

WELCOME to the first edition of the Office for Research Integrity's quarterly newsletter.

We will provide you with ORI updates, introduce you to key research-related personnel and provide you with research compliance information at the University and national level.

ORI Mission:

- Identifying compliance risks in our research practices and communicating those risks to the research community;
- Partnering with the research community in innovative and effective ways to minimize and manage research risks;
- Educating the research community with respect to appropriate business practices related to the conduct of research at Northwestern University;
- Monitoring and correcting non-compliance in accordance with University and federal guidelines.

ORI Staff

Lauran Qualkenbush
Director
Research Integrity Officer

Lindsay Greco
Research Training Manager

Sheri Lindsay
Senior Compliance Analyst

Michelle Stalilonis
Senior Compliance Analyst



Journal Retractions & Research Misconduct

A recent study published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)* found that the majority of scientific journal retractions are due to research misconduct. Researchers reviewed 2,047 biomedical and life-science research articles indexed as "retracted" in PubMed on May 3, 2012 and determined that 67.4% were retracted due to misconduct, which includes falsification, fabrication, duplicate publication and plagiarism. Of the articles retracted due to misconduct, 43.4% were retracted due to actual or suspected falsification or fabrication. Only 21.3% of the retractions reviewed were due to error.

This particular study conducted by Dr. Arturo Casadevall, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Dr. Ferric Fang, University of Washington and R. Grant Steen, a freelance writer in Chapel Hill, NC, appeared to be the most extensive study of its kind to date. The researchers not only reviewed all the retractions in the biomedical journals, but they also included other sources to inform their determinations, such as the website for [the federal Office of Research Integrity](#), the federal oversight agency that oversees PHS-funded research integrity activities, and [Retraction Watch](#), a weblog that reports on retractions in scientific papers, media reports and other public records. The earliest retraction found was from a 1973 published article retracted in 1977, but the increase in retractions caused by falsification and fabrication started occurring in the 1990s. The study found that since 1975, the number of retractions due to falsification and fabrication has increased nearly tenfold.

Did You Know?

Research misconduct is defined as falsification, fabrication, and plagiarism in the proposing, performing or reviewing of research, or in reporting research results? For more information, visit ORI's webpage on research misconduct:

<http://www.research.northwestern.edu/ori/misconduct/index.html>

The new PHS Conflict of Interest (COI) regulations began August 24, 2012? For more information on the new requirements, to view the investigator required training module, or to review Northwestern's updated policy, visit the Northwestern University Conflict of Interest (NUCOI) website: <http://www.northwestern.edu/coi/>

The federal Office for Research Integrity (ORI) oversees Northwestern University's ORI for research misconduct investigations involving PHS funds? View federal ORI's website here: <http://ori.hhs.gov/>



Introducing Michelle Stallionis...

1) What is your title at Northwestern?

Senior Compliance Analyst in the Office for Research Integrity

2) What does that mean?

I assist in facilitating research misconduct investigations at the University. I also investigate other research compliance concerns.

3) What is one thing you want people to know about what you do here?

I would like people to know that ORI exists to assist you in addressing your research compliance and ethical concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any compliance concerns you may have.

4) What did you do before you came to NU?

I am an attorney. I worked at a law firm for a state court judge prior to coming to Northwestern.

5) Where is your home town?

Hobart, Indiana

6) What brought you to Chicago?

I came to Chicago to attend law school at Loyola.

7) What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?

Vanilla...it's the little black dress of ice creams. You can dress it up or down.

8) What is your favorite vacation spot?

I like staycations in Chicago, but Hawaii is my favorite place I have been.

9) What is your favorite yearly Chicago event?

The Christkindlmarket in the loop at Christmas:
<http://www.christkindlmarket.com/en/>

*"Vanilla...it's the little black dress of ice creams."
-Michelle Stallionis*

NU Partners with RePAIR Program

Wrongdoing in research is unfortunately more common than one might think. Institutions have an obligation to ensure that research is conducted in accordance with the many regulatory and policy requirements that govern the complex research compliance environment. In addition, researchers are expected to uphold the highest ethical standards in the conduct and reporting of their work, including, but not limited to, the protection of human and animal subjects, fiscal responsibility and responsible authorship practices. Universities often struggle with implementing adequate management plans to address non-compliance and, until recently, there were no formal options available to institutions to help meet this important need. Funded by a grant from NIH and in collaboration with federal partners, James Dubois Ph.D., D.Sc. and his team at St. Louis University have developed a program to do just that.

