

4<sup>th</sup> 2021 Seoul Asia Pacific Research Integrity (APRI) Network Conference

## Preventing Research Misconduct Through Education: The 2020 Plagiarism Case

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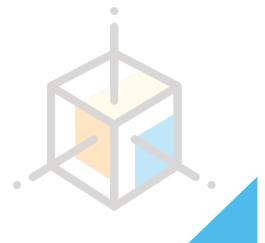
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February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021



## Outline

### RCR Education during the Pandemic

- Formats of RCR training during the pandemic
- Epidemic prevention measures employed in teaching/learning sites

### The High-Profile Case of Thesis Plagiarism

- A brief review of the case
- Issues brought to local academic research community

### Taiwan Association for Academic Ethics Education

- Background
- Current and future activities



## About Me

**PhD in Education (eLearning)**, National Chiao Tung University, Taiwan (2018)



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COI Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this talk are those of mine; they do not necessarily reflect the position of any of my affiliations.



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## RCR Education during the Pandemic



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## Formats of RCR Training during the Pandemic

In the first and second quarters of 2020...



Total confirmed cases: 834 Death: 7

Due: 2021-January-11 by Taiwan CDC



**Due to a rapid response to the Covid-19 outbreak in January...**

Most of semester-length courses at all levels of schools/universities remained face-to-face. To avoid unnecessary social gathering, most of RCR/research ethics face-to-face instruction were *temporarily suspended*.



Online course played a significant role in the fulfilling renewal requirements of RCR/research ethics training.

Some universities extended the qualification of researchers' current training certificates for a certain time frame (e.g., 6 months).



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Center for Taiwan Academic Research Ethics Education



Training and Resources in  
Research Ethics Evaluation  
(TRREE)



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## Formats of RCR Training during the Pandemic

In the third and fourth quarters of 2020...



Semester-length courses at all levels of schools/universities remained face-to-face.

Face-to-face RCR/research ethics instruction was *fully resumed* in many universities.

*Epidemic prevention measures* were conducted to secure participants'/students' health across instructional sites.



Online courses still played significant roles in the required renewal of RCR/research ethics training in response to the high demand for training needs in the grant season.



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# Epidemic Prevention Measures



Participants must... before entering teaching/learning venues ►►►

- **wear face masks;**
- **Provide handwashing products at entrances;**
- fill out a **health declaration form**, including travel/contact history and any symptoms of the coronavirus disease;
- be taken their **temperature** ( $< 37.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ ); and
- maintain **social distance** as much as possible in the venues.

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# Epidemic Prevention Measures



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## The High-Profile Case of Thesis Plagiarism

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### About the Plagiarism Case

**2020-07** | A candidate for the Kaohsiung mayoral by-election had been accused of plagiarizing other people's academic work verbatim when she was a graduate student in 2008.

**2020-08** | The university's academic ethics committee, which investigated the allegations, did find a large degree of similarity between the candidate's thesis and text from another master's thesis and a speech by a prominent academic.

**2020-10** | The university revoked the candidate's master's degree to comply with the *Degree Conferral Act*.



## Issues Brought to Local Academic Research Community

What are the specific methods for establishing a quality assurance mechanism for degree theses and dissertations?

**MOE's Eight (8) Measures for the Supervision of Universities and Colleges to Actively Strengthen the Dissertation and Thesis Quality Assurance Mechanism, including...**



**RCR Education** – “*The implementation of academic ethics education.*”



**Quality Control in Theses Writing** – “*The assistance in dissertation or thesis checking before presentation delivery.*”



**Institutional Accountability** – “*A university’s degree quality assurance mechanism that is connected with (a) the addition and the adjustment for the department and graduate institute, and (b) the enrollment quota.*”



**Ghostwriting** – “*The proactive investigation of ghostwriting.*”

Ministry of Education (MOE) of Taiwan, 2020

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## Issues Brought to Local Academic Research Community

What are the methods for effectively detecting improper behavior, such as contract and Internet-facilitated cheating?

- e.g., buy a completed thesis from a ghostwriting company

How can the contract cheating industry and relevant advertisements be detected and then dealt with?

*No specific answers yet!*

Public research funding agencies

Law enforcement agencies

Both scholars in research integrity and law

Universities and professional associations

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# Issues Brought to Local Academic Research Community



How can the quality and commitment of mentorship relationships be enhanced?

## AREE's Eight (8) Tips that Thesis Advisors Can Employ to Secure the Quality and Integrity of Students' Theses

- #1 Being a role model of RCR and research integrity.
- #2 Teaching students how to write a formatted and professional thesis.
- #3 Teaching students how to present research materials (e.g., data, figures, images, and tables) in their theses accurately and consistently.
- #4 Requiring students to turn in both their theses and all *cited references* and *raw data* (#5) regularly for cross- and double-checking of the sources.



Center for Taiwan Academic Research Ethics Education (AREE), 2020 13

# Issues Brought to Local Academic Research Community



How can the quality and commitment of mentorship relationships be enhanced?

## AREE's Eight (8) Tips that Thesis Advisors Can Employ to Secure the Quality and Integrity of Students' Theses

- #6 Carefully reading and editing students' theses and paying more attention to the parts with inconsistent quality in writing (e.g., suspiciously high writing quality).
- #7 Asking students to have multiple practice talks and drill with co-workers' (e.g., advisors and lab mates) questions before officially defending their degree.
- #8 Employing a similarity check to ensure both the quality of citing and writing and research integrity.



Center for Taiwan Academic Research Ethics Education (AREE), 2020 14



## Taiwan Association for Academic Ethics Education

<https://www.taaee.org.tw>

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## Background



- Nature: A non-profit, non-governmental, and professional organization
- Formed: August 2020
- Honorary Chairman: Dr. Ovid J.-L. Tzeng (Former Chancellor of the University System of Taiwan)
- Chairman: Dr. Chien Chou (Director of the Center for Taiwan Academic Research Ethics Education, Ministry of Education of Taiwan)
- Members: Local academic ethics educators and scholars across research fields



**Join** with local teachers, students, and management personnel at all levels to work collaboratively to deepen the spirit and values of academic ethics in every corner of our campuses.

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## A Current Activity

### Academic Integrity in High School: Ethical Issues in Research Essay Writing

- Time: 2020-12-30
- Duration: 6 hours
- Format: Face-to-face
- About 100 high school teachers



- Introduction to a nation-wide research essay contest among high school students
- Academic integrity in high school: Ethical issues in research essay writing
- Tips for preparing academic portfolios
- Resource for teaching academic integrity in high schools
- Teaching and guiding research conducting and reporting in high schools: Two teachers' experience

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## Future Activities

### EU Path2Integrity Train-the-Trainer Workshop in Taiwan

- Time/Duration: Summer/3.5 months
- Participants: High school teachers and university faculty who are interested in teaching academic and research integrity
- Format: Blended eLearning (virtual synchronous meetings, web-based activities, and practicum)



Welcome Any Future Collaboration!

 <https://www.taaee.org.tw>  [taaee2020@gmail.com](mailto:taaee2020@gmail.com)

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**Thank you**  
**Stay healthy. Stay safe. Stay positive.**

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