Closeout of M90020003

On February 7, 1990, [redacted] University in [redacted] notified us that it was proceeding to an investigation of allegations of academic dishonesty made by an NSF-supported faculty member, [redacted] against a senior research scientist, [redacted], who had been employed by the professor's research group. The alleged dishonesty involved (1) submitting an article without the professor's knowledge or permission; (2) making false claims in the article regarding the research scientist's contributions to the development of the techniques reported; and (3) compromising the work done by others as well as the competitive position of the professor's research program by publishing the techniques and results.

The university's completed investigative report was received in OIG on [redacted] The committee did not find any evidence of academic dishonesty by the senior research scientist and therefore recommended no punitive action. The committee, however, did find probable errors in judgment, communication, mutual trust, and professional courtesy by both parties. It noted that both the professor and the senior research scientist are talented individuals who have made and could continue to make major contributions. Further, the investigative committee suggested that each party send letters to appropriate journal editors explicitly acknowledging certain contributions, short of co-authorship, by the other in two previously published papers.

Our review of the final investigative report found that the university investigative committee had proceeded conscientiously with its task. We accepted the findings of the university's investigative report and closed this case.

James J. Zwolenik

James J. Zwolenik
26 March 1991

concur: PHS

cc: Inspector General

90-03