1 2 3 4 5 6 7	CAROLYN KUBOTA (S.B. #113660) ckubota@omm.com APALLA U. CHOPRA (S.B. #163207) achopra@omm.com O'MELVENY & MYERS LLP 400 South Hope Street Los Angeles, CA 90071-2899 Telephone: (213) 430-6000 Facsimile: (213) 430-6407 Attorneys for Defendant CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	Superior Court of California County of Los Angeles DEC 3 0 2014 Sherri R. Carter, Executive Officer/Clerk By Many D. Clark Mary D. Clark Y E STATE OF CALIFORNIA
9	COUNTY OF I	LOS ANGELES
10		
11	SANDRA TROIAN, Ph.D.,	Case No. BS152258
12	Plaintiff,	DEFENDANT CALIFORNIA
_13	v.	INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY'S NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION
14	CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY,	TO BIFURCATE MANDAMUS PROCEEDINGS AND STAY
15	Defendant.	PLAINTIFF'S LEGAL CAUSES OF ACTION PENDING RESOLUTION OF
16	·	MANDAMUS REVIEW; MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND
17 18		AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT THEREOF
19	·	Complaint Filed: November 13, 2014
20		Trial Date: None Set
21		Date: May 14, 2015
22		Time: 1:30 p.m. Dept: 82
23		Dept: 82 Judge: Hon. Luis A. Lavin CHEC CHAN CHEC CARD
.24		
25	·	BS152258 CCH52087 12/30/14 \$435.00 %;
26		8S152258 CCH520872077 12/30/14 03 435.00
27		***
-28		03 PM 310 \$435.00 \$0.00 \$0.00

DEFENDANT'S NOTICE OF MOTION & MOTION TO BIFURCATE MANDAMUS PROCEEDINGS; MEMORANDUM OF POINTS & AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT THEREOF

جال.

TO ALL PARTIES AND THEIR ATTORNEYS OF RECORD:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT on May 14, 2015, at 1:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard in Department 82 of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, located at 111 N. Hill Street, Los Angeles, California 90012, Defendant California Institute of Technology ("Caltech") will and hereby does move for an order (1) bifurcating mandamus proceedings under CCP § 1094.5 or CCP § 1085 from Plaintiff Sandra Troian's four legal causes of action against Caltech; and (2) staying discovery and any other proceedings related to Plaintiff's four legal causes of action until completion of the appropriate mandamus process.

This motion is made pursuant to Code of Civil Procedure sections 1048(b) and 598 on the grounds that Plaintiff has failed to exhaust her judicial remedies and that bifurcation of the mandamus proceedings and a stay of the remaining four causes of action will promote judicial economy and efficiency, and otherwise serve the ends of justice.

This motion is based upon this notice of motion, the memorandum of points and authorities, the concurrently filed Declaration of Grace Fisher-Adams, the records, papers, and files in this case, and any further evidence or argument that the Court receives prior to decision.

Dated: December 30, 2014

CAROLYN KUBOTA APALLA U. CHOPRA O'MELVENY & MYERS LLP

Apalla U. Chopra Attorneys for Defendant

California Institute of Technology

1. Chopra /VH

MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

I. INTRODUCTION.

Plaintiff Dr. Sandra Troian ("Troian" or "Plaintiff") admits that while employed by the California Institute of Technology ("Caltech" or "Defendant"), she listed her cat—M. Pucci—as co-author on a scientific abstract submitted to the American Physical Society. Troian's former postdoctoral research scholar, Dr. Anoosheh Niavaranikheiri, contacted Caltech to inquire about the identity of "M. Pucci" and to express surprise that she, Dr. Niavaranikheiri, had not been named as an author. In response, Caltech appointed a four-member faculty committee (the "Investigation Committee" or "Committee") to investigate the abstract's authorship. The Committee found that Troian had behaved improperly. With respect to sanctions, Caltech only mildly admonished Troian. Caltech advised her that the decision to list her cat as an author "reflects poorly" on her and Caltech and encouraged Troian to "consider" acknowledging Dr. Niavaranikheiri's contributions in "future publications." (See Exhibit A to Declaration of Grace Fisher-Adams ("Fisher-Adams Decl.") filed concurrently herewith.)

