

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM FOR A-01060019

The Vice President for Research (VPR) at University 1¹ received an e-mail message from the complainant² that alleged the subject,³ a faculty member at University 1, had plagiarized the complainant's ideas. According to the complainant, the alleged theft of his ideas began when he was a post-doctoral researcher at University 2 where the subject was a graduate student supported by an NSF award.⁴ The complainant's e-mail explained that he had already informed University 2 about this allegation. The VPR notified us that he had received the allegation and explained that the complainant failed to provide any evidence in support of the allegation. Because the VPR knew that the complainant had provided this allegation to University 2, he contacted the misconduct official at University 2.⁵ She informed him that it had initiated an inquiry into this allegation as well as other allegations against other scientists. The VPR deferred its inquiry to University 2.

Prior to learning of the complainant's e-mail to the VPR with the allegation against the subject, we had learned of the allegations against the subject and other scientists at University 2 and had deferred our inquiry to University 2.⁶ Similarly, we deferred our inquiry to University 1. At the completion of University 2's inquiry, University 1 received a copy of the report. University 2's inquiry committee report documented that, despite repeated attempts to get factual information from the complainant, he never provided it. The inquiry committee could not evaluate the allegation against the subject without factual evidence. Consequently, University 2 closed the case against the subject (and the other scientists) for lack of evidence.

After receipt of University 2's inquiry report, the VPR informed our office that University 1 used University 2's inquiry report in lieu of its own. It found the inquiry report to be "reasonable and adequate" and closed the case.

We concur with University 1's decision to close this case. Like Universities 1 and 2, we have been unable to obtain factual evidence necessary to evaluate the allegation.

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

cc: Investigations, IG

_____ is the _____
(University 1).

2 _____ was a former post-doc at _____ (University 2).

3 _____ is a faculty member in _____ University 1.

4 NSF award _____ is entitled _____

5 _____ with _____

6 _____ Director of Research Administration, University 2.

Case _____