Closeout for M97020006

A complainant[1] told us that the subject,[2] another professor at the complainant's university, had plagiarized from the complainant's grant proposal, and their university retaliated against him when he complained about the plagiarism. The complainant requested treatment as a confidential source, and expressed significant concern about possible further retaliation; specifically, he told us that he did not

> agree to any contacts that use my name and cause me to be subjected to additional reprisal actions.

In subsequent correspondence the subject reiterated his abhorrence of any inquiry that identified him in any way.

Ensuring confidentiality is a primary concern for our office, and we have stated unequivocally that

> the complainant participates in the case only if willing to do so, and then only as a witness. . . . NSF believes it is essential to encourage good faith complainants to come forward, and accordingly keeps the identity of a complainant confidential unless the complainant is willing to be a witness.[3]

To investigate whether the complainant was the victim of plagiarism or whether retaliatory actions were taken against him by individuals at his university, we would at some point have to be able to identify him in our inquiries of faculty and staff at the university. The complainant's insistence that we not do so precluded further inquiry, and as a result we have closed this case.

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[1] [TEXT REDACTED]

[2] [TEXT REDACTED]

[3] K.G. Herman, P.L. Sunshine, M.K. Fisher, J.J. Zwolenik & C.H. Herz, "Investigating Misconduct in Science: The National Science Foundation Model," 65 J. HIGHER ED. 384, 388 (1994).