Troian has sued Caltech, however, alleging that the Investigation Committee process was a "sham" undertaken to retaliate against her for cooperating with the FBI in an unrelated matter. But Troian must use a mandamus process to challenge Caltech's academic investigation. Unless Troian succeeds in a mandamus proceeding, she cannot challenge the underlying issues through a civil lawsuit. Westlake v. Comm. Hosp. v. Super. Ct., 17 Cal. 3d 465, 484 (1976); DeCuir v. Cnty of Los Angeles, 64 Cal. App. 4th 75, 83 (1998).

Recognizing this, Troian has requested a Writ of Mandate under CCP § 1094.5 or, alternatively, CCP § 1085. She also, however, seeks damages and legal (as opposed to equitable) relief against Caltech through four causes of action. Each legal claim rests primarily on the allegations at issue in Caltech's administrative proceeding; her legal claims are therefore premature. "So long as such a quasi-judicial decision is not set aside through appropriate review procedures the decision has the effect of establishing the propriety of the [university's] action." Westlake, 17 Cal. 3d at 484; DeCuir, 64 Cal. App. 4th at 83. As a matter of law, Troian is barred from pursuing her legal claims against Caltech unless and until she succeeds on a mandamus

challenge. *Id.* Caltech therefore respectfully requests that this Court bifurcate the writ proceeding from Troian's legal causes of action, and stay discovery and all other proceedings with respect to Troian's legal causes of action until the mandamus review is complete.

II. BACKGROUND.

On November 13, 2014, Troian filed a Complaint against Caltech in Los Angeles Superior Court seeking a Petition for Writ of Mandate under CCP § 1094.5 or, alternatively, CCP § 1085. She also asserted causes of action for: (1) Retaliation in Violation of Cal. Labor Code § 1102.5(b); (2) Representative Action for Civil Penalties Pursuant to the Private Attorney General Act; (3) Breach of Contract; and (4) Breach of Implied Covenant of Good Faith and Fair Dealing. Plaintiff's Complaint alleges the following facts, which the Court must assume are true for purposes of this motion.

In 2006, Troian joined the Caltech faculty as a Professor of Applied Physics. (Complaint ¶¶ 13-14.) In June 2011, Troian hired Dr. Anoosheh Niavaranikheiri as a postdoctoral research scholar to assist Troian with a project related to "Thermal Slip." (*Id.* ¶ 77.) Dr. Niavaranikheiri worked with Troian on the Thermal Slip project until June 2012, when Dr. Niavaranikheiri abruptly left Caltech. (*Id.* ¶ 79.)

On June 28, 2012, and July 3, 2012, FBI agents approached Troian, seeking information about one of Troian's former postdoctoral scholars, Amir Gat. (*Id.* ¶¶ 56-60.) According to Troian, she cooperated with the FBI and responded truthfully to the agents' questions. (*Id.* ¶ 58.)

On August 2, 2012, Troian submitted online an abstract for the American Physical Society's ("APS") November 2012 conference. (*Id.* ¶ 81.) Troian's abstract reported results for the Thermal Slip project. (*Id.* ¶ 84.) Troian did not list Dr. Niavaranikheiri as a co-author on the abstract. (*Id.*) Instead, Troian listed "M. Pucci" as the first author and herself as the second author. (*Id.* ¶ 85.) After Caltech received an inquiry from Dr. Niavaranikheiri regarding the identity of "M. Pucci" and her own authorship status, Caltech reached out to Troian, who admitted that M. Pucci was her cat. (*Id.* ¶ 93-95.)

