



College ESLG

RESEARCH INTEGRITY POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic integrity and integrity in research are most important elements of educational process at College ESLG. The Research Integrity Policy of College ESLG upholds the following fundamental values:

- Trust
- Fairness
- Honesty
- Responsibility
- Respect
- Integrity in Research is respectful of the six core fundamental values defined in

The present Research Integrity Policy defines the obligations and responsibilities of both academic personnel and students of College ESLG with respect to acceptable conduct in research, which must be in conformity with the highest ethical scientific behavior standards.

The Research Integrity Policy of College ESLG defines the following:

- obligations and responsibilities of researcher community at College ESLG;
- misconduct in research, which defined separately also in the Academic Integrity Policy of College ESLG;
- procedures that must be initiated when there is reasonable grounds to suspect of misconduct in research;

The present policy defines the obligation of researcher community at ESLG not only to actively nurture the research integrity culture but also actively avoid and report research misconduct.

All members of academic and researcher community at College ESLG are not only obliged to meet the requirements as set out in this policy but also report any suspected research integrity misconduct.



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College ESLG promotes integrity in research and is responsible to investigate the cases of misconduct in research and impose sanctions as set out in the present policy and Code of Ethics for Academic Staff of College ESLG.

2. SCOPE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY POLICY

The present policy is applicable to all research and scholarly activities occurring under the umbrella of College ESLG. The present policy applies to all full time tenure academic staff, part-time staff, visiting professors, research associates and collaborators, and students (both bachelor and master level).

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

All academic community at College ESLG must abide by the following ethical rules:

- a. Conducting research in an honest manner in search for new horizons of knowledge;
- b. Observing high rigor in conducting research, including the collection, analysis, and interpretation of research data and reporting and publication of data and research results;
- c. Concluding findings based on the critical analysis and interpretation adhering to recognized scientific principles;
- d. Making the research results available to the wider research community and general public by means of publication in journals, conferences, scientific monographs etc;
- e. Mentioning College ESLG when publishing under ESLG's umbrella and ensuring adequate attribution to all authors as per their significance in research contribution;
- f. Keeping and maintaining of research records, which allows the confirmation by others within three years after the publication and presentation in conference. The destruction of data and research records can be an exception only if the Ethics and Disciplinary Committee of College ESLG approves that;
- g. Accurately referencing the work of unpublished and published work, including theories, concepts, data, source material, methodologies, and findings.
- h. Including acknowledgments in the research publication of all who contributed to research, including research aides and research sponsors.



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4. MISCONDUCT IN RESEARCH

Misconduct in research from academic staff and students involved in research includes, but it not limited to:

- a. Fabrication of research data, which includes the fabrication of data, source materials, research methods and research results;
- b. Falsification of research data, which includes the manipulation of data, research methods and findings without proper acknowledgment;
- c. Plagiarism which includes the presentation of other author's published and unpublished work as its own, including theories, concepts, data, source materials, research methodologies without references;
- d. Lack of recognition of contributions of others, including the use of unpublished material of others without permission;
- e. Attribution of authorship to persons other than those that contributed sufficiently in line with the intellectual content, including acceptance to be listed as an author although the listing is highly inappropriate in terms of contribution and discipline;
- f. Self-plagiarism and redundant publication whereby own's previous publication is re-published without adequate acknowledgement of the source or justification;
- g. Failure to protect researchers, human subjects, the health and safety of the public, or the welfare of lab animals;
- h. Lack of disclosure of conflict of interest with regards to the College ESLG and research sponsors;
- i. Misconduct in financial management of research funds and research projects of the College;
- j. Including the names of co-applicants, or partners on grants, and co-authors in papers, conference abstracts, and research articles without their written or explicit agreement;

5. REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT

Every member of College ESLG (both academic and administrative) has the obligation to report an allegation if he/she has reasonable grounds to believe that a research misconduct has taken place under the umbrella of College ESLG.

The reporting of allegations of research misconduct may be brought forward also from external stakeholders.



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Allegations of misconduct in research should be filed in good faith and confidentiality to the Office of Rector of College ESLG in writing with signature with all the supporting documents. The Office of Rector then forwards the complaint of misconduct to be treated fairly by the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission of the Faculty under which scope the misconduct falls. The complainant of misconduct in his allegation must state that he/she does not bear any conflict of interest.

