

### Closeout for M99110053

On November 11, 1999, a Program Director<sup>1</sup> informed us of correspondence he received from a Dean<sup>2</sup> which alleged that an NSF PI<sup>3</sup> was in possession of certain equipment that did not belong to him as the result of an expired loan agreement. The Program Director forwarded the matter to us because the PI represented this equipment as essential to the research goals of the award<sup>4</sup> under his direction.

The PI stated that he entered into the loan agreement with the Dean's institution, that he needed the equipment specified in the loan agreement to fulfill his award obligations, that he decided not to return this equipment, and that he was prepared to replace this equipment if necessary.

We concluded (1 year into the award period) that there had been no significant changes to the objectives or scope of the award as a result of the equipment dispute and that the PI had not misrepresented his ability to access the equipment. However, we also noted, due to the equipment dispute, that the PI's uninterrupted access to such equipment over the remaining lifetime of the award was not guaranteed.

We notified the Program Director of our conclusions and recommended that he contact the PI and an appropriate official from the grantee institution<sup>5</sup> and inform them of NSF's expectations with respect to the PI's equipment access.<sup>6</sup> The Program Director imparted this expectation to both parties.<sup>7</sup>

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

cc: Integrity, IG

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4 Footnotes Redacted

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