¹ Plaintiff bears the burden of proving all elements of each writ petition alleged in her Complaint, including applicability to this case.

On February 26, 2013, Caltech informed Troian it had created a faculty committee to investigate her decisions to list her cat and to omit Dr. Niavaranikheiri as co-author. (*Id.* ¶¶ 110, 111, 114.) Between March 2013 and May 2013, the Investigation Committee investigated these issues by interviewing witnesses and collecting and reviewing evidence. (*Id.* ¶ 115.) On September 1, 2013, the Investigation Committee issued a Final Report of its findings. (*Id.* ¶ 121.) According to Troian, the Committee found her "guilty of wrongdoing." (*Id.*) On October 17, 2013, the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs ratified the Investigation Committee's findings. (*Id.* ¶ 123). On April 14, 2014, the Caltech Provost, who was then serving as Interim President, affirmed the Committee's findings after consideration of Troian's appeal. (*Id.* ¶ 130.) With respect to sanctions, Caltech admonished Troian that listing her cat as co-author on a scientific abstract "reflects poorly both on [her] and Caltech" and suggested that Troian "carefully consider" giving credit to Dr. Niavaranikheiri on future abstracts. (*Id.* ¶ 130; *see* Fisher-Adams Decl., Ex. A.)

III. DISCUSSION.

Troian asks this Court to "[i]ssue a peremptory writ of mandate under CCP § 1094.5, or, alternatively CCP § 1085, setting aside Caltech's findings and final decision on the charges against Dr. Troian." (Complaint, Request for Relief ¶ 3.) Troian also asserts claims for damages based on the same facts. For the reasons set out below, those claims are premature and should be bifurcated and stayed until the mandamus proceeding is complete.

A. The Court Has Inherent Power To Bifurcate And Stay Troian's Legal Claims.

This Court has inherent power to bifurcate mandamus proceedings and to stay Troian's legal claims. "As early as 1940 our Supreme Court observed that '[t]here is nothing novel in the concept that a trial court has the power to exercise a reasonable control over all proceedings connected with the litigation before it. Such power necessarily exists as one of the inherent powers of the court and such power should be exercised by the courts in order to insure the orderly administration of justice." *Nazir v. United Airlines, Inc.*, 178 Cal. App. 4th 243, 289-290 (2009) (citing *Hays v. Super. Ct.*, 16 Cal. 2d 260, 264 (1940)). Indeed, courts have broad

discretion with respect to the order of proof presented at trial, and may order a "separate trial of any cause of action . . . or of any separate issue or of any number of causes of action or issues." Cal. Civ. Proc. Code § 1048(b); Cal. Civ. Proc. Code § 598; Heppler v. J.M. Peters Co., 73 Cal. App. 4th 1265, 1285 ("a court has wide discretion in controlling the manner in which evidence is presented").

Further, "the power to stay proceedings is incidental to the power inherent in every court to control the disposition of the causes on its docket with economy of time and effort for itself, for counsel, and for litigants." Landis v. N. Am. Co., 299 U.S. 248, 254 (1936); see also Freiberg v. City of Mission Viejo, 33 Cal. App. 4th 1484, 1489 (1995) ("Trial courts generally have the inherent power to stay proceedings in the interests of justice and to promote judicial efficiency.")

