

## CLOSEOUT FOR CASE M00100037

The complainant<sup>1</sup> informed an NSF program officer<sup>2</sup> of allegations of misconduct in science. The complainant alleged that his graduate advisor, the subject,<sup>3</sup> 1) stole his research work, a computer program he developed; and 2) did not provide the complainant appropriate compensation for work performed for a project supported by NSF. The complainant explained that the subject published the complainant's work in two papers (paper 1 and paper 2)<sup>4</sup> which they co-authored. Both papers acknowledged NSF support.<sup>5</sup>

We learned shortly after we had started our inquiry that the complainant had informed the institution of his allegations and the institution had initiated an inquiry. As is our practice, we deferred our inquiry to the institution, and request a copy of its inquiry report when completed.

We determined that the institution's inquiry committee report was fair, thorough, and complete. The committee determined that the co-authored papers did not use the computer codes the complainant was concerned about. With the help of an outside expert, the committee determined that "much of the substance of the computer codes in question were based on the formulae supplied by [the subject]," and that the "derivations and extensive notes were reviewed by the expert panel member . . . who agreed that the [complainant's] work depended heavily on the work of [the subject] and that [the subject] had contributed materially to the development of the 'codes.'" The complainant explained during his interview with the committee "that it was not his intention to represent that [the subject] had 'stolen' his research." Finally, the committee learned that the complainant thought that the publication of a paper containing some of his thesis results before he completed his thesis would prevent him from receiving his Ph.D. The committee noted that the subject's Department expected each student to publish a paper prior to the completion of the dissertation as partial fulfillment of the degree. It also noted that the acknowledgment for paper 1 did not specifically state that paper 1 was in partial fulfillment of a Ph.D. degree as it could have, but this failure did not jeopardize the complainant's degree. The committee determined that there was no substance to the allegation that the subject stole the complainant's research work, a computer program he developed.

<sup>1</sup> [REDACTED] the complainant, is a graduate student in [REDACTED]  
<sup>2</sup> [REDACTED] is an NSF program officer in the [REDACTED]  
<sup>3</sup> [REDACTED] the subject, is a faculty member [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] At the time of the allegation, he was the complainant's graduate advisor.  
<sup>4</sup> Paper 1 is [REDACTED] by the complainant and the subject, in [REDACTED] and paper 2 is [REDACTED] by the subject and the complainant in [REDACTED]  
<sup>5</sup> NSF award [REDACTED] is entitled [REDACTED] with the subject as the PI [REDACTED]

## **CLOSEOUT FOR CASE 10100037**

The committee learned that the complainant thought that if the acknowledgment section in a paper stated that NSF support was involved, he should have received some money for his work on the project. The committee noted that the complainant's education was supported from the institution's funds, not NSF. It explained to the complainant that acknowledgment of NSF funding in a paper did not mean he was to receive compensation for work accomplished on the project. The committee determined that there was no substance to the allegation that the subject failed to provide the complainant with appropriate compensation for work performed for a project supported by NSF.

The university's administration accepted the report and closed its case. This inquiry is closed and no further action will be taken.

cc: Investigations, IG