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ORI Makes Misconduct Finding Against Former UMass Post-Doc

More than two years after Ozgur Tataroglu's paper was retracted, the HHS Office of Research Integrity found that it and two grant applications contained falsifications, leading to ORI's finding of research misconduct against Tataroglu, a former post-doctoral fellow at the University of Massachusetts (UMass) School of Medicine Department of Neurobiology. ORI announced Jan. 14 that Tataroglu agreed to a three-year plan for supervision should any of his research be funded by the Public Health Service, effective Dec. 30, 2019; he did not admit to wrongdoing, however.

ORI said Tataroglu "engaged in research misconduct by knowingly, intentionally, and/or recklessly falsifying data in bar graphs representing phase shift of circadian clock activity between *Drosophila* without and with heat pulse treatment" in four figures published in a paper in *Cell* in 2015 and retracted in 2017, in a total of five figures submitted in grant applications, and in data in his files. ORI said he "selectively alter[ed] the original *Drosophila* behavior locomotor data in his primary data files," which distorted experimental results. The *Cell* paper was retracted as requested by Tataroglu's coauthors following a misconduct investigation by UMass.

According to the *Cell* retraction notice, which Tataroglu did not sign, "In follow-up experiments, other members of the corresponding author's laboratory were unable to reproduce key observations" in the paper. ORI specified the structure of any supervisory plan, calling for a committee of two-to-three "senior faculty members at the institution who are familiar with Respondent's field of research, but not including Respondent's supervisor or collaborators, [to] provide oversight and guidance." The same committee is required to review any grant applications or papers prior to submission. Both requirements are uncommon in ORI resolution agreements.

[Link to misconduct finding](#)

[Link to retraction notice](#)

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