



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIONS

CLOSEOUT MEMORANDUM

Case Number: A15020008

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We reviewed two pairs of Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) proposals from different institutions that had been identified in the review process as overlapping in content. Applicants to the GRFP certify to the “originality” of their personal statements and research statements. The first pair involved substantially similar text in the two applicants’¹ personal statements. Both applicants were students in the same undergraduate research lab.² It was evident based on the applicants’ submission histories that the later applicant had most likely used the first applicant’s proposal as a template, substituting her own similar accomplishments. In the second pair, the two applicants,³ also sharing the same undergraduate lab,⁴ were alleged to have overlapping research statements and figures. These applicants, however, are coauthors on a pending publication on the research topic, and it is the likely source of the overlapping content. For both pairs, the facts do not support further investigation for criminal false statements or research misconduct.

Accordingly, this case is closed.

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