

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM FOR M-01030008

We received an anonymous letter alleging that the subject,¹ the PI on an NSF award,² misrepresented her degree in the award application. In addition, this misrepresentation of the subject's degree allegedly resulted in her receiving more money to work on this and other NSF awards.

The subject's "Biographical Sketch" in the award, and on earlier NSF awards,³ stated that she had a "Ph.D. (ABD)" (All But Dissertation) from a large university.⁴ The registrar at the university confirmed that, although the subject was on the Ph.D. track and had completed many graduate courses, she did not complete a dissertation and, therefore, did not receive a Ph.D. degree. The NSF database, however, incorrectly indicated that the subject's highest degree was a Ph.D.

The NSF program manager⁵ for the subject's active award explained that a Ph.D. degree is not required for the PI on her particular award. He said that PIs are evaluated on a case-by-case basis prior to recommending this type of an award. He said he knew the subject had a "Ph.D. (ABD)" and that, on a site visit to the university prior to the award, he met the subject and determined that she was the best person to manage the project.

We observed that the subject referred to herself as "doctor" on her College's homepage and was listed on other government databases⁶ as having a Ph.D. There was no evidence, however, that the subject misrepresented her degree on any of her NSF forms. Further, our review showed that she received no money from any of the NSF awards for managing them. We concluded that the subject had not seriously deviated from accepted practice. However, because we were concerned that the subject's representation of the degree could conceivably cause a problem in the future, we called her and discussed this matter with her.

This case is closed and no further action will be taken.

cc: Investigations, IG

¹ [REDACTED] (the subject) is the [REDACTED]
² NSF [REDACTED] entitled [REDACTED]
³ [REDACTED] entitled [REDACTED] entitled [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
⁴ The [REDACTED] entitled [REDACTED]
⁵ [REDACTED] for the [REDACTED]
⁶ Webserv [REDACTED] and -
www [REDACTED]