
EXPECTATIONS ON RESEARCH DATA

Binghamton University, in its published policy on “Responsible Conduct of Research” defines misconduct as: “Fabrication, falsification and plagiarism in proposing, conducting, or reporting research and creative scholarly activity. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data.”

The existence and embodiment of data are often the defining evidence when making judgments on the propriety and soundness of research actions. Publishing expectations on data retention and timely delivery of such data to a deliberation body allows for the consideration of basic questions of responsibility without the onus of an ongoing investigation. In this way, if a claim of research misconduct does occur, a common ground exists on which to make judgments.

Research data takes on many forms. It is information used as a basis for reasoning, discussion or calculations. The most common image is registry of observations in a notebook in a prescribed format. For purposes outlined in this guideline, data is defined in the broadest context as the registry of observations, measurements, and embodiment of creative works. This registry may be in the form of pencil on paper, memory on computer hard discs or other media or initial sketches or drafts of creative works. Data includes preliminary original source materials and working drafts that are defining of the final work or data set that is published.

Researchers and scholars are expected to retain data, in a readable and deliverable form, for at least six years beyond the publication date. It is a faculty member’s responsibility to manage and take appropriate care of data collected directly by them and their students. Various disciplines have standards and criteria for archiving data that exceed these University expectations.

At the request of the Division of Research, researchers will promptly provide all such data in a readable form for examination. When necessary, data will be copied and returned to ensure that ongoing research or scholarly activities are minimally disrupted.