

Peer Review Form for Research Integrity Investigation Reports

Check one:	Yes (cite page #)	No	In Part	Cannot Assess	
General Scope					
1. Does the report include an executive summary?	X pp.3-4				1.
2. Is the report clear and understandable?	X unusually so				2.
3. Are the allegation(s) clearly presented?	X				3.
4. Is the charge to the committee clearly described?		X			4.
5. Is the scope of the investigation sufficient to address the scientific integrity issues?			X	X	5.
Investigative Committee					
6. Is the committee appropriately constituted to carry out its charge?				X	6.
7. Are there any external members on the committee?		X			7.
8. Does the report state whether potential conflicts of interest for committee members were reviewed?		X			8.
9. Did the report indicate that standards of due process and confidentiality were followed?	X pp.13-14				9.
10. Did the respondent have an opportunity to identify conflicts?				X	10.
11. Do you have any concern that the investigative committee lacked access to necessary expertise or resources for a thorough investigation?				X	11.
Evidence					
12. Did the report indicate if evidence was properly sequestered and protected from tampering?	pp.15		X		12.
13. Is there a description of the evidence considered in the investigation?	X				13.
14. Was the respondent offered an opportunity to respond?	X see §7				14.
15. Did the committee consider and address whether important evidence was unavailable to them?			X		15.
16. If seemingly pertinent evidence was not reviewed, is that explained?			X		16.
17. Is there a need for further evidence or additional analysis?	X				17.
18. Is there a list of individuals who were interviewed?	X throughout, in allegation discussion				18.
19. Were there others who should have been interviewed?		X			19.
20. Are there additional questions that should have been asked or evidence examined in the report to reach a supportable conclusion?			X		20.
Conclusion					
21. Does the report clearly state its findings?	X				21.
22. Does the report clearly state its conclusions?	X				22.



Check one:	Yes (cite page #)	No	In Part	Cannot Assess	
23. Does the evidence fully support the conclusions of the report?	> X				23.
24. Does the investigation articulate and apply relevant institutional policies?	X				24.
25. Are the recommendations clear and supported by the report?	X				25.
26. Does the report describe and address requirements of external sponsors regulations and how the requirements are met?			X		26.

Reviewer feedback

In addition to checklist items listed above, authors benefit from receiving qualitative feedback from reviewers. Please comment as appropriate on the quality of the report in following areas:.

1. Is the charge clearly stated?

A committee charge letter is mentioned on p. 14, and not included in the report. The scope of the committee's purview is not clear. They examined figures with care and diligence; there is no mention of examining PHS grants or progress reports. There is no corrective action recommended other than retraction of identified papers, though the committee identifies a number of troubling facts. It is not clear whether this resulted from a limited/focused charge or other institutional factors.

2. Was the investigation well designed and executed?

The report is well organized and its contents presented with great clarity. The timeline included in the report is a valuable element.

3. Are the conclusions of the report justified by the contents of the report?

Yes. Every conclusion included is strongly supported. The committee showed great diligence and clarity in differentiating reckless conduct from intentional conduct, and again from questionable research practices. It is transparent on these grounds and clear on each count.

4. Other comments:

What is not clear is what action, if any, is being taken on the questionable, reckless, and unacceptable practices identified that spanned many years and affected many trainees in a university laboratory. While a number of papers are identified for retraction, and the blacked-out portions indicate that the conduct of others may be under review, other actions being taken to address failures of scientific integrity, if any, are not identified.

The timeline is very helpful. It does, though, raise a number of questions about the very large lapses of time between/before certain actions, e.g. between assessment and sequestration, between assessment and inquiry initiation, the duration of inquiry and investigation, etc.

Please provide your overall assessment of this investigation report, taking into account all the elements included in the previous sections. Please check one:

Report acceptable as is

Major revisions and/or additional investigative actions needed

Minor revisions needed

Report is not acceptable

Documentation of committee expertise, freedom from conflicts of interest would be useful. Documentation of referral of items to other appropriate bodies (if any, or not) also would be helpful for full understanding of how scientific integrity concerns addressed.