

**UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE DIRECTOR OF THE
UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Mimi Yongzhi Rankin,)	Proceeding No. D2025-04
)	
Respondent)	
<hr/>)	

Final Order Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 11.26

The Director of the Office of Enrollment and Discipline (“OED Director”) for the United States Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO” or “Office”) and Ms. Mimi Yongzhi Rankin (“Respondent”) have submitted a Proposed Settlement Agreement (“Agreement”) to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO Director”) for approval.

The Agreement, which resolves all disciplinary action by the USPTO arising from the Joint Stipulated Facts set forth below, is hereby approved. This Final Order sets forth the parties’ Joint Stipulated Facts, Joint Legal Conclusions, and Agreed-upon Sanction.

JURISDICTION

1. At all times relevant hereto, Respondent of Arlington, Texas, is a registered patent attorney (Registration Number 56,310).
2. Respondent is subject the USPTO Rules of Professional Conduct, 37 C.F.R. § 11.101 *et seq.*
3. The USPTO Director has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §§ 2(b)(2)(D) and 32 and 37 C.F.R. §§ 11.19, 11.20 and 11.26.

LEGAL BACKGROUND

4. On April 19, 2024, Respondent surrendered her license and was disbarred from practice of law by the Council of North Carolina State Bar in *In The Matter of the Tender of Surrender of License of Mimi Yongzhi Rankin Order of Disbarment*. Respondent tendered her license based upon her engagement in conduct involving dishonesty, deceit or misrepresentation reflecting adversely on her fitness as a lawyer by making false statements of material fact in her application for admission to the North Carolina State Bar in 2000.

JOINT STIPULATED FACTS

5. On June 12, 2000, Respondent submitted an Application For Registration To Practice Before the United States Patent and Trademark Office, noting that she received a Bachelor of Science (“B.S.”) degree in analytical chemistry from Hunan Advanced College of Building Material in July 1995.

6. Respondent signed a certification on the application that stated, “I certify that each and every statement or representation in this application is true and correct.”

7. Respondent also provided an Oath or Affirmation executed on or about June 13, 2000. Respondent swore or affirmed that she would not “seek to mislead the officials of the Office by any artifice or false statements of fact or law.”

8. In fact, Respondent never received a B.S. degree from Hunan Advanced College of Building Material or any other accredited institution.

9. Respondent took and passed the registration exam on October 18, 2000.

10. On December 15, 2004, Respondent provided a Data Sheet-Register of Patent Attorneys and Agents, and an Oath or Affirmation swearing, *inter alia*, to observe

the laws and rules of practice of the United States Patent and Trademark Office and not mislead the officials of the Office by any false statements of fact or law.

11. On January 21, 2005, with the change of her immigration status from a nonimmigrant temporarily residing in the United States under H-1B status to a permanent U.S. resident, Respondent was registered as a patent attorney (Registration No. 56,310) effective January 18, 2005.

12. On December 9, 2023, Respondent notified OED on her own accord that she fabricated a Bachelor of Science ("B.S.") degree from China in order to enroll in and later graduate from Texas Tech University School of Law, and used it to qualify to sit for the USPTO registration examination. Thus, in her June 12, 2000 application to sit for the USPTO registration examination, Respondent falsely stated that she obtained a B.S. degree in analytical chemistry from Hunan Advanced College of Building Material.

13. On April 19, 2024, in *In The Matter of the Tender of Surrender of License of Mimi Yongzhi Rankin Order of Disbarment*, Ms. Rankin was disbarred by the North Carolina State Bar for engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, deceit or misrepresentation reflecting adversely on her fitness as a lawyer by making false statements of material fact in her application for admission to the North Carolina State Bar in 2000.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

14. Respondent self-reported to OED that she engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, deceit, or misrepresentation.

15. In over twenty-four (24) years of patent practice, Respondent has not been the subject of any disciplinary action before the USPTO.

16. Respondent has acknowledged her ethical lapses, demonstrated genuine contrition, and accepted responsibility for her acts and omissions.

17. Respondent cooperated with OED's investigation, *e.g.*, by providing *sua sponte* informative, supplemental responses to her original responses to requests for information.

JOINT LEGAL CONCLUSIONS

18. Respondent acknowledges that, based on the information contained in the Joint Stipulated Facts, above, that Respondent's acts and omissions violated the following provisions of the USPTO Rules of Professional Conduct:

- a. 37 C.F.R. § 11.804(c) (Engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation) by, among other things, providing multiple false statements of material fact in her applications for admission to the North Carolina State Bar and the USPTO registration examination; and
- b. 37 C.F.R. § 11.804(h)(1) (Be publicly disciplined on ethical or professional misconduct grounds by any duly constituted authority of a State) by, among other things, being disbarred by the North Carolina State Bar.

