



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-19-0017-O

Page 1 of 1

A university informed us that it had completed an inquiry into possible plagiarism by a graduate student (Subject) and determined an investigation was warranted. We concurred and referred the investigation to the University. The University found the Subject took material from a confidential manuscript he was reviewing for a journal and published that material in a conference paper that acknowledged NSF support under his own name. The Subject was enrolled in two departments at the University, and the University removed him from the department associated with the misconduct. He remained at the University in the other department until he graduated.

The University's report did not explain the investigation committee's reasoning for their finding or refer to specific evidence in making their determination. We asked the University for an addendum that elaborated on their finding. The University provided a detailed comparison of the Subject's paper and the manuscript he reviewed which showed they were nearly identical. As the University did not provide any further analysis of their finding, we conducted a review of all the documents provided by the University. The Subject claimed a lack of understanding of proper use of citations. Our review determined the Subject had received ample training on proper citation and the confidentiality of peer review. We concluded the Subject intentionally plagiarized the manuscript.

We recommended NSF make a finding of research misconduct and debar the Subject for 2 years. We also recommended NSF bar him from serving as an NSF peer reviewer, advisor, or consultant for 5 years, and require submission of certifications and assurances with each document submitted to NSF for 5 years. NSF concurred with our finding and debarred the Subject for 2 years. NSF implemented our other recommendations for 6 years instead of the 5 years we recommended.

This case is closed with no further action taken.