B. Troian Must Succeed In A Mandamus Proceeding Before Pursuing Damages Based On Caltech's Administrative Investigation.

1. Troian's Four Causes Of Action For Damages Are Premature Because She Has Failed To Exhaust Judicial Remedies.

The doctrine of exhaustion of judicial remedies "precludes an action that challenges the result of a quasi-judicial proceeding unless the plaintiff first challenges the decision through a petition for writ of mandamus." *Gupta v. Stanford Univ.*, 124 Cal. App. 4th 407, 411 (2004) (holding that plaintiff could not challenge Stanford University's academic proceeding in civil litigation because he failed to exhaust his judicial remedies through a writ of mandate); *DeCuir*, 64 Cal. App. 4th at 83; *Westlake*, 17 Cal. 3d at 484; *see also City of Fresno v. Super. Ct.*, 188 Cal. App. 3d 1484, 1488 (1987) (plaintiff's failure "to challenge successfully the board's administrative decision renders his tort action premature"). The exhaustion requirement is the same under either administrative mandamus pursuant to CCP § 1094.5 or traditional mandamus under CCP § 1085. *DeCuir*, 64 Cal. App. 4th at 83 n. 7 (CCP § 1094.5 requires judicial remedy exhaustion and "the same barrier applies to actions brought pursuant to the ordinary mandate procedures specified in Code of Civil Procedure section 1085.") As the California Supreme Court has explained, the "requirement that employees exhaust judicial remedies ensures proper respect for administrative proceedings. It requires employees challenging administrative findings

to do so in the appropriate forum, by filing a writ of administrative mandamus petition in superior court." Schifando v. City of Los Angeles, 31 Cal. 4th 1074, 1090 (2003). Under the exhaustion doctrine, Plaintiff's legal claims are premature.

2. Each Of Troian's Legal Causes Of Action Is Based Primarily On Caltech's Administrative Process And Should Be Bifurcated And Staved.

Where the gravamen of a plaintiff's claims is the same as the subject matter of the administrative process, the plaintiff must first pursue his or her claims through a writ of mandate. See Gupta, 124 Cal. App. 4th at 412 ("Regardless of Gupta's characterization of the causes of action in tort or contract, he cannot avoid the fact that the gravamen of his claims is confined to the disciplinary process and the proceedings against him. As such, Gupta was required to purse his claims through writ of mandate"); see also Gutkin v. Univ. of S. Cal., 101 Cal. App. 4th 967, 980 (2002). ("despite the tort labels, the substance of these claims is strictly confined to the employment relationship and the University's dismissal proceedings: precisely the type of claims that administrative mandamus is designed to address.").

Here, the focus of the administrative process was two-fold: (1) the circumstances under which Troian "list[ed] [] [her] cat as first author on the submitted and published abstract; and (2) an allegation by Dr. Anoosheh Niavaranikheiri, [Troian's] postdoctoral fellow from 2011 and 2012, that the work presented in the abstract is, in part, her work for which she should have received credit as a coauthor." (Complaint ¶ 111.) Despite the labels Troian has attached to her four legal claims, each fundamentally challenges Caltech's administrative process and its findings.

Troian alleges that the administrative process was a "sham" that lay at the heart of Caltech's alleged "campaign of retaliation and intimidation" against her for cooperating with the FBI. Caltech's alleged goal was to "drive her out of Caltech and ruin her career." (Complaint ¶¶ 61-171, 197.) In her retaliation claim, Troian alleges that Caltech's retaliatory actions included "falsely accusing her of research misconduct [a reference to the allegations the Committee investigated]; refusing to follow the [Faculty] Handbook's procedure of investigating

research misconduct and instituting sham proceedings that violated her rights as a faculty member; issuing false findings of wrongdoing against her and imposing discipline against her; ... [and] causing her to waste significant time and money to fight Caltech's baseless allegations against her." (Id. ¶ 197.)

In her breach of contract claim, Plaintiff alleges that the administrative process was a "sham" and was procedurally flawed because it did not conform to the Research Misconduct Policy set forth in Caltech's Faculty Handbook. (*Id.* ¶¶ 220-230). In her breach of implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing claim, Troian alleges that "Caltech breached its duty of good faith and fair dealing to Dr. Troian by subjecting her to a sham investigation designed to result in false adverse findings against her so that Caltech could justify imposing discipline on her, in its effort to harm her reputation, damage her career, and drive her out of her job." (*Id.* ¶ 234.)

