

# Interviewer Falsification Preliminary Remarks

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# Research Misconduct Defined

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*Research misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results.*

- ❑ *Fabrication* is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.
- ❑ *Falsification* is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- ❑ *Plagiarism* is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.
- ❑ Research misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion.

Research, as used herein, includes all basic, applied, and demonstration research in all fields of science, engineering, and mathematics.

From [http://www.ostp.gov/html/001207\\_3.html](http://www.ostp.gov/html/001207_3.html)

# Findings of Misconduct

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*A finding of research misconduct requires that:*

- ❑ There be a significant departure from accepted practices of the relevant research community; and
- ❑ The misconduct be committed intentionally, or knowingly, or recklessly; and
- ❑ The allegation be proven by a preponderance of evidence.

# Interviewers and Interviewing

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- ❑ Low paid
- ❑ Non-professional employment
- ❑ Part-time work with low commitment
- ❑ Poorly indoctrinated in science
- ❑ Trained (poorly?) for limited tasks
- ❑ Few incentives to be good employees
- ❑ Difficult work
- ❑ Heavily monitored in centralized facilities

# Interviewer Falsification (1)

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“Interviewer falsification” means the *intentional* departure from the designed interviewer guidelines or instructions, unreported by the interviewer, which could result in the contamination of the data. “Intentional” means that the interviewer is aware that the action deviates from the guidelines and instructions.

Source: <http://www.aapor.org/interviewfalse.pdf>

# Falsification Includes:

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- ❑ fabricating all or part of an interview - the recording of data that are not provided by a designated survey respondent and reporting them as answers of that respondent;
- ❑ deliberately misreporting disposition codes and falsifying process data (e.g., the recording of a refusal case as ineligible for the sample; reporting a fictitious contact attempt);
- ❑ deliberately miscoding the answer to a question in order to avoid followup questions;
- ❑ deliberately interviewing a nonsampled person in order to reduce effort required to complete an interview; or
- ❑ otherwise, intentionally misrepresenting the data collection process to the survey management.

# Methods to Prevent Falsification

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- ❑ articulation of values, goals and rules by research managers and supervisory personnel;
- ❑ selection and training of interviewers;
- ❑ the manner in which interviewers are compensated, supervised, evaluated, and rewarded;
- ❑ overall project design and budget;
- ❑ the design and execution of programs of deterrence and detection, including the use of advanced technologies;
- ❑ appropriate use and analysis of process data and data from actual interviews to detect anomalies; and
- ❑ appropriate actions in response to suspected and proven instances of falsification.

# Responsibility for Reducing Falsification

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- Organizations
- Processes
- Training
- Detection
- Prevention

# Summary

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- ❑ Is it bad people, bad rules, bad systems, bad organizations?
- ❑ Is interviewer falsification a form of research misconduct that is caused by the interviewer or the organization?