NSF's Office of Inspector General

- What is an Office of Inspector General?
  - Jurisdiction
  - Issues addressed
  - Reporting structure
- Our staff: administrators, attorneys, auditors, criminal investigators, and scientists

Reference Materials

- A submission to NSF must be of the highest level of scholarship
- NSF Submission Certifications
- Research approvals (human subject, animal, material)
- Per Review Confidentiality
- Misconduct Policies and Materials
- Financial and administrative responsibilities
- Current and Pending support
- www.nsf.gov/oig

Ethical Issues

- Data Selection
- Sharing and Using Ideas
- Balancing Priorities
- Making Financial Decisions
- Authorship and Acknowledgements
- Collaborations
- Conflicts of Interest
- Paraphrasing and Plagiarism
- Mentorship/Advisor Problems
- Merit Review
- Obtaining Oversight Reviews

Data Selection

- Full disclosure, cleaning, fudging, falsification, fabrication
- Share with whom, when, what restrictions and agreements?
- Who owns the data?

? PI takes project data that are essential for current analysis and won't return them.

? PI alters data because he anticipates it will be correct, it is not published.

? Graduate student fabricates spectra to obtain Ph.D.

Sharing and Using Ideas

- NSF Policy on Sharing
- Ideas are “in the air”, a continuum, unique,
- Agreements, seminars and meetings
- Sharing manuscripts, proposals
- Shelby Amendment to FOIA

- PI shared manuscript with another researcher who refined it, was named as a co-author and then used the manuscript in NSF proposal without PI.
- Collaborator is slow to publish results with samples that are subsequently shared with another group. Latter effort lead to a publication.

Balancing Your Priorities

- Teaching Responsibilities
- Department Responsibilities
- Research Commitments

? PI fails to disclose all funding on Current and Pending Support statement.

? PI asserts that institution will not provide facilities needed for research and is demanding too much time for teaching responsibilities.

Making Administrative and Financial Decisions

- NSF's GC-1
- Understanding what you can and can't buy
- Cost sharing and start-up

? PI fires research associate, and associate reports firing to OIG.

? PI purchases personal books and uses telephone for personal business.

Responsible Authorship

- Prior agreements on what merits authorship or acknowledgments (people, funding)
- Order of authors
- Whose intellectual property?
- Who is responsible for content?
- Copyright
- Duplicate or salami publications

? PI fires research associate, and associate reports firing to OIG.

? Student provides samples to testing facility for analysis and finds that analyses are used by facility staff in meeting presentation.

Collaborations

- Written agreements on work, authorship, proprietary nature, subsequent use

- PI shares manuscript with colleague, who edits and becomes co-author and subsequently uses manuscript as part of sole authored proposal to NSF.
- Co-PI helps develop submitted collaborative proposal, the sequel to which relies on co-PIs information but which is submitted without co-PI.
- New researcher shares ideas with professor who invited researcher to come to university and present seminar. Professor subsequently uses ideas in his own proposal that competes with researcher's.

Conflicts of Interest

- Balancing and Disclosing Financial and Commitment conflicts
- What are conflicts?
- SBIR vs. basic research awards
- Working with industry

- PI has research grant and a funded SBIR grant and has graduate students working on SBIR grant.
- PI uses research grant to cover costs of his personal business.
- Industry wants PI to conduct work related to research grant but puts stipulations on how data may be used or published.

Paraphrasing and Plagiarism

- Background, methods, research plan and ideas
- Common knowledge, limited usage, adequate citation

? PI copies methodology from another grant proposal because there are only limited ways of describing process.

? PI copies material into background section of proposal without attribution or offset.

? How much can you copying without attribution and offset before it becomes misconduct? When must you provide attribution?

? PI copies several paragraphs of text and has an introductory sentence stating, "Jones' lab has discovered that....."

Mentor/Advisor Problems

- He/she took my idea
- I took “my” data/notebook

- Graduate student has a falling out with advisor and finds that data and ideas are used by advisor in publication that fails to provide authorship or acknowledgment to student.
- Graduate student leaves laboratory either happily or unhappily and takes laboratory notebooks with him/her.
- Graduate student believes that mentor is fabricating data.

Merit Review

- Confidentiality, sharing proposals
- When is it intellectual theft?
- What if you recognize theft or plagiarism?

? PI shares proposal received for review with research staff. Member of staff uses text and idea in proposal in own submission.

? Reviewer has ideas that will improve research proposed in proposal and contacts PI with suggestions and request to do research.

? Reviewer discusses panel process and proposals to class at home institution (or with PIs that submitted proposals).

Obtaining Oversight Reviews

- Human / animal / biohazards reviews and permits
- Collection permits

- ? PI makes agreements about awardee oversight and fails to ensure that it occurs feeling that he/she can provide sufficient oversight.
- ? PI collects endangered species and imports into US without permits.

Allegations Reviewed (%)

✔	Intellectual theft	24
✔	Verbatim plagiarism	16
✔	False statements (CV& CPS)	9
	NSF procedures	8
✔	Falsification in a proposal	7
✔	Peer review violation	7
✔	Mentoring or colleague abuse	6
	Retaliation	4
✔	Fraud	3
	Fabrication in proposal	3
	Data sharing	3
	Impeding research progress	3
	Conflicts of interests	2
✔	Duplicate submissions	2
✔	Mishandled investigation	1
✔	Data tampering	1
✔	Human subjects	1
	Animal welfare	0.1
	Recombinant DNA	0.1

Findings of Misconduct as of April 2000:

- ✷ 12% Fabrication
- ✷ 12% Falsification
- ✷ 67% Plagiarism
- ✷ 9% Other

✔Indicates a finding

Encountering a Dilemma

- What policy covers the case?
- What would you do?
- Who would you talk to?

Your University's Policies

- Conflicts of interest
- Misconduct in Science
- Grievances
- Student Behavior
- Scope (Definition)
- Your contact point?
- Handling/Process
- Actions
- Who is decision-maker and manager of process?
- Federal Policies in absence of or supplementing University Policies

How to Contact Us?

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- E-mail: oig@nsf.gov
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- Anonymous: 1-800-428-2189
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