



Iman Sadeghi <sadeghi@gmail.com>

Revoking Doctorate Degrees Awarded Based on Fraudulent Publications

Iman Sadeghi <sadeghi@gmail.com>

Fri, Nov 4, 2022 at 9:00 AM

To: ori@usc.edu, uscprovost@usc.edu, vpres@usc.edu, Kristen Grace <gracekri@usc.edu>, "Daniel K. Shapiro" <daniel.shapiro@usc.edu>

Dear University of Southern California (USC)'s Office of Research Integrity (ORI),

The following doctorate degrees have been awarded by USC based in part on fraudulent publications containing data fabrication, data falsification, and intentional misrepresentations:

- Ph.D. degree awarded in 2018 to Lingyu (Cosimo) Wei, Advisor: Hao Li
- Ph.D. degree awarded in 2019 to Liwen Hu, Advisor: Hao Li
- Ph.D. degree awarded in 2020 to Shunsuke Saito, Advisor: Hao Li

Fraudulent publications in support of awarded Ph.D. degrees:

- "Avatar digitization from a single image for real-time rendering" published in the ACM Transactions on Graphics. 36, 6, Article 195, 14 pages
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3130800.31310887>
- "Pinscreen: creating performance-driven avatars in seconds," published in the ACM SIGGRAPH 2017 Real Time Live! (RTL), page 23
<https://doi.org/10.1145/3098333.3107546>

Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)'s Ethics Committee has investigated both publications and found the above individuals "guilty" of "severe violation (Level V)" of its policies including "data falsification." Wei, Hu, and Saito are expected to each write a letter of apology including an admission of wrongdoing, and have been banned from participating in ACM venues including SIGGRAPH, SIGGRAPH RTL, and SIGGRAPH Asia for the next five years. [1]

Consistent with ACM's findings, USC ORI's Investigation Committee reviewing these publications has found that Li and Pinscreen committed "intentional misrepresentation", "falsification", and "research misconduct." [2]

These fraudulent publications—which will be retracted from ACM digital library—were included in each doctoral dissertation and relied upon by the dissertation committees in making the decisions to award the doctorate degrees. Therefore, those misinformed decisions must be re-evaluated.

Please consider this letter as my formal report and complaint regarding this research compliance issue and advise on the next steps involved in this process.

Best,
-Iman Sadeghi, Ph.D.
<http://sadeghi.com>
(858) 444-6175

[1] ACM's Investigation re Hao Li's and Pinscreen's Scientific Misconduct:
<http://sadeghi.com/ACM-Investigation/>

[2] USC ORI's Investigation re Hao Li's and Pinscreen's Scientific Misconduct:
<http://sadeghi.com/USC-Report/> (Pages 12-13)

Iman Sadeghi <sadeghi@gmail.com>

Thu, Dec 1, 2022 at 2:39 PM

To: ori@usc.edu, uscprovost@usc.edu, vpres@usc.edu, Kristen Grace <gracekri@usc.edu>, "Daniel K. Shapiro" <daniel.shapiro@usc.edu>

Dear University of Southern California (USC)'s Office of Research Integrity (ORI),

I would like to follow up on my 11/4 inquiry email regarding the revocation of doctorate degrees awarded based on fraudulent publications.

Best,

-Iman Sadeghi, Ph.D.

<http://sadeghi.com>

(858) 444-6175

Kristen Grace <gracekri@usc.edu>

Thu, Dec 1, 2022 at 8:38 PM

To: Iman Sadeghi <sadeghi@gmail.com>, Office of Research Integrity <ori@usc.edu>, USC Provost <uscprovost@usc.edu>, "Ishwar Puri, Vice President of Research" <vpres@usc.edu>, "Daniel K. Shapiro" <daniel.shapiro@usc.edu>

Dear Dr. Sadeghi,

Thank you for the concerns you expressed to us on November 4, 2022. USC has been reviewing them. As you are already aware, USC takes all allegations of potential misconduct very seriously. We thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. We will contact you to request additional information as needed

Sincerely,

Kristen Grace, M.D., Ph.D.

Director, Research Integrity

Research Integrity Officer

Office of Research

University of Southern California

3720 S Flower Street, Suite 325

gracekri@usc.edu