

RCR Topic: Authorship and Publication

Title: Professor Beta

Case: Student Alpha performed some preliminary research in Professor Beta's lab, who at the time, was Student Alpha's advisor. For a variety of reasons, Student Alpha left Professor Beta's lab, and assumed that she could take the data with her to her new lab and expand upon her previous efforts. Student Alpha later finds out that Professor Beta has published a manuscript, which included Student Alpha's work, and did not include Student Alpha as an author but rather, included another student (Student Gamma). Professor Beta justified this by saying that he was the caretaker of all work performed in his lab, and that he had the right to assign it to anyone in the lab. Student Gamma had expanded Student Alpha's preliminary findings, so he did not owe authorship to Student Alpha. Besides, Professor Beta had provided financial support to Student Alpha when she was working in the lab, and thus, this also negated the need to include her as an author.

Based on the MSU definition, Did Professor Beta commit plagiarism? Why or why not?