of research, the Principal Investigator and all co-investigators will have free access to all original data and products of the research.
- 2.4. Copies of the primary data for use in secondary research or for purposes other than the original research must be requested from and authorized by the Principal Investigator.

**Note:** Secondary use of data or biological samples may require review by the REC.

- 2.5. Primary data will remain, where possible, in a secure location in the Principal Investigator's program area and should be preserved as long as there is reasonable need to refer to it. Exceptions to this protocol will be entertained if outlined in data protocols and/or data-sharing agreements.
- 2.6. Original primary research data should be recorded both in hard copy format and protected electronic media and stored in a retrievable fashion by the Principal Investigator. Exceptions to this protocol will be entertained if outlined in data protocols and/or data-sharing agreements and/or if Aurora College is petitioned by a traditional knowledge holder and/or community for the return of their traditional knowledge property.
- 2.7. Primary data will not be destroyed unless there is a bona fide requirement for confidentiality or if Aurora College is petitioned by a traditional knowledge holder and/or community for the removal of their traditional knowledge property.
- 2.8. Research results should be recorded accurately and be retrievable for five years following publication where the medium permits.
- 2.9. Prior to leaving the College, the Principal Investigator will make arrangements with the Vice President, Research (or designee) for the safe keeping of records, data and products of research.

**3. Research Results**

- 3.1. Entitlement to ownership, reproduction and publication of primary data, software and other products of research will vary according to the

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circumstances under which the research is conducted. Federal legislation, territorial legislation and policies, and Aurora College policies guide this process (see Policy I.06 *Intellectual Property*).

### **Authorship**

- 3.2. Work of other researchers and scholars, published or unpublished, will only be used with appropriate permission and with due acknowledgment (see Policy B.18 *Copyright*).
- 3.3. Authorship of published work includes all persons and only those persons, including students, who have materially contributed to, and share responsibility for, the contents of the publication.

### **4. Conflict of Interest in Research**

- 4.1. Policy F.04 *Conflict of Interest* outlines potential situations of conflict. Researchers are expected to conduct themselves in accordance to the highest possible ethical standards and in a manner which will bear the closest scrutiny. They are also responsible for seeking guidance from the appropriate source before embarking on activities which might raise questions about conflict of interest.

### **5. Allegations and Complaints of Misconduct in Research and Scholarship**

- 5.1. Any member of the College community or the public may make an allegation of misconduct in research. The College will follow the procedures outlined below to investigate such allegations promptly, fairly, and confidentially.
- 5.2. The REC will assess complaints about the ethical treatment of human participants, including non-compliance with approved protocols or the *Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)*. When the REC has completed its assessment, it may make an allegation of misconduct in research.
- 5.3. The ACC will assess complaints about the ethical treatment of animal subjects, including non-compliance with approved protocols or standards of care. When the ACC has completed its assessment, it may make an allegation of misconduct in research.

**Note:** If human or property safety is jeopardized, the Vice President, Education and Training or a designee of the President will immediately suspend the research until an investigation can be completed.

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#### 5.4. *Allegations*

- 5.4.1. Any member of the College Community who receives an allegation of misconduct in research will direct the complainant to the Vice President, Research. Any member of the College Community who receives an allegation of misconduct in research will not share it with anyone other than the Vice President, Research.
- 5.4.2. On receipt of an allegation of misconduct, the Vice President, Research will require that the allegation be formulated in writing before taking any further action. If it is not possible to formulate the complaint in writing, no further steps will be taken against the researcher accused of misconduct under these procedures.
- 5.4.3. The complaint in writing will contain sufficient detail to allow the researcher accused of misconduct to understand the allegation of misconduct.
- 5.4.4. The complaint in writing will identify the person or persons who made the allegation if it appears to the Vice President, Research that the evidence supporting the complaint might reasonably require such identification for its proper evaluation.
- 5.4.5. Where the documentation in support of the complaint reasonably requires knowledge of the identity of any person who caused it to be forwarded to the Vice President, Research for its proper evaluation, no complaint in writing will be valid unless it identifies that person. However, no such person will be identified unless that person has expressly so agreed.
- 5.4.6. Within ten (10) working days of receiving a written allegation of misconduct in research, the Vice President, Research will provide the researcher accused of misconduct with a copy of the written allegation.
- 5.4.7. Within ten (10) working days of receiving a written allegation of misconduct in research, the Vice President, Research will review the allegation and related documentation to determine whether a formal investigation is required and will notify the complainant and the researcher accused of misconduct of his/her decision immediately.
- 5.4.8. If the Vice President, Research determines that a formal investigation is not required and the complainant wishes to pursue the matter further, the complainant must make a formal complaint in writing to the Vice President, Education and Training within ten (10) working days of notification of the Vice President, Research's decision.

