Noncompliance versus Research Misconduct

You may be familiar with the term "noncompliance" if you have research that is reviewed by the IRB, IACUC or IBC. Noncompliance means there was a deviation from the approved protocol, Clemson University policy, or state/federal regulations. Instances of noncompliance are often reviewed by the appropriate committee using internal procedures.

On the other hand, allegations of *Research Misconduct* are specific to instances of plagiarism, fabrication, or falsification of research data during research proposals, conduct of the research, or reporting research results.[1] Research Misconduct allegations are also managed by the Office of Research Compliance, but this review is separate from noncompliance, and not reviewed by our compliance committees.

Confusing? Here are some examples of noncompliance versus research misconduct:

> **Noncompliance:** Not obtaining documented informed consent from participants in accordance with approved IRB.
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> **Research Misconduct:** Intentionally removing legitimate data points to create the impression of stronger support for conclusion.
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> **Noncompliance:** Performing procedures on animals not approved by the IACUC.
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> **Research Misconduct:** Knowingly using text from another author's work in a publication without proper citation or attribution.
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> **Noncompliance:** Failure to follow established safety protocols in the lab.
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> **Research Misconduct:** Creating and using data from experiments that were never conducted.

You can report any concerns or allegations of noncompliance or research misconduct to a variety of contacts: The compliance committees or administrators listed on our website; to orc@clemson.edu; through the Ethics line linked on the Research Misconduct page (allows you to remain anonymous); or to the Director of Research Compliance, rtyndal@clemson.edu. All reports are held in confidence and anyone who reports in good faith will not be subject to retaliation as outlined in our Whistleblower policy.

[1] https://ori.hhs.gov/definition-research-misconduct