



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

## CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-21-0039-O

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We received an allegation (Allegation 1) that an NSF-funded PI (Subject 1) did not cite or acknowledge the work of another researcher and his lab in a journal article and a presentation. The University subsequently identified a second allegation of plagiarism (Allegation 2) involving Subject 1 and one of his graduate students (Subject 2) who allegedly copied text into a journal manuscript and a declined NSF proposal.

We referred the investigation to the University. The investigation committee concluded, for Allegation 1, that Subject 1 plagiarized the ideas and processes of the other researcher and his lab. For Allegation 2, it concluded that Subject 2 did not commit research misconduct. The University Deciding Official (DO) disagreed with the committee. He determined that the lack of physical evidence supporting Allegation 1 meant that the preponderance of evidence standard was not met and revoked the research misconduct finding. For Allegation 2, the DO determined that Subjects 1 and 2 committed research misconduct with a reckless degree of intent. He further determined that Subject 1 allowed Subject 2 to engage in research without completing required RCR training and should have scanned and reported the plagiarism under University Policy.

Based on our review, we determined that Allegation 1 is an authorship dispute between former collaborators and does not constitute research misconduct. Regarding Allegation 2, we determined that Subject 2's action did not rise to the level of research misconduct.

We sent Subject 1 a questionable research practice letter, reminding him to be diligent about adequate citation and acknowledgement. We also cautioned him about adequate standards of lab oversight and record-keeping.

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