

Directive**of academic integrity (Academic integrity)**

dated 7 December 2023 (as embedded: 1 January 2024)

The University Council by the University of St.Gallen

issues

based on

Art. 82 Para. 2 B of the University Statutes of 25 October 2010¹

the following directive:

A. General Provisions*Art. 1 Basic Principle*

¹ Scientific integrity involves the commitment of the members of the University of St.Gallen to various fundamental principles and their concretisation. In their research and teaching activities, the members of the University of St.Gallen undertake to observe four fundamental principles: reliability, honesty, respect and responsibility. The University is committed to ensuring that these principles are respected in its sphere of influence and to taking appropriate measures in the event of misconduct, that is, the violation of the above-mentioned principles of scientific integrity.

Art. 2 Purpose

¹ This directive defines the principles of scientific integrity at the University of St.Gallen and governs the procedures to be followed if the principles of scientific integrity are violated.

² The rights to pursue and, if necessary, prosecute violations of scientific integrity or copy-right infringements under civil and criminal law remain reserved.

Art. 3 Scope

¹ This directive applies to all members of the University of St.Gallen involved in research, teaching, continuing education and degree programmes.

² This directive applies to exmatriculated persons and persons no longer employed at the University of St.Gallen if they violated the principles of scientific integrity while matriculated or employed at the University of St.Gallen and if the University of St.Gallen still maintains an interest in initiating proceedings.

³ The basic principles of scientific integrity are incorporated into education and training at all career levels and form an integral part of continuing scientific education.

⁴ If students or course participants violate the principles of good scientific practice when authoring seminar papers, Bachelor's and Master's theses, and any written work submitted as part of their programme, the University of St.Gallen reserves the right to take disciplinary action under the applicable regulations.²

⁵ Doctoral students who violate the principles of good scientific practice in their doctoral thesis will be subject to the provisions set out in this directive.

¹ [sGS 217.15.](#)

² Art. 34 ff. Gesetz über die Universität St.Gallen (Act on the University of St.Gallen), sGS 217.11.

Art. 4 Relation to Other Guidelines and Regulations

¹ The provisions of this directive represent and shall apply as a minimum standard. If organisational units of the University of St.Gallen or organisations and institutions associated with the University of St.Gallen or organisations and institutions involved in national or international research activities and collaborations have their own regulations for scientific integrity that extend beyond this directive, then those regulations shall apply to those organisations and institutions. If those regulations are not compatible with this directive, then this directive shall apply.

B. Scientific Integrity*Art. 5 Publication and Dissemination of Research Findings and Results*

¹ All research findings and results obtained at the University of St.Gallen should be made accessible to the public, provided that no legal interests or contractual obligations prevent publication.

² The members of the University of St.Gallen shall make their research data accessible in accordance with the objectives of open data and in application of the FAIR principles wherever possible. University members should publish their research in accordance with the principle of open access wherever possible, as well as in compliance with the University of St.Gallen's open access policy.

³ The state of research must be acknowledged in an appropriate manner and in accordance with the standards prevailing in the respective field or discipline.

⁴ All sources and aids used in authoring a publication must be declared.

⁵ If research findings or results prove to be unreliable or incorrect, the author(s) or editor(s) shall either publish corrections or shall withdraw the work.

⁶ Publications must mention any third-party funding, the use of external infrastructure and facilities and other significant support or vested interests or prior involvement, for example, on account of an expert opinion on which the publication is based.

Art. 6 Authorship

¹ Scientific publications shall credit all authors who have made a substantial contribution to the work.

² All persons whose scientific performance has made a substantial contribution to the planning, conception, execution, implementation, evaluation or quality and, if applicable, to the revision of an scientific publication are entitled to claim authorship of that publication.

³ Occupying a managerial role or holding a superior position or giving financial and organisational support to a project or supervising scientific work alone does not entitle persons performing such duties and responsibilities to be named as authors.

⁴ In the case of multiple authors, the order in which individual authors are mentioned shall be determined by the substantiality of their contributions, subject to discipline-specific regulations or practices regarding the role of first and final authorship. If authors are mentioned in an order other than that which is customary in a specific field or discipline, this must be indicated accordingly in the publication.

⁵ Publishing scientific work requires that authorship, the order in which authors are listed, and the mentioning of specific contributions have been cleared at the time of submission.

The contributions of all authors to a publication (research output) must be made transparent.

⁶ Authorship also means that those mentioned as authors take responsibility for the content of a publication. If these responsibilities are not clearly evident, in essence all authors shall be responsible for the entire content of the publication in question. In the case of joint or multiple authorship, the authors shall take joint responsibility for the content, unless otherwise stated.