- 5.4.9. The written allegation and supporting documentation pertaining to written allegations that do not result in formal investigations will be stored securely by the Vice President, Research in accordance with GNWT policies and legislation.
- 5.4.10. If the Vice President, Research determines that a formal investigation is required, he/she will forward the written allegation and documentation to the Vice President, Education and Training who will initiate a formal investigation (see below).
- 5.4.11. The Vice President, Research may independently or at the sponsor's request, take immediate action to protect the administration of the sponsor's funds. This could include freezing grant accounts, requiring a second authorized signature from a College representative on all expenses charged to the grant account or before funds are released, or other measures, as appropriate.
- 5.5. Formal Investigation*
- 5.5.1. Formal complaints must be made in writing to the Vice President, Education and Training. Anonymous complaints will not be entertained.
- 5.5.2. If the Vice President, Research determines that a formal investigation is not required and the complainant makes a formal complaint in writing to the Vice President, Education and Training, then within ten (10) working days of receiving a formal complaint in writing from the complainant the Vice President, Education and Training will decide if a formal investigation is required and will immediately notify the complainant, the researcher accused of misconduct, and the Vice President, Research.
- 5.5.3. Within ten (10) working days of receiving a formal complaint and deciding that a formal investigation is required, the Vice President, Education and Training will establish an investigating committee (the "Committee" or the "Investigating Committee") of three persons, with relevant experience in the area of research involved in the particular case, to conduct an investigation. Committee members will be chosen from program areas other than the program area in which the researcher accused of misconduct is employed. Persons external to the College may be appointed at the discretion of the Vice President, Education and Training. The Vice President, Education and Training will coordinate and chair the Investigating Committee but will not be a voting member.
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- 5.5.4. The Vice President, Education and Training will inform the researcher accused of misconduct and the complainant, in writing, of the committee's membership within five (5) working days of appointing the committee, and the researcher and the complainant will have ten (10) working days to voice objections to the composition of the committee. The Vice President, Education and Training's disposition of any such objection will be final.
  - 5.5.5. The Vice President, Education and Training will forward a copy of the formal complaint and supporting documentation to each member of the Investigating Committee within five (5) working days of finalizing the appointment of the committee.
  - 5.5.6. In all proceedings and subsequent to a final decision being made, there will be no reprisals against complainants acting in good faith and without demonstrably malicious intent. Any College employees, students or research associates taking reprisals or filing a false complaint that involves malicious intent, as determined by the investigation, will be subject to disciplinary action.
  - 5.5.7. The Investigating Committee will pay special attention to all issues of privacy and confidentiality and, if the complaint being investigated relates to research involving human subjects, the Investigating Committee will take whatever steps are necessary to protect the identities of the subjects.
  - 5.5.8. If deemed necessary, the Vice President, Education and Training, in consultation with the Investigating Committee, may direct that research funds be withheld until allegations of misconduct are resolved.
  - 5.5.9. Within fifteen (15) working days of establishment of the Investigating Committee, the Committee will schedule a meeting with the complainant and researcher(s) accused of misconduct. The Investigating Committee will meet separately with complainants and researchers accused of misconduct. Each party will be given an opportunity to give his/her version of the facts to the Investigating Committee. At the discretion of the Committee, the hearing may be conducted orally or by way of written submissions.
  - 5.5.10. Before accepting any evidence from any person not already identified in the written complaint or identified to the researcher accused of misconduct during the investigation, the Committee will advise that person that their identity may be revealed to the researcher accused of misconduct should revelation be necessary in the interests of due process.
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- 5.5.11. Prior to making its final decision, the Committee will advise the researcher accused of misconduct in sufficient detail of all the evidence being considered by the Committee. The researcher accused of misconduct will be given the opportunity to respond to that evidence orally and/or in writing.
- 5.5.12. The Investigating Committee will hold all investigation evidence and materials confidential.
- 5.5.13. The Investigating Committee will generate a confidential, written summary of the investigation within ten (10) working days of the completion of the investigation. The summary will state:
- The alleged misconduct;
  - The composition of the Investigating Committee and an explanation of the selection process;
  - The investigative methods used;
  - The names of the persons interviewed and/or supplying information;
  - The Committee's conclusions and recommendations:
    - i. Misconduct in research occurred in part; or
    - ii. Misconduct in research occurred in whole; or
    - iii. Misconduct in research did not occur and recommendations to restore the research and working environment to its previous state.
  - Any other relevant details.
- 5.5.14. The report will be reviewed by the Vice President, Education and Training to determine final sanction in accordance with this policy.
- 5.5.15. The Vice President, Education and Training will provide the complainant, the researcher accused of misconduct and the Vice President, Research with a copy of the Investigating Committee's written summary and the final sanction within ten (10) working days of the Committee submitting its written summary.
- 5.5.16. In the case of a researcher being wrongly accused:
- A letter stating the finding (e.g. the complaint was unsubstantiated or the researcher was found not to have committed misconduct in research) from the Vice President, Education and Training will be sent to the researcher accused of misconduct and the Vice President, Research; and
  - Where documents or files have been provided to a member of the Investigating Committee or an expert consultant, he/she will be sent a
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copy of the letter and will be directed to destroy the relevant documents and files.

