



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A15030021

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We received an allegation that a PI plagiarized in three NSF proposals. The Subject, an Assistant Professor, claimed that she had not known that verbatim copied text needed to be distinguished from original text, as long as the correct citation was in proximity. The university investigation concluded that plagiarism had not occurred, finding it reasonable and credible that she was not aware of the need for quotation marks and finding, despite evidence of citation problems, that she correctly cited all copied text.

We found, however, that the citations she provided for verbatim copied text were ambiguous, inaccurate, or nonexistent. We concluded that these defects in her citations, along with the Subject's claimed reliance on her citations as substitutes for quotation marks, established her conduct as reckless. We therefore disagreed with the university and submitted a report to NSF recommending actions. NSF issued a written decision in which it made a finding of research misconduct, issued a letter of reprimand, required the Subject to complete RCR training, required the Subject to submit certifications and assurances for 3 years, and barred the Subject from participating as a peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant for NSF for 1 year. The Subject appealed the decision and NSF upheld the finding and actions.

This case is closed with no further action taken.