⁷ Authors must approve the final version of the manuscript and consent to its publication. The required consent may not be withheld without sufficient grounds.

Art. 7 Data Management

¹ Research data are (digital) data that are the subject of a research process, are generated during a research process or are the result of a research process.

² All persons involved in a research project are responsible for the accuracy of the data they have collected and for ensuring compliance with the applicable regulations.

³ Pursuant to Para 1, research data must be stored in an appropriate manner to ensure their reproducibility and/or verifiability, accuracy and reliability and must be made available within the scope of legal possibilities. The University of St.Gallen shall provide its members with an appropriate infrastructure or shall ensure access to infrastructure that ensures the storage of research data.

⁴ If data or data sources cannot be disclosed or made accessible for reasons of confidentiality, data and personality protection, intellectual property rights or security, or solely after a certain period of time, the verifiability of research results must be ensured. The persons entitled to access such data or data sources and their institutions are responsible for the safe and secure storage or, if necessary, for the destruction of such data.

Art. 8 Assessments of Scientific Performance and Research

¹ The members of the University of St.Gallen participate in subject-related decision-making, assessment or evaluation processes at the University of St.Gallen and in the wider scientific community as an integral part of their scientific activities, in particular with regard to:

- a) Research funding applications;
- b) Manuscript submissions;
- c) Proposals for appointments or promotions;
- d) Award nominations;
- e) Evaluation of scientific units or research infrastructures.

² Experts and assessors shall:

- a) provide transparent and comprehensible assessments;
- b) provide objective and unbiased assessments;
- c) respect the confidentiality and intellectual property rights of unpublished ideas, data or interpretations; and shall:
 - i. therefore treat all information to be assessed as confidential for as long as that information has not been published by its author(s),

- ii. obtain further opinions on the subject matter of the assessment solely with the consent of the body or committee that has commissioned or requested an expert opinion or assessment,
 - iii. not make use of confidential information to which they have access while serving as experts or assessors.
- d) provide expert opinions in a substantiated, constructive and timely manner.

³ Experts and assessors shall disclose existing and potential conflicts of interest and any resulting bias. University members who are requested to review research that competes with their own work shall either decline such requests or disclose the fact and leave it to the commissioning body to consult other reviewers if necessary.

⁴ The examination and grading of seminar papers, Bachelor's and Master's theses are not considered assessments of scientific performance and research as understood in this directive.

C. Research Ethics

Art. 9 Social Responsibility of Research

¹ The members of the University of St.Gallen shall conceptualise, conduct, analyse, document and publish their research and research results with due diligence and with an awareness of their responsibility towards individuals, the environment and society. Persons, animals and research subjects must be treated with respect and care and in accordance with legal, ethical and discipline-specific regulations.

² The principles of socially responsible research demand that University members consider the potential harm, foreseeable risks and unintended consequences of their research projects in advance and that due diligence be exercised and ensured for the entire duration of such projects.

³ The University of St.Gallen supports its members in implementing ethically responsible research practices and in fulfilling their social responsibility. To this end, it provides the necessary infrastructure and guidance (advisory services).

Art. 10 Ethics Committee

¹ The Ethics Committee of the University of St.Gallen is responsible for assessing the ethical and legal aspects of research projects.

² The University Senate is responsible for issuing regulations that govern the tasks and composition of the Ethics Committee.

D. Proceedings

I. Scientific Misconduct

Art. 11 Scientific Misconduct

¹ Scientific misconduct exists when the principle of scientific integrity is violated as a result of intent or negligence.

² The following conduct in particular constitutes scientific misconduct:

- a) any violations of Art. 5 to 8 of this directive;
- b) if an author's work cannot be sufficiently distinguished from that of others (plagiarism);

- c) if an author's work cannot be sufficiently distinguished from their previous work (self-plagiarism);
- d) if alleged facts are fabricated, in particular by asserting, recording or otherwise presenting non-existent data, foundations or results;
- e) falsification, in particular through the dishonest, intentional or grossly negligent manipulation of research materials, instruments or procedures or through the untruthful alteration, emphasis, omission or deletion of data or results and their presentation;
- f) erroneous publication lists, in particular when authors provide incorrect or misleading information about the publication status of their work;
- g) misconduct in connection with proceedings concerning scientific integrity, in particular baseless or unsubstantiated allegations that others have violated the principles of scientific integrity.

