



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-18-0098-O

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Our office received an allegation of plagiarism in a declined NSF proposal a PI submitted. We contacted the PI about the allegation. The PI's response did not dispel the allegation because he acknowledged copying material without appropriate citations and because citations he provided as evidence of appropriate citation were not located near the annotated text. We referred the matter to the PI's University.

The University inquiry concluded, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the PI recklessly and carelessly committed plagiarism, and that the act was a significant departure from accepted practice of the research community. It also identified a pattern of plagiarism. The University required that the PI submit all publications and proposals for software and faculty review for 2 years; be ineligible for tenure or promotion for 1 academic year; not receive a merit increase for 1 year; have a letter of reprimand placed in his file and promotion packet; register for and attend an integrity workshop and provide certification of completion within 6 months; and communicate NSF's adjudication to the University.

Our review of the University's inquiry report found it incomplete. Our independent investigation determined, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the PI knowingly committed plagiarism and that the act was a significant departure from accepted practices. We also concluded that the PI exhibited a pattern of plagiarism. We recommended that NSF make a finding of research misconduct against the PI send him a letter of reprimand; require he complete responsible conduct of research training; require he certify compliance with the requirements imposed by his University; bar him from serving as an NSF peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant for 3 years; and require he submit certifications and assurances for 3 years.

NSF's Chief Operating Officer concurred with our recommendations, but reduced the period of certifications, assurances, and removal from NSF service to 2 years.

The PI appealed NSF's decision, but NSF's General Counsel rejected the appeal.

Accordingly, this case is closed.