Each of the alleged legal claims relies upon Caltech's administrative process, which can only be challenged through a writ proceeding. Because Troian has failed to exhaust her judicial remedies, her legal claims are premature. The Court should therefore bifurcate Troian's legal claims and stay them until the mandamus proceeding is resolved.

C. <u>Bifurcation Of Mandamus Proceedings And A Stay Of Troian's Legal Claims</u> <u>Will Promote Judicial Efficiency And Simplify The Court's Proceedings.</u>

Bifurcation would simplify the judicial proceedings in this case and promote judicial economy. See Landis, 299 U.S. at 254; see also Freiberg, 33 Cal. App. 4th at 1489. Mandamus proceedings generally do not involve discovery and are based instead on a review of the narrowly-limited administrative record. See Schoenen v. Bd. of Med. Exam'rs, 245 Cal. 2d 909, 913 (1966) (hearing in administrative mandamus case is "more of the nature of a review than of an unlimited new trial"). In both traditional and administrative mandamus proceedings, the "general rule preclud[es] evidence outside the administrative record." Cardiz Land Co., Inc. v. Rail Cycle, L.P., 83 Cal. App. 4th 74, 119-120 (2000). Additionally, a plaintiff has no right to a jury trial in mandamus proceedings; the Court generally decides writ petitions. As the California Supreme Court has explained, the mandamus process "simplif[ies] court procedures by providing

a uniform practice of judicial, rather than jury, review of quasi-judicial administrative decisions." Westlake, 17 Cal. 3d at 484 (citations omitted); see also Pomona College v. Super. Ct. of Los Angeles, 45 Cal. App. 4th 1716, 1724 (1996) ("Important public policy interests are served by providing a uniform practice of judicial, rather than jury, review of quasi-judicial administrative decisions.")

Strong policy considerations also weigh in favor of the Court's considering Troian's writ petition first, under a mandamus standard. Like the decision regarding tenured faculty conduct in *Gutkin* and the adjudication of student cheating allegations in *Gupta*, Caltech's administrative process required evaluation of whether Troian's behavior was consistent with academic norms. *See Gutkin*, 101 Cal. App. 4th at 978 (administrative process leading to dismissal of tenured professor required "an assessment of whether the professor's conduct is consistent with or contrary to academic norms, which only academic peers, not lay jurors, are qualified to determine."); *Gupta*, 124 Cal. App. 4th at 413 ("Gupta's claims based upon Stanford University's finding that he had violated the University's Honor Code were 'precisely the type of claims that administrative mandamus is designed to address.""). Courts have been reluctant to review the merits of such academic decisions. *Gutkin*, 101 Cal. App. 4th at 977. The academic community has "the knowledge to meaningfully evaluate the candidate's contribution within his or her particular field of study as well as the relevance of those contributions to the goals of the particular institution." *Id*.

The Investigation Committee's evaluation of Troian's authorship choices—to list her cat as an author in place of Dr. Niavaranikheiri—similarly required knowledge of and experience with academic norms, as well as scientific expertise. Troian's remedy for any wrongs she allegedly suffered as a result of that administrative process is a mandamus proceeding. Only if she overturns the final decision of the administrative process should she be allowed to litigate any surviving claims for damages. *See Westlake*, 17 Cal. 3d at 483 ("so long as such a quasi-judicial decision is not set aside through appropriate review procedures the decision has the effect of establishing the propriety of the [university's] action."); *Miller v. City of Los Angeles*, 169 Cal.

App. 4th 1373, 1380 (2008) ("We serve judicial economy by giving collateral estoppel effect to appropriate administrative findings.").

A stay of discovery during the mandamus proceedings will also promote judicial economy. As noted above, a mandamus proceeding would be based on the administrative record. "Evidence additional to the administrative record can be introduced only if that evidence could not with reasonable diligence have been presented at the administrative hearing, or was improperly excluded at that hearing." *City of Fairfield v. Super. Ct.*, 14 Cal. 3d 768, 771 (1975). By addressing the mandamus proceeding first, the Court and the parties could dispose of a significant subset of the issues in this case without discovery, in a court-adjudicated hearing.²

IV. CONCLUSION.

For all of the reasons set forth above, Caltech respectfully requests that this Court bifurcate the mandamus proceeding, and stay Plaintiff's four legal causes of action, including discovery related thereto, until final resolution of Plaintiff's petition for writ of mandamus.