*5.6. Appeals of the Formal Investigation*

- 5.6.1. Appeals will be submitted to the President in writing, within ten (10) days of receipt of the summary and decision of the Investigating Committee.
- 5.6.2. The President will advise the Vice President, Research and the Vice President, Education and Training that an appeal has been filed.
- 5.6.3. Within ten (10) days of receipt of the appeal, the President will establish an ad hoc appeal committee (the “Appeal Committee”) consisting of three persons, with relevant experience in the area of research involved in the particular case. The President will appoint one of the three members as Chair of the committee.
- 5.6.4. Appeal Committee members will be chosen from program areas other than the program area in which the researcher accused of misconduct is employed. Persons external to the College may be appointed at the discretion of the President. Members of the Appeal Committee will not have been members of the original Investigating Committee.
- 5.6.5. The President will notify the complainant and the researcher accused of misconduct of the Appeal Committee’s membership.
- 5.6.6. The Appeal Committee will review the case and provide a decision in writing to the President within ten (10) working days of the committee being established.
- 5.6.7. Within one (1) working day of receipt of the Appeal Committee’s decision, the President will inform the complainant, the researcher accused of misconduct, the researcher’s supervisor, the Vice President, Research and the Vice President, Education and Training of the outcome. Where the Appeal Committee:
  - i. Concludes that misconduct occurred, the supervisor of the researcher accused of misconduct will immediately implement the disciplinary action(s) sanctioned by the Vice President, Education and Training;
  - ii. Concludes that misconduct did not occur, the President and the supervisor of the researcher accused of misconduct will immediately take all reasonable steps to restore the research and working environment to its previous state.

### 5.7. *Disciplinary Action*

- 5.7.1. Disciplinary action will reflect the severity and nature of the misconduct. Disciplinary action will be in accordance with the procedures outlined in the GNWT Human Resources Manual and the Collective Agreement between the Union of Northern Workers and the Minister of Human Resources, except in the case of students. Student disciplinary action will be in accordance with Aurora College bylaws.

