

CLOSEOUT FOR M97110041

On 4 November 1997, OIG was informed¹ of allegations of misconduct in science against the subject.² It was alleged that the subject's NSF proposal³ contained text plagiarized from the subject's graduate research advisor's NSF award.⁴ In addition, the subject's proposal allegedly described research that was essentially the same as research presented in the advisor's award, suggesting that the subject was seeking duplicate funding.

We noted that some of the text in the subject's proposal was substantially similar to text in the advisor's award without any attribution to a source document. In addition, several of the research projects presented in the subject's proposal appeared to be similar to projects described in the advisor's award.

We wrote to the subject who explained that he and his former advisor "maintained a collaboration" and, therefore, similarities between their research "should not be surprising." The subject provided documentation that the similar text in his proposal was not copied from the advisor's award, but rather it was material from jointly authored earlier awards and publications, and the subject's Master's thesis. We determined that the subject and advisor had collaborated in the preparation of the text that was common to the proposal and award. We concluded that there was no substance to the allegation of plagiarism.

The subject also explained that three of the seven projects in his proposal bore some resemblance to the projects from his advisor's award, but that this resemblance involved only the materials to be investigated, not the technique to be used. We determined that the technique described in the subject's proposal for the research projects was different and more sophisticated than that presented in the award. At our request, an NSF expert in the field reviewed the subject's response and concluded that the subject's explanations were reasonable. We concluded that there was no substance to the allegation that the subject sought duplicate funding to do the same research.

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

cc: Staff Scientist, Investigations, Attorney, AIG Oversight, IG.

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Footnotes Redacted