

## Redacted Report of the Inquiry Committee

*Inquiry Committee to Review allegations of research misconduct by Wei Chyung Wang, Ph.D as covered by the University at Albany Policy and Procedures on Misconduct in Research and Scholarship.*

### University Receives Complaint, Inquiry Initiated

The Division for Research received an allegation against Wei-Chyung Wang, for fabrication and misrepresentation of research results as covered by the *University at Albany Policy and Procedures on Misconduct in Research and Scholarship*.

It is alleged that Dr. Wang fabricated and misrepresented research results in two research papers he co-authored:

- Jones P.D., Groisman P.Y., Coughlan M., Plummer N., Wang W.-C., Karl T.R. (1990), “Assessment of urbanization effects in time series of surface air temperature over land”, *Nature*, 347: 169–172
- Wang W.-C., Zeng Z., Karl T.R. (1990), “Urban heat islands in China”, *Geophysical Research Letters*, 17: 2377–2380

In light of the seriousness of the implications of this allegation, the Chair of the Committee on Ethics in Research and Scholarship (CERS) and the Vice President for Research decided that an Inquiry Committee should be appointed to review the facts of the case. A formal inquiry was initiated in accordance with the *University at Albany Policy and Procedures on Misconduct in Research and Scholarship*. The Vice President for Research (VPR) is the institutional official responsible for the case.

### Inquiry Committee Appointed

In consultation with the Council on Ethics in Research and Scholarship Chair, the VPR appointed an Inquiry Committee, qualified persons, from inside and outside the University who did not have real or apparent conflicts of interest in the case, were unbiased, and had the necessary expertise to evaluate the evidence and issues related to the allegation.

The committee members named for this Inquiry Committee were:

**Helmut Hirsch**, Distinguished Teaching Professor, Department of Biology;  
**Marvin Geller**, Professor, Department of Marine Sciences, Stony Brook University; and  
**Eric Lifshin**, Professor, College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering; and member of CERS

*Ex-Officio Members –*

**Adrienne D. Bonilla, J.D.**, Research Compliance Officer, Office of the Vice President for Research, staff assistance to the Inquiry Committee

**John Reilly, J.D.**, University Counsel’s Office representative

## **Notice to the Respondent**

The VP for Research sent a letter of notice to the Respondent, on August 16th, 2007. The letter provided information on the allegation, and notice of the names of the proposed Inquiry Committee members. The letter informed the Respondent of his right to object to any of the Committee members within five (5) calendar days. The University's Misconduct Policy, which outlines the Inquiry and Investigation process, was also attached to this letter. The Respondent did not object to any of the proposed members.

### **Three (3) Meetings of the Inquiry Committee**

The time between initiation of the Inquiry and the date of the first meeting was due to difficulties associated with scheduling. Scheduling was challenging as it this was taking place during the summer months. Additionally, participants (Respondent and a Committee member) travel for work on a fairly frequent basis.

- **October 5, 2007:** (Redacted)
- **October 18, 2007:** (Redacted)
- **December 7, 2007:** The Committee interviewed the Complainant via telephone and immediately (Redacted) thereafter, the Committee interviewed the Respondent in person. The Complainant highlighted points that the Committee had taken notice of, namely that there were a sizable number of stations for which there was no data that could be used in defending the statement that these stations had remained relatively "constant". (Redacted)

### **Recommendation (unanimous) (Redacted) of the Inquiry Committee:**

After careful and thorough review of the evidence, the Committee has concluded that without the written input from the Respondent's colleague, we cannot determine the accuracy of the Respondent's explanation for the station selection. While the Respondent maintains that there may be additional evidence available that could allow for a clear and final decision to be rendered, for this Inquiry Committee to examine this case further or in more depth would be beyond its charge. Consequently, in the absence of any such available additional evidence regarding the paper station logs, there is simply no way for us as an Inquiry Committee to conclude that there is not sufficient evidence to warrant further investigation.

Therefore, on the record before us, we are compelled by the Policy to recommend that an Investigation Committee be formed and charged with obtaining and reviewing any such additional evidence regarding the paper station logs so that a final resolution may be made regarding the allegation against Dr. Wang.

Submitted and Approved by Inquiry Committee Members:

**Helmut Hirsch**, Distinguished Teaching Professor, Department of Biology;  
**Marvin Geller**, Professor, Department of Marine Sciences, Stony Brook University; and  
**Eric Lifshin**, Professor, College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering; and member of CERS