



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: I-19-0067-O

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A University informed us that it had completed an inquiry into allegations of plagiarism by two professors and determined an investigation was warranted. We concurred and referred the investigation to the University.

The University investigated the allegations that the professors plagiarized when they presented parts of a student's research project as their own on two conference posters. The University determined that the allegations, if substantiated, involved both authorship dispute and plagiarism.

The University determined that one of the professors (Instructor) was the instructor for the graduate level course in which the student enrolled. The Instructor invited the other professor (Subject) to visit the class and recruit students to work under the Subject's supervision. The Instructor did not supervise the student's work and the University concluded the Instructor was not responsible for any plagiarism that occurred in the posters.

The University determined that the Subject and the student were research collaborators and that when preparing the posters, the Subject used figures that the student produced as part of his class. The University concluded the Subject plagiarized when he intentionally used the student's work without proper attribution. The University required the Subject to enroll in Responsible Conduct of Research training; to correct the research record by appropriately adding the student's name to the posters; and to serve a 1-year probationary period during which he must submit an attestation to an administrator that all individuals are appropriately acknowledged in publications and reports.

We accepted the University's evidentiary findings and conclude that the Subject's conduct involves elements of both plagiarism and an authorship dispute. The authorship dispute has been mitigated by adding the student's name to the posters. We determined that the Subject's compliance with all the University actions adequately protects the federal government's interests. We sent the Subject a letter reminding him to properly acknowledge all contributors on all research products.

This case is **closed** with no further action taken.