

## Report on Research Compliance Volume 19, Number 4. March 24, 2022 RRC E-Alerts: March 10, 2022

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By Theresa Defino

### **ORI Makes Misconduct Finding Against UNC Research Chancellor**

Terry Magnuson, reappointed just last spring by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) to a second five-year term as vice chancellor for research, admitted to inserting plagiarized text from four sources into a grant application submitted to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) on March 1, 2021, according to a notice published March 8 by the HHS Office of Research Integrity (ORI). Magnuson admitted to the plagiarism and agreed to a 22-month supervisory program that requires UNC's School of Medicine and Office of Research to review any funding applications before he submits them, among related requirements. The notice said Magnuson, the Kay M. & Van L. Weatherspoon Eminent Distinguished Professor, and, according to UNC's website, still the vice chancellor for research, "engaged in research misconduct by intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly plagiarizing text" in an application titled "Genome-wide dynamics of chromatin modifiers," submitted to NCI. Supervision is required from Feb. 25 of this year to Jan. 5, 2024. The case was resolved approximately a year from when Magnuson submitted the grant—possibly a record for ORI, as most cases take years to bring to fruition. It is the first ORI finding of the year.

According to its website, UNC's Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research "oversees, develops and supports UNC's \$1 billion research enterprise. It sets strategic priorities for research, manages proposals and awards, provides research infrastructure, identifies funding opportunities, develops research teams and partnerships, and oversees regulatory compliance, ethics, and conflict of interest management." In announcing Magnuson's reappointment on April 15, 2021, UNC said a review committee "was overwhelmingly positive in its recommendation to reappoint Vice Chancellor Magnuson: 'Terry is a top-notch scientist who possesses strength, compassion and goodness that permeates the research ecosystem at Carolina. Notably, under Terry's leadership, Carolina's research enterprise has grown each year and now exceeds more than \$1 billion in research awards and spending annually.' Congratulations to Dr. Magnuson!" In response to questions from RRC about ORI's actions, UNC provided a statement attributed to Beth Keith, associate vice chancellor for university communications. None of RRC's questions were answered, including why Magnuson would retain his position after a misconduct finding. "UNC-Chapel Hill has high professional expectations for the integrity of all research activities carried out by our faculty, staff and students. The University follows a federally mandated policy regarding research misconduct, and we hold anyone involved in research activity at the University to that standard. We will continue to follow the standards and processes set forth by the Office of Research Integrity and our research sponsors," the statement said.

[Link to ORI misconduct finding](#)

[Link to UNC reappointment announcement](#)

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