

Report on Research Compliance Volume 19, Number 5. April 21, 2022 RRC E-Alerts: April 7, 2022

By Theresa Defino

ORI Announces Misconduct Finding for Researcher Who Worked at Two Universities

A woman who earned her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 2014 and now teaches seventh and eighth grade science at a private school in Mill Valley, California, included fabricated or falsified data in her dissertation, a grant application submitted to the National Cancer Institute in 2017, and in seven papers that were published from 2013 to 2018, the HHS Office of Research Integrity (ORI) announced April 5. According to information on the website of Mount Tamalpais School where Brand is employed, she earned a bachelor’s of science in molecular, cellular, and developmental biology from the University of California, Santa Barbara, “then worked as a brain cancer researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles,” after which she applied to graduate school. Her Ph.D. is in cellular and molecular pathology. At some point later, Brand joined the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) as a post-doctoral researcher; it is not clear when she left there. Some of the misconduct occurred during her time at Wisconsin (in particular, in her dissertation) but also at UCSF.

ORI officials told RRC that both the University of Wisconsin and UCSF separately conducted investigations, leading to some delay in the finding. The retraction notice for one of the papers, published in *Science Signaling* on Jan. 3, 2017, said the University of Wisconsin committee “found...issues were due to carelessness and lack of attention to detail rather than through any intent to deceive, and thus concluded that no research misconduct was committed.” However, ORI considered this paper among the seven containing evidence of misconduct. ORI said Brand’s misconduct consisted of “fabricating western blot data, by reusing and relabeling data to represent expression of proteins in control experiments measuring the purity of cytoplasmic and nuclear cell fractionation, measurements of proteins of interest, and measurements of the same protein under different experimental conditions or loading controls, included in twenty-four (24) figures” used in the publications and her dissertation. Brand did not admit to the misconduct as part of the settlement, which calls for a four-year supervisory plan should she apply for Public Health Service funding beginning March 23. Brand also agreed to retract or correct three papers. She did not respond to RRC’s request for comment.

[Link to ORI announcement](#)

[Link to Brand’s bio at Mount Tamalpais](#)

This document is only available to subscribers. Please log in or purchase access.

[Purchase Login](#)