



CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-21-0056-O

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A university informed us it was investigating an allegation of plagiarism and data fabrication related to an article citing NSF awards. All authors used the university as their affiliation and had university email addresses, but only one, the Subject, had a connection to the university, having graduated several years prior. The NSF awards acknowledged in the article were to another university with different researchers.

The university's investigation found the Subject committed research misconduct. It also found the email addresses for the two unrelated coauthors were alias addresses the Subject created. The Subject appealed the research misconduct finding, insisting that the two coauthors were responsible for the plagiarism and data fabrication. He also stated he had not been able to defend himself due to illness. He submitted a letter signed by one of the coauthors stating that the third coauthor, who could not be found, was responsible. The university concluded the letter was fabricated.

We found the Subject had never submitted an NSF proposal. We attempted to reach the Subject and were contacted by the Subject's relative, who informed us the Subject had died and provided us with a death certificate. As the available evidence indicates the Subject is deceased, we will not pursue the matter further.

This case is closed with no further action taken.