³ University members may be held responsible for scientific misconduct if they actively contribute to violations committed by others, if they have knowledge of falsifications or forgeries committed by others, if they co-author publications containing forgeries and if they grossly neglect their supervisory duties and responsibilities.

⁴ Instigating and aiding and abetting scientific misconduct as well as attempting to commit scientific misconduct are also regarded as violations of scientific integrity.

⁵ Scientific misconduct can also be committed by omission in breach of duty..

⁶ Any member of the University of St.Gallen who fails to prevent scientific misconduct and whose position enables them to prevent misconduct is also deemed to have violated their duties and responsibilities.

⁷ Facts and circumstances that fall within the scope of this directive shall be assessed in accordance with the generally accepted standards and with the historical and social context at the time.

II. Responsibilities

Art. 12 Integrity Office

¹ Any suspected violation of scientific integrity should be brought to the attention of the University's Integrity Office, which is affiliated to the Vice-President's Board for Research & Faculty.

² The Integrity Office is responsible for administering preliminary and investigative proceedings.

³ If a violation of the Arbitration Regulations of the University of St.Gallen³ is alleged, the Integrity Office shall forward the matter to the Ombuds Office of the University of St.Gallen and shall inform the University President.

Art. 13 Integrity Committee

¹ Members of the Integrity Committee are:

- a) Vice-President for Research & Faculty;
- b) President of the Research Committee;

³ Reglement über die Schlichtungsverfahren an der Universität St.Gallen (Arbitration Regulations of the University of St.Gallen), III.A.07.

- c) Integrity Office and ;
- d) Legal counsel of the General Secretariat.

² The Integrity Committee is chaired by the Vice-President for Research & Faculty or by the President of the Research Committee. They must agree who will chair the committee.

³ If necessary, and with the approval of the University President, other persons may be appointed as members of the Integrity Committee on a case-by-case basis or may be consulted for advice and support.

Art. 14 Investigative Committee

¹ The Investigative Committee must comprise:

- a) Vice-President for Research & Faculty or the President of the Research Committee;
- b) Integrity Office;
- c) Legal counsel of the General Secretariat and;
- d) at least two further members.

² In accordance with Para 1 d, the other members of the Investigative Committee are appointed by the University President on a case-by-case basis.

³ The other members referred to in Para 1 d are:

- a) a member of the Senate representing the accused's discipline or field;
- b) a member of the Senate possessing expert knowledge in the field or discipline in which scientific misconduct has been committed.

⁴ If necessary, other persons, in particular ones from outside the University of St.Gallen, may be appointed as additional members of the Investigative Committee on a case-by-case basis.

⁵ In accordance with Para 1 d, the Integrity Committee may propose further members of the Investigative Committee to the University President.

⁶ The Vice-President for Research & Faculty and the President of the Research Committee shall agree who will sit on the Investigative Committee. The appointee shall chair the Investigative Committee.

III. Rules of Procedure

Art. 15 General Rules of Procedure

¹ Proceedings shall be governed by the Act on Administrative Justice,⁴ unless stipulated otherwise in this directive.

² Pursuant to Art. 25 Para. 4 and Art. 30 of this directive, proceedings must be kept confidential.

³ The individual process steps must be documented.

⁴ Proceedings must comply with the requirements for data protection, information security, data security and cyber security.

⁴ Act on Administrative Justice of 16 May 1965, sGS 951.1.

Art. 16 Recusal

¹ Persons who give orders or instructions, or who are involved in giving or preparing orders or instructions, in connection with scientific misconduct procedures, shall recuse themselves if they appear to be biased in the case at hand.

² If recusal is subject to dispute, the University President shall decide on the matter. If the University President is affected by a conflict of interest, his or her deputy shall take the final decision.

Art. 17 Anonymous Reports

¹ Anonymous reports will only be further investigated if the reported scientific misconduct is sufficiently substantiated and if that misconduct can be verified by the bodies responsible for conducting proceedings if scientific misconduct is suspected.

Art. 18 Duty of Disclosure and Reporting

¹ University members must report suspected violations of scientific integrity.

² To enable suspected violations of scientific integrity to be investigated and resolved, University members must provide honest and truthful information. They must also provide access to existing documents or hand over such documents.

³ To investigate and resolve suspected violations of scientific integrity, the bodies responsible for conducting proceedings must be granted access to all documents available at the University. In particular, they shall have access to electronic documents.

Art. 19 Status of Persons Who Report Scientific Misconduct

¹ The University shall ensure that persons who report scientific misconduct shall be protected against reprisals or discrimination, in particular if such persons are dependent on the accused. In accordance with this directive, reprisals shall be penalised as violations of this principle.

