



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A15090051

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We received the following allegations:

- **Allegation 1**: A University professor (Subject 1)<sup>1</sup> committed intellectual theft by using a former undergraduate student's<sup>2</sup> ideas without adequate attribution in a published article (Article 1).<sup>3</sup>
- **Allegation 2**: Subject 1 violated journal guidelines<sup>4</sup> by not obtaining a former student's informed consent before altering the authorship of their co-authored article (Article 2).<sup>5</sup>
- **Allegation 3**: A former post-doc (Subject 2)<sup>6</sup> of Subject 1 fabricated and/or falsified content contained in his dissertation<sup>7</sup> and in two of his publications (Articles 3).<sup>8</sup>

Article 1, Article 2, and Articles 3 acknowledged NSF support, and Subject 2 received NSF funding while a graduate student. Our review of the evidence did not substantiate Allegation 1 or Allegation 3, and determined Allegation 2 was not within our jurisdiction.

Regarding Allegation 1, we found the former student worked in Subject 1's laboratory and they co-authored reports related to this line of research. Therefore it is reasonable for Subject 1 to re-use the material he co-authored without committing intellectual theft. Regarding Allegation 2, we determined the allegation related to a violation of journal guidelines and not an NSF policy or regulation, making the journal, rather than NSF OIG, the appropriate venue for this allegation. Regarding Allegation 3, we determined the matter did not constitute falsification or fabrication, but instead represented a scientific difference of opinion, which is best addressed within the literature itself through publishing divergent views.

Accordingly, this case is closed with no further action taken.

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