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ORI Makes Two Related Misconduct Findings

Two former researchers with Albert Einstein College of Medicine agreed to a 12-year supervision program and a four-year exclusion, respectively, according to a March 21 announcement by the HHS Office of Research Integrity (ORI). The agency said Hui (Herb) Bin Sun, formerly a professor of orthopedic surgery and radiation oncology, and Daniel Leong, a research technician, “engaged in research misconduct by intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly falsifying and/or fabricating data included in sixteen (16) grant applications” that were submitted to the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases and National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. ORI said the misconduct occurred from 2013 to 2019; neither Sun nor Leong admitted to misconduct but nonetheless agreed to settlement terms. More specifically, ORI said that Sun reported and Leong created “Western blot and histological image data for chronic deep tissue conditions including osteoarthritis (OA) and tendinopathy in murine models.” ORI said the data at issue “were falsely reused and relabeled as data representing different experiments.”

Under the terms of Sun’s agreement, which began March 1, he must submit a supervision plan should he apply for funding from any Public Health Service (PHS) agencies or participate “in any capacity in PHS-supported research.” A committee of two to three senior faculty members at Sun’s institution would “provide oversight and guidance” and, on a quarterly basis, review primary data from his laboratory. They also would report to ORI every six months regarding Sun’s “compliance with appropriate research standards and confirming the integrity of [Sun’s] research.” Sun is also required to “ensure that any institution employing him submits, in conjunction with each application for PHS funds, or report, manuscript, or abstract involving PHS-supported research” in which Sun is involved, “a certification to ORI that the data provided by [Sun] are based on actual experiments or are otherwise legitimately derived and that the data, procedures, and methodology are accurately reported in the application, report, manuscript, or abstract.” After Leong’s governmentwide exclusion concludes, he agreed to be subject to a four-year supervision period with requirements that echo those imposed on Sun. An Albert Einstein spokesperson told *Retraction Watch* that “Leong left Einstein voluntarily in 2016, prior to our investigation. Dr. Sun was terminated in 2019 at the conclusion of our investigation that found evidence of research misconduct.”

[Link to ORI finding regarding Sun](#)

[Link to ORI finding regarding Leong](#)

[Link to Retraction Watch article](#)

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