Each complainant must sign an agreement of confidentiality, which if violated can be sanctioned. Anonymous complaints can be addressed also if sufficient information are included in the claim to assess the credibility of evidence.

Both academic and administrative staff are obliged to forward any written misconduct complaint that they receive to the Office of Rector, who then forwards the complaint to Ethics and Disciplinary Commission of the Faculty in which the academic staff, researcher or student are engaged.

All the complaints related to the students, which are received are forwarded to the Deans of respective faculties, because of they are related to the course written assignment they must be addressed with different processes at the respective faculty according to the Plagiarism Prevention Policy and sanctions outlined in this policy by the course professor before the case of complaint is further forwarded to the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission of the Faculty.

6. INITIATION OF PROCEDURE OF MISCONDUCT

The complaint related to misconduct in research must be submitted in writing with the statement of conflict of interest to the Office of Rector. The complaint must outline all the facts of misconduct or else must be discarded.

6.1. INITIAL REVIEW OF ALLEGATION

Initial review takes place by the Office of Rector, which is subject to fair review and assessment of the merits of the misconduct allegation.

The Office of Rector invites within 14 days upon receipt of complaint of misconduct the complainant to speak with him/her and meeting with the complainant must occur within 14 days after the receipt of invitation by email. The Office of Rector may request further information from the complainant.



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The Office of Rector also invites the respondent party to inform him/her about the nature of the complaint and to seek the evidence within 15 days after having met with the complainant. The Office of rector may seek additional evidence and facts from the respondent party, which the respondent party must provide within 15 days after the meeting.

6.2.INVESTIGATION

Upon receiving all the information from the claimant and respondent party and upon initial review of the case, if there are reasonable grounds to believe that misconduct has occurred as per section 4 of the present policy, the Office of Rector must forward the case to the Secretary of College ESLG, who represents the College before the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission of the Faculty in which scope the misconduct has occurred.

The Secretary of the College appoints an investigative commission of three members (one member from the Faculty in which the misconduct occurred, one student representative, and one administrative staff), who conduct investigation hearings with the complainant, respondent party, and any other witnesses in the case. The Investigative Commission shall decide by consensus if there are merits to this case to be pursued further before the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission of the Faculty. The Investigation Commission must bring the decision within 30 days and forward the decision to the Secretary of College.

If the merits of the case do not exist then the Secretary of College discards the case and informs the Office of rector, who further informs the parties (complainant and respondent party) that the case has been discarded due to decision of investigative commission.

If there are reasonable grounds to believe that the misconduct has occurred then the Secretary of College forwards the case to the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission of Faculty in which the misconduct occurred within 15 days upon receiving the positive decision of the Investigative Commission.

6.3.HEARINGS BEFORE THE ETHICS AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISION OF FACULTY

The Ethics and Disciplinary Commission has the right to initiate the hearings within 30 days after having received all the case files from the Office of Secretary.



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The Ethics and Disciplinary Commission summons to the hearings all the parties (Secretary, Investigative Commission, complainant and respondent party) as witnesses.

The Ethics and Disciplinary Commission must within 30 days conduct all the hearings and render all the deliberations and come to a final decision.

If the decision is positive the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission can impose any of the sanctions as set out in the Code of Ethics for Academic Staff or Code of Ethics for Students.

6.4. APPEALS PROCEDURE

The respondent party has the right to file an appeal within 15 days to the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission of the College ESLG, which within 15 days must deliberate on the case and decide to uphold the decision of the Ethics and Disciplinary Commission of the Faculty or reverse the case for retrial.

Decision of Ethics and Disciplinary Commission of College ESLG as an appellate body is final.

7. EDUCATION AND PREEMPTIVE ASPECT

College ESLG is committed to ensuring high standards of ethical research behavior hence the principles of research integrity are promoted throughout the research community of College. The new staff and new students are informed about this policy at the induction session with staff upon employment and with students upon enrollment and beginning of academic year. The present Policy shall be made public also in the website of College ESLG under the Research part.

Dr. Visar Hoxha, Senate Chair, **15.10.2016**



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