



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-20-0045-O

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We received an allegation of retaliation from a former Ph.D. student and Graduate Teaching Assistant (Complainant) at a university. The Complainant alleged that a university department chair: (i) bullied and retaliated against a different Ph.D. student for reporting misuse of NSF grant funds; (ii) facilitated the award of Ph.D. degrees to individuals who plagiarized dissertations; (iii) terminated faculty and staff who reported violations to the department chair by using fabricated safety concern reports; (iv) had an associate bully him after he reported sexual harassment by a professor; and (v) falsely reported him to campus police, and faculty and students, as being a public-safety risk after he testified for the other Ph.D. student in an investigative hearing. The department chair is a co-PI on an NSF award, but the allegations are not related to the award.

We provided the Complainant with our standard Complaint Form to collect additional information about the allegation of retaliation, to determine if our office had jurisdiction to investigate. Our jurisdictional analysis determined that we do not have jurisdiction to proceed with an investigation of the complaint under 41 USC § 4712 because the disclosures about the department chair did not pertain to misconduct involving NSF grant or contract funding, evidence a gross waste of Federal funds with a nexus to NSF, or warn of a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety in NSF programs or operations.

Accordingly, this case is *closed* and no further action will be taken.