



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-17-0089-O

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A graduate student, whose research was supported by an NSF grant, falsified data in two experiments designed to test her thesis. Her advisor, the co-PI of the NSF grant, discovered the falsified data and reported it to the University's Research Integrity Officer. The University conducted an inquiry, during which the graduate student confessed to purposefully falsifying data in one experiment. The student subsequently left the University and did not respond to correspondence from the University.

The University concluded the student intentionally falsified and fabricated data in both experiments and therefore committed research misconduct. It expelled her from the University and foreclosed her readmission. It directed her advisor to retract a conference proceeding and a paper that relied upon her falsified data.

We independently reviewed the University's investigation and accepted its report. We concluded the former graduate student committed research misconduct when she intentionally falsified and fabricated data.

We recommended that NSF:

- Make a finding of Research Misconduct;
- Require completion of interactive responsible conduct of research training;
- Debar the Subject for 2 years; and
- For 5 years (3 years after the debarment ends):
 - Require Certifications and Assurances,
 - Require a detailed data management plan and annual certification of compliance; and
 - Bar the Subject from NSF participation as peer reviewer, advisor, consultant.

NSF debarred the student for 1 year, but otherwise imposed all our recommendations.

This case is **closed** with no further action taken.