Dated: December 30, 2014.

CAROLYN KUBOTA APALLA U. CHOPRA O'MELVENY & MYERS LLP

By:

Attorneys for Defendant

CALIFÓRNIA INSTITUTE OF

TECHNOLOGY

² Caltech currently takes no position as to whether, if Caltech were to prevail on the mandamus petition, any of Troian's legal causes of action would remain viable.

PROOF OF SERVICE

I, Vanessa Hayes, declare:

I am a resident of the State of California and over the age of eighteen years, and not a party to the within action; my business address is 610 Newport Center Drive, 17th Floor, Newport Beach, California 92660-6429. On December 30, 2014, I served the within document(s):

DEFENDANT CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY'S NOTICE OF MOTION AND MOTION TO BIFURCATE MANDAMUS PROCEEDINGS AND STAY PLAINTIFF'S LEGAL CAUSES OF ACTION PENDING RESOLUTION OF MANDAMUS REVIEW; MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT THEREOF

by placing the document(s) listed above in a sealed envelope with postage thereon fully prepaid, in the United States mail at Newport Beach, California, addressed as set forth below. I am readily familiar with the firm's practice of collecting and processing correspondence for mailing. Under that practice it would be deposited with the U.S. Postal Service on that same day with postage thereon fully prepaid in the ordinary course of business. I am aware that on motion of the party served, service is presumed invalid if the postal cancellation date or postage meter date is more than one day after date of deposit for mailing in affidavit.

by putting a true and correct copy thereof, together with an unsigned copy of this declaration, in a sealed envelope designated by the carrier, with delivery fees paid or provided for, for delivery the next business day to the person(s) listed below, and placing the envelope for collection today by the overnight courier in accordance with the firm's ordinary business practices. I am readily familiar with this firm's practice for collection and processing of overnight courier correspondence. In the ordinary course of business, such correspondence collected from me would be processed on the same day, with fees thereon fully prepaid, and deposited that day in a box or other facility regularly maintained by FedEx, which is an express carrier.

by causing the document(s) to be emailed or electronically transmitted to the person(s) at the email addresses set forth below, pursuant to a court order or an agreement of the parties to accept service by email or electronic transmission. I did not receive, within a reasonable time after the transmission, any electronic message or other indication that the transmission was unsuccessful.

 \mathbf{H}

1 2 3 4	Caused personal service by requesting that an agent or employee of Nationwide Legal LLC deliver to the office of the recipient named below, either by handing the document(s) to the recipient or by leaving the document(s) with the receptionist or other person apparently in charge of the recipient's office:	
5	Dan Stormer, Esq. Attorneys for Plaintiff/Petitioner	
. 6	Cindy Pànuco, Esq. HADSELL STORMER & RENICK LLP	
7	128 N. Fair Oaks Avenue	
8	Pasadena, CA 91103 Telephone: (626) 585-9600	
9	Facsimile: (626) 577-7079	
10	Lynne Bernabei, Esq. Attorneys for Plaintiff/Petitioner	
11	Karen Tanenbaum, Esq. BERNABEI & WACHTEL PLLC	
12	1775 T Street, N.W.	
	Washington, D.C. 20009 Telephone: (202) 745-1942	
13	Facsimile: (202) 745-2627	
·14	I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California	
15	that the above is true and correct. Executed on December 30, 2014, at Newport Beach,	
16	California.	
17	Camorna	
18		
19	1 amontau	
20	Vanessa Hayes	
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		
26		
27		
28		
40	- 2 -	