² Persons who report scientific misconduct shall not be a party to proceedings, neither during nor after proceedings have been concluded. Such persons may present their allegations in detail when proceedings are initiated, yet are not entitled to be heard once proceedings have started.

³ Persons who report scientific misconduct will be notified of the outcome of proceedings once these have been concluded.

⁴ Persons who report scientific misconduct are not entitled to inspect case files and records.

Art. 20 Status of Persons Accused of Scientific Misconduct

¹ Persons who stand accused of scientific misconduct must be informed of the composition of the respective body or committee at the beginning of each stage of proceedings. Such persons must be given the opportunity to request that persons who may be biased against them recuse themselves.

² Persons who stand accused of scientific misconduct are entitled to be accompanied by a person of their own choice or by legal counsel at their own expense.

³ If persons who stand accused of scientific misconduct obtain a second opinion, they do so at their own expense, unless otherwise stipulated in this directive.

IV. Preliminary Proceedings

Art. 21 Initiation of Preliminary Proceedings

¹ If suspected scientific misconduct is reported, the Integrity Office shall inform the members of the Integrity Committee and the University President.

² Provided that reasonable grounds for suspicion exist, the Integrity Committee may also take action even if no suspected violation of scientific integrity has been reported.

Art. 22 Preliminary Proceedings

¹ The Integrity Committee provides advice, support and mediation. It may obtain verbal or written statements and, where necessary and proportionate, shall access all available documents. The contacted bodies and committees must be honest and truthful in supporting the Integrity Committee.

² The Integrity Committee shall give the accused the opportunity to inspect case files and records, to make a comprehensive statement on the allegations, to submit evidence and to request that additional investigative measures be adopted. The anonymity of the person reporting scientific misconduct shall be protected as far as possible. Access to files may be restricted to protect important public interests or private interests worthy of protection or in the interests of proceedings that have not yet been concluded.

³ While proceedings should be conducted in manner appropriate to the case at hand, they should be transacted as swiftly as possible.

Art. 23 Precautions for Preserving Evidence

¹ The Integrity Committee may inform the University's bodies, schools and/or institutes of the suspected scientific misconduct and urge them to take precautions for preserving evidence, in particular the seizure of data and documents.

Art. 24 Report of the Integrity Committee and Submission of Applications

¹ The Integrity Committee shall record its findings in a report for the attention of the University President.

² The Integrity Committee shall state whether it considers the suspicion to be well-founded or unfounded and shall submit an application to conclude proceedings in unequivocal cases or to discontinue proceedings or to initiate investigative proceedings. Applications to conclude proceedings must be accompanied by legal recommendations.

³ If an application is submitted to conclude or discontinue proceedings, the report must contain a well-reasoned assessment of the extent to which and the grounds on which the suspicion of scientific misconduct has been confirmed or refuted or could not be proven.

⁴ If an application is submitted to conclude proceedings, the accused is entitled to inspect the report before it is forwarded to the University President and to enclose a written comment for the President's attention.

⁵ The Integrity Committee may propose any necessary precautions for preventing scientific misconduct to the relevant bodies and committees.

Art. 25 Termination of Preliminary Proceedings

¹ The University President shall decide whether preliminary proceedings should be terminated or whether investigative proceedings should be initiated based on the report, the applications and the recommendations of the Integrity Committee and any statement

submitted by the accused. The University President may hear the parties involved again before taking his or her decision.

² Should the University President find that scientific misconduct has been committed, he or she shall take the appropriate measures provided for by the University's acts and statutes⁵ or shall submit a corresponding application to the Board of Governors. The aim is to establish a consistent sanctioning practice compared to other institutions. The decision must include guidance on the right to appeal (legal remedies).

³ Should the University President find that no scientific misconduct has been committed, this finding shall be communicated to the person concerned and the person who has alleged the misconduct. The person concerned may request that a ruling be issued on the matter.

⁴ If proceedings are concluded or discontinued, the University President shall decide on a case-by-case basis, based on an assessment of the facts of the case, whether other authorities should be informed and whether a public announcement should be made. Conclusive findings must be published if the initiation of an investigation has already been made public or if the person affected so requests. In the case of public announcements, the personality rights of the person concerned must be respected.

V. Investigative Proceedings

Art. 26 Initiation of Investigative Proceedings

¹ If the University President finds that the application of the Integrity Committee to initiate investigative proceedings is justified, such proceedings shall be initiated with the appointment of the Investigative Committee in accordance with Art. 14.