RePAIR, which stands for **R**estoring **P**rofessionalism and **I**ntegrity in **R**esearch, is “designed for researchers who have engaged in research wrongdoing or have repeatedly failed to comply with policies and procedures and who might benefit from an intensive professional development program that engages cognitive biases, promotes effective ethical problem-solving strategies, and develops personalized management plans to implement following the program.”

The confidential program has two tracks, one for **RePAIRing** human subject protections and the other for **RePAIRing** research integrity, including problems with research misconduct and other types of non-compliance like improper care of animals, conflict of interest problems, mentoring issues and fraud. The program requires completion of online modules and a three-day intensive workshop at SLU. Costs are \$3000 per person. The program provides an individualized assessment and continual follow up over the first year. Northwestern has joined the **RePAIR** program as an institutional partner, which means that for our annual fee, Northwestern receives 50% off registration costs for all participants and unlimited consultations on referrals.

While we all work diligently to ensure that Northwestern’s research activities meet the required compliance and ethical guidelines, research compliance problems happen. Promptly identifying and correcting these issues helps to maintain and promote a responsible research environment. The **RePAIR** program provides a potential option for correcting non-compliance in a manner focused on professional integrity and retaining productive and talented investigators, which is very important to the success of Northwestern’s research enterprise.

If you have questions about **RePAIR** and Northwestern’s partnership, please contact Lauran Qualkenbush, ORI. Additional information about **RePAIR** can be found online (<http://www.slu.edu/repair/index.html>).

The logo for the RePAIR program features the word "REPAIR" in a bold, sans-serif font. A green leaf-like graphic is positioned below the letter "A", extending to the right and curving upwards.

Restoring Professionalism & Integrity in Research

“...designed for researchers who have engaged in research wrongdoing or have repeatedly failed to comply with policies and procedures...”





A third party vendor that allows you to anonymously raise ethical complaints, ask questions, and/or report activities that may involve misconduct or violations of Northwestern University policy. For more information visit the website at:

www.northwestern.edu/ethics

Compliance Corner

**Do you have compliance questions or concerns?
Here's a quick list of contacts!**

Misappropriation of costs/Grant management

- OSR Chicago: David Lynch (312.503.7955)
- OSR Evanston: Elizabeth Adams (847.491.3003)
- Controller's Office: Mike Daniels (847.491.4710)

Falsification of effort reporting

- Controller's Office: Mike Daniels (847.491.4710)
- Effort Reporting Manager: Jennifer Wei (847.467.2473)

Non-compliance with human subject protection policies/procedures or with IRB approved protocol/procedures

- IRB: Eileen Yates (312.503.6011)

Non-compliance with the treatment of research animals or with IACUC approved protocol/procedures

- IACUC: (847.467.2282)

Concerns regarding falsification, fabrication or plagiarism of research

- ORI: Lauran Qualkenbush (312.503.7908)

Keep in mind that you can always report any research compliance concerns to ORI or by using [Ethics Point](#).

Office for Research Integrity

750 N Lake Shore Drive
Rubloff, 7th floor
Chicago, IL 60611

PHONE:
(312) 503-0054

FAX:
(312) 503-0902

E-MAIL:
nu-ori@northwestern.edu



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Journal Retractions & Research Misconduct

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One factor for this increase in retractions is due to the creation of the federal Office of Research Integrity's predecessor, the Office of Scientific Integrity, as well as the passage of The Whistleblower Protection Act in 1989. However, despite this increase, the researchers noted that numerous articles suspected of falsification and fabrication had not been retracted. Furthermore, because journals have different policies for notifying readers of a retraction, they may not provide sufficient information regarding why the retraction was necessary. The study concluded that while retractions have increased, the retraction notice from scientific journals often does not provide an adequate representation for why an article was retracted.

The researchers state that they have "previously argued that increased retractions and ethical breaches may result, at least in part, from the incentive system of science, which is massed on a winner-takes-all economics that confers disproportionate rewards to winners in the form of grants, jobs, and prizes at a time of research scarcity." The researchers recommended that the influx of retractions "suggests a need to reevaluate the incentives driving this phenomenon." Because the integrity of scientific research rests on the credibility of the scientists, the researchers hope that this study sparks increased dialog about improving the quality of scientific literature.

To read the article in its entirety, see the following link:

<http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2012/09/27/1212247109.abstract>