

CLOSEOUT FOR CASE M99020006

On 22 February 1999, an NSF program officer¹ brought allegations of misconduct in science to our attention. In a letter to the program officer, the complainant² alleged that subjects 1, 2, 3, and 4³ had committed plagiarism in one or more of the following instances: 1) subjects 1, 2, and 4 copied material from a publication into their paper A⁴ without appropriate citations; 2) subjects 1 and 2 used research results (intellectual theft) in their draft paper B⁵ without appropriate citations, and inappropriately altered two of the citations; 3) subjects 1, 2, and 4 used ideas (intellectual theft) taken from a book in their paper C⁶ without appropriate citations; and 4) subjects 1, 2, and 3 copied material from several publications into their NSF Annual Report⁷ without appropriate citations.

Allegations 1, 2, and 3: Our review showed that NSF did not fund the work at issue and therefore did not have jurisdiction in these matters. However, because another federal agency⁸ was acknowledged as the source of funding for work associated with two of these allegations, we reviewed the available information for all three allegations to determine if any were substantive and if we should forward either or both of the relevant allegations to the other agency. We concluded that all three allegations had either no substance or insufficient substance to pursue.

Allegation 4: The complainant provided a copy of the NSF Annual Report submitted by subjects 1, 2, and 3 with each allegedly copied section annotated to show the suspected source documents. Each identified section of the Report that allegedly contained copied text either directly or indirectly cited one or more of the source documents. We determined that the subjects had cited the source documents in the Report and that there was insufficient substance to pursue this allegation.

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

cc: Integrity, IG.

¹ [REDACTED] is program officer for the [REDACTED] in the Division [REDACTED]
² [REDACTED] is a [REDACTED] from [REDACTED]
³ The subjects are at the [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] subject 3, [REDACTED] and subject 4, [REDACTED]
⁴ Subjects 1, 2, and 4 authored paper A entitled, [REDACTED]
⁵ Draft paper B was never identified or located.
⁶ Subjects 1, 2, and 4 authored paper C entitled [REDACTED]
⁷ NSF [REDACTED] Report" for proposal [REDACTED] entitled [REDACTED] was submitted by subjects 1, 2, & 3 for the [REDACTED] The award was for 2 years which began on [REDACTED]
⁸ [REDACTED]