Cornell Code of Academic Integrity

Absolute integrity is expected of every Cornell student in all academic undertakings. Academic integrity is expected not only in formal coursework situations, but in all University relationships and interactions connected to the educational process, including the use of University resources. Integrity entails a firm adherence to a set of values, and the values most essential to an academic community are grounded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others.

The Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity outlines guidelines for students, as well as procedures for addressing violations of those guidelines. All graduate students should familiarize themselves with the Code of Academic Integrity. Specific excerpts from the Code of Academic Integrity are provided below:

A Cornell student’s submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student’s own. All outside assistance should be acknowledged, and the student’s academic position truthfully reported at all times. In addition, Cornell students have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers.

A. General Responsibilities

1. A student shall in no way misrepresent his or her work.
2. A student shall in no way fraudulently or unfairly advance his or her academic position.
3. A student shall refuse to be a party to another student’s failure to maintain academic integrity.
4. A student shall not in any other manner violate the principle of academic integrity.

B. Examples of Violations

The following actions are examples of activities that violate the Code of Academic Integrity and subject their actors to proceedings under the Code. This is not a definitive list.

1. Knowingly representing the work of others as one’s own.
2. Using, obtaining, or providing unauthorized assistance on examinations, papers, or any other academic work.
3. Fabricating data in support of laboratory or field work.
4. Forging a signature to certify completion of a course assignment or a recommendation to graduate school.
5. Unfairly advancing one’s academic position by hoarding or damaging library materials.
6. Misrepresenting one’s academic accomplishments.
Cornell Policy on Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct related to integrity in the conduct of scholarly and scientific research and communication is addressed in Cornell University Policy 1.2. Specific excerpts from the Policy on Academic Misconduct are provided below:

Members of the Cornell University community are expected to perform their scholarly and scientific activities with honesty, to meet the highest ethical standards, and to respect the facts, the appropriate standards of evidence, and the contributions and scholarship of others. The university will vigorously investigate allegations of academic misconduct, taking all reasonable steps to protect the rights and interests of individuals whose work or performance is questioned.

What is Academic Misconduct?

Academic misconduct includes any act that violates the standards of integrity in the conduct of scholarly and scientific research and communication. This includes, but is not limited to, plagiarizing the work of others, i.e., intentionally or knowingly representing other people’s words or ideas as one’s own; deliberately falsifying or fabricating data, citations, or information; forging academic documents; abusing the confidentiality of information obtained from colleagues or other persons; intentionally or knowingly helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct, or otherwise facilitating such acts; or other practices that seriously deviate from ethical standards that are commonly accepted within the scientific and scholarly communities for proposing, conducting, or reporting research. Academic misconduct also includes any form of retaliation against a person who, while acting in good faith, provides information about suspected or alleged misconduct.

Note: Academic misconduct does not include unintentional error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data.

Reporting Academic Misconduct

All members of the Cornell community are obligated to report suspected acts of academic misconduct. The initial report of such an allegation, whether on the part of a faculty member, a member of the staff, a student (including those with university appointments), or any other person with a university appointment, should be made to the Dean of the Faculty.

Cornell Policy on Financial Conflicts of Interest Related to Research

All members of the Cornell University community are expected to conduct the affairs of the university in a manner consistent with their primary commitments to the university, and the performance of their professional responsibilities must be free from real or apparent bias motivated by self-interest. In order to maintain the integrity of the research process and maintain the trust of the public and of sponsors in the integrity and credibility of its research and its research programs, Cornell must ensure that there is no reasonable expectation that research results are biased by the external commitments and financial interests of persons who are responsible for the design, conduct, reporting, or direct administration of university research.
Cornell policies on conflict of interest describe situations that present intersections between the duties of Cornell personnel towards the University and their personal financial interests that could lead to real or apparent conflicts of interest, and outline requirements for managing or eliminating such conflicts of interest.

The following two Cornell policies are relevant to all Cornell students, staff and faculty who are responsible for the design, conduct or reporting of Cornell research.

- Cornell Policy 1.7, Financial Conflict of Interest Related to Research
- Cornell Policy 4.14, Conflicts of Interest and Commitment

Research with Humans, Animals, and Biohazardous Materials at Cornell

All students conducting research with humans, vertebrate animals, biohazardous materials, or recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules (r/sNA) should also explore the institutional requirements put in place to ensure that all such activities are conducted in accordance with the applicable ethical principles and in accordance with University policies, Federal, state and local regulations and established best practices. The policies, procedures and training requirements for conducting such research, as well as helpful resources are available here:

- Vertebrate Animals: Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
- Human Participants in Research: Institutional Review Board (IRB)
- Biohazards, Recombinant/Synthetic Nucleic Acids in Research: Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)

Cornell RCR Office

For more information related to Responsible Conduct of Research, please visit the Cornell RCR website at www.oria.cornell.edu/rcr/ or email rcr@cornell.edu.

Resources

Cornell Graduate School Policies
Cornell Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (ORIA)
Sub-offices:
- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)
- Financial Conflicts of Interest (COI)
- Institutional Review Board for Human Participants (IRB)
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
- Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)
Cornell Office of Sponsored Programs