

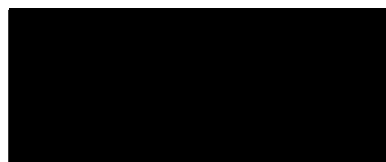
CLOSEOUT FOR M92120048

This case came to the attention of OIG when we received a copy of a [REDACTED] electronic mail message from [REDACTED] (the complainant) to [REDACTED] program officer. The complainant, then a member of the [REDACTED] reported two instances of alleged wrongdoing with regard to research grants at the university. In subsequent telephone conversations with the OIG, he made two additional allegations.

The complainant alleged (1) that [REDACTED] faculty member at the university had been pressured into participating as a principal investigator on a [REDACTED] proposal and that the proposal had been altered while the faculty member was out of town, (2) that the university wasted an NSF grant to purchase [REDACTED] in that it left the instrument unused and in storage and never made available a facility to house it, (3) that an administrator at the university had forced a researcher in the [REDACTED] to add the administrator as a co-principal investigator to a proposal that the administrator had not helped to develop, and (4) that the university had a special project that may have used indirect cost funds to develop new proposals and to lobby in Washington to have them funded.

Our inquiry was unable to find evidence of misconduct relating to NSF grants or proposals in this case. With regard to Allegation #1, there is no evidence that the principal investigator was pressured to do anything that violates the norms of science. According to our complainant, he agreed to whatever alterations were made in the course of proposal development and, in signing the proposal, took responsibility for its content. Similarly, we have no reason to believe that the principal investigator misrepresented his participation in the proposed project. With regard to Allegation #2, our inquiry did not reveal an NSF grant that fit the complainant's description. Likewise, Allegation #3 could not be substantiated because NSF records show no proposals from the principal investigator named in the complaint, or from anyone at the institution with a similar name. The use of indirect cost funds to develop new proposals, described in Allegation #4, is legal. The use of such funds to lobby for grants is not legal, but the complainant was unable to provide specific information about lobbying, or any evidence that indirect cost funds were used for this purpose.

If there is a systemic problem at the complainant's [REDACTED] university, he has been unable to provide evidence of it with regard to NSF grants or proposals. This case is closed and no further action will be taken.



2/31/93

Staff Scientist, Oversight

1 of 2

92-48

Concurrence:

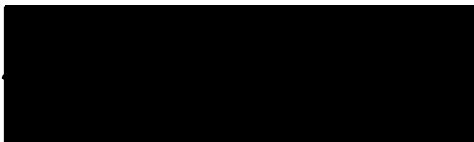


8/31/93

Deputy Assistant Inspector General,
Oversight

James J. Zwolenik 8/31/93

James J. Zwolenik
Assistant Inspector General for Oversight



8/31/93

Assistant Counsel to the Inspector General

cc: Assistant Inspector General for Oversight
Inspector General.

272

92-48