Art. 27 Investigation

¹ Only the Investigative Committee is authorised to conduct investigative proceedings.

² The Investigative Committee will conduct the necessary investigations. It may inform the University's bodies, schools and/or institutes of the suspected scientific misconduct and urge them to take precautions for preserving evidence, in particular the seizure of data and documents.

³ The Investigative Committee shall give the accused the opportunity to inspect the case files, to make a comprehensive statement on the allegations, to submit evidence and to request that additional investigative measures be adopted. The anonymity of the person who has reported scientific misconduct shall be protected as far as possible.

⁴ Access to files may be restricted to protect important public interests or private interests worthy of protection or in the interests of an investigation that has not yet been completed.

Art. 28 Report of the Investigative Committee and Submission of Applications

¹ The Investigative Committee shall record its findings in a report for the attention of the University President.

² The report shall state whether scientific misconduct has been committed. The report must contain a well-reasoned assessment of the extent to which and the grounds on

⁵ Gesetz über die Universität St.Gallen (Act on the University of St.Gallen), sGS 217.11; Universitätsstatut (University Statutes), sGS 217.15; and any decrees and directives of the University of St.Gallen based on its Act and Statutes.

which the suspicion of scientific misconduct has been confirmed or refuted or could not be proven.

³ The report shall contain a legally substantiated application regarding the measures to be adopted.

⁴ The Investigative Committee may propose any necessary precautions for preventing scientific misconduct to the responsible bodies and committees.

⁵ The accused is entitled to inspect the report before it is forwarded to the University President and to enclose a written comment for the President's attention.

Art. 29 Termination of Investigative Proceedings

¹ The University President shall decide further procedure based on the report, the applications and recommendations of the Investigative Committee, the statement of the person concerned and any expert opinions. He or she may hear the parties involved again before making a decision.

² Should the University President find that no scientific misconduct has been committed, the person concerned and the person who has reported the misconduct shall be notified accordingly. The person concerned may request that a ruling on the matter be issued.

³ Should the University President find that scientific misconduct has been committed, he or she shall take the appropriate measures provided for by the University's legislation⁶ or shall submit a corresponding application to the Board of Governors. The aim is to establish a consistent sanctioning practice compared to other institutions. The decision must include guidance on the right to appeal (legal remedies).

Art. 30 Further Procedure

¹ The University President shall decide on a case-by-case basis, based on an assessment of the facts and circumstances, whether other authorities should be informed and whether a public announcement should be made.

² Conclusive findings must be published if the initiation of an investigation has already been made public or if the person concerned so requests.

³ Any public announcements must respect the personality rights of the persons concerned.

VI. Costs of Proceedings

Art. 31 Basic Principle

¹ The costs of proceedings are as follows:

- a) up to CHF 2,500 for preliminary proceedings;
- b) up to CHF 5,000 for investigative proceedings.

² In individual cases, if a decision is made in favour of the accused, the University President may award that person compensation or partial compensation for the costs incurred in the proceedings, provided that these expenses were incurred to fund the proceedings.

⁶ Gesetz über die Universität St.Gallen (Act on the University of St.Gallen), sGS 217.11; Universitätsstatut (University Statutes), sGS 217.15; and any decrees and directives of the University of St.Gallen based on its Act and Statutes

Art. 32 Expert Opinions

¹ If expert opinions are obtained as part of proceedings concerning suspected scientific misconduct, the accused may be ordered to pay costs up to a maximum of CHF 10,000.

² If the accused obtains a second opinion, the University President shall determine the costs.

E. Repeal of Other Decrees and Transitional Provisions

Art. 33 Repeal of Existing Legislation

¹ The Richtlinie zur Integrität wissenschaftlichen Arbeitens (Wissenschaftliche Integrität)⁷ of 24 February 2015 is repealed as of 31 December 2023.

Art. 34 Transitional Provision

¹ Any proceedings initiated prior to the enactment of this directive shall be conducted and completed in accordance with the Richtlinie zur Integrität wissenschaftlichen Arbeitens (Wissenschaftliche Integrität)⁸ of 24 February 2015.

F. Enactment

Art. 35 Enactment

¹ This directive shall enter into force on 1 January 2024 and shall apply from that date.

⁷ Translation: Directive of Scientific Integrity (Scientific Integrity)

⁸ Translation: Directive of Scientific Integrity (Scientific Integrity)

Amendments
acc. to the University Concil Resolution

Date of amendment	Amendments	Date in force
7 December 2023	Initial decree	1 January 2024