### 5.8. *Appeal of Discipline*

Disciplinary appeals will follow the procedures outlined in the GNWT Human Resources Manual and be in accordance with the Collective Agreement between the Union of Northern Workers and the Minister of Human Resources.

### 5.9. *Notification of Sponsors and the Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research (“the Secretariat”)*

Access to Aurora College reports and records is subject to the provisions of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

- 5.9.1. It is recommended that research grant contracts include a provision that by signing the contract, the researcher has given the required consent for Aurora College to report its findings to the sponsor in accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Integrity in Research and Scholarship*, as outlined below.
- 5.9.2. Where misconduct was found to have occurred, the President will, within 30 days of completion of the inquiry/investigation, forward the report to the sponsor(s) involved, in accordance with the written terms of the research grant contract.
- 5.9.3. In cases where the sponsor(s) has initiated the request for an inquiry/investigation, the President will, within 30 days of completion of the inquiry/investigation, forward the report to the sponsor(s), regardless of the findings, in accordance with the written terms of the research grant contract.
- 5.9.4. Section 5.8.2 notwithstanding, the President will inform sponsors and the Secretariat of complaints, investigations into misconduct in research, and appeals of investigations into misconduct in research at the written request of the researcher accused of misconduct.

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- 5.10. *Notification of Institutional Research Partners*  
Access to Aurora College reports and records is subject to the provisions of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- 5.10.1. It is recommended that collaborative research agreements include a provision that by signing the agreement, the researcher has given the required consent for Aurora College to notify institutional research partners of complaints, investigations into misconduct in research, and appeals of investigations into misconduct in research.
- 5.10.2. The President will notify the institutional research partners involved in the research project of complaints, investigations into misconduct in research, and appeals of investigations into misconduct in research in accordance with the written terms of collaborative research agreements.
- 5.10.3. Section 5.10.2 notwithstanding, the President will inform institutional research partners of complaints, investigations into misconduct in research, and appeals of investigations into misconduct in research at the written request of the researcher accused of misconduct.
- 5.11. *Time Limits*  
When there are extenuating circumstances, time limits in these procedures may be extended at the discretion of the administrator responsible. A formal record will be kept. The Complainant and the researcher accused of misconduct will be advised of both the extension time and the reasons for the extension.
- 5.12. *Accountability and Record Keeping*
- 5.12.1. The documentation from investigations and appeals will be kept and stored securely at the Aurora Research Institute in accordance with GNWT policies and legislation. Access to reports and records will be by application subject to the provisions of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- 5.12.2. The Vice President, Research will be responsible for preparing bi-annual summary reports for the Research Advisory Council on allegations of and investigations into complaints of misconduct received by the College. The reports should respect the confidential nature of the investigations.
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**PROCEDURES, FORMS, AND RULES**

The Vice President, Research (or designee) is responsible for managing the supporting procedures, forms and rules for this policy.

Forms are available on SharePoint and at <http://www.nwtresearch.com>.

**RELATED POLICIES**

- B.18 Copyright
- F.04 Conflict of Interest
- I.02 Research Administration
- I.04 Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects
- I.05 Care of Animals in Teaching and Research
- I.06 Intellectual Property

**RELATED AURORA COLLEGE BYLAWS**

- Bylaw #1 Student Conduct
- Bylaw #2 Academic Standards
- Bylaw #3 Student Loss of Privileges, Expulsion, and Appeals

**FACT SHEET****DATES:**

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| 2013-06-11 | New policy.<br>Policy and Program Committee Motion #PP05-2013.<br>Board of Governors motion #BG13-2013.<br>Implemented July 1, 2013. |
| 2018-06-08 | Policy revised.<br>Approved by Public Administrator Ref.#Admin-25-2018.<br>Implemented July 1, 2018.                                 |
| 2021       | Next scheduled review  |