AGREED-UPON SANCTION

19. Respondent has freely and voluntarily agreed, and it is hereby ORDERED that:

- a. Respondent is suspended from practice before the Office for forty-eight months (48) months commencing on the date the Final Order is signed;
- b. Respondent shall remain suspended from the practice of patent, trademark, and non-patent law before the USPTO until the OED Director grants a petition requesting Respondent's reinstatement pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 11.60;
- c. Respondent shall be granted limited recognition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 11.58(f) for thirty (30) days starting on the date of the Final Order approving this

Agreement so that Respondent may endeavor to conclude work on behalf of clients on any matters pending before the Office and, if such work cannot be concluded within thirty (30) days, Respondent shall so advise each such client so that the client may make other arrangements;

- d. Respondent shall comply with 37 C.F.R. § 11.58;
- e. Respondent's name shall be dissociated from any Customer Number(s) and USPTO verified Electronic System account(s), and Respondent shall not apply for, obtain, nor have his name added a USPTO Customer Number or a USPTO verified Electronic system account unless and until he is reinstated to practice before the USPTO;
- f. The OED Director electronically publish the Final Order at the OED's electronic FOIA Reading Room, which is publicly accessible through the Office's website at: <https://foiadocuments.uspto.gov/oed/>;
- g. The OED Director shall publish a notice in the Official Gazette that is materially consistent with the following:

Notice of Suspension

This notice concerns Mimi Yongzhi Rankin of Arlington, Texas, who is a registered patent attorney (Registration Number 56,310). The USPTO Director suspended Ms. Rankin for forty-eight (48) months for violating 37 C.F.R. §§ 11.804(c) and 11.804(h)(1) predicated on being disbarred on ethical or professional misconduct grounds by a duly constituted authority of the State Bar of North Carolina in *In The Matter of the Tender of Surrender of License of Mimi Yongzhi Rankin Order of Disbarment*.

On April 19, 2024, Ms. Rankin surrendered her license and was disbarred from practice of law by the Council of North Carolina State Bar in *In The Matter of the Tender of Surrender of License of Mimi Yongzhi Rankin Order of Disbarment*. Respondent tendered her license based upon her engagement in conduct involving dishonesty, deceit or misrepresentation reflecting adversely on her fitness as a lawyer by making false statements of material fact in her

application for admission to the North Carolina State Bar in 2000.

Respondent also acknowledged that she made false statements of material fact on her application for admission to the USPTO registration examination in 2000.

Respondent fabricated a Bachelor of Science ("B.S.") degree from China and used it to qualify to sit for the USPTO registration examination. Respondent *sua sponte* informed the USPTO of such false statements.

This action is the result of a settlement agreement between Mimi Yongzhi Rankin and the OED Director pursuant to the provisions of 35 U.S.C. §§ 2(b)(2)(D) and 32 and 37 C.F.R. §§ 11.19, 11.20, and 11.26. Disciplinary decisions involving practitioners are posted for public reading at the Office of Enrollment and Discipline Reading Room accessible at: <https://foiadocuments.uspto.gov/oed/>;

- h. Nothing in this Agreement or the Final Order shall prevent the Office from considering the record of this disciplinary proceeding, including the Final Order: (1) when addressing any further complaint or evidence of the same or similar misconduct concerning Respondent brought to the attention of the Office and (2) in any future disciplinary proceeding against Respondent (i) as an aggravating factor to be taken into consideration in determining any discipline to be imposed, and/or (ii) to rebut any statement or representation by or on Respondent's behalf;
- i. As a condition of being reinstated to practice before the USPTO in patent matters, Respondent shall demonstrate that she possesses the scientific and technical training necessary to provide valuable service to patent applicants with any petition for reinstatement under 37 C.F.R. § 11.60;
- j. Respondent waives all rights to seek reconsideration of the Final Order under 37 C.F.R. § 11.56, waives the right to have the Final Order reviewed under

37 C.F.R. § 11.57, and waives the right otherwise to appeal or challenge the Final Order in any manner;

k. Each party shall each bear their own costs incurred to date and in carrying out the terms of this Agreement and any Final Order.

Users,
Seifert,
Jennifer

Digitally signed by
Users, Seifert, Jennifer
Date: 2025.02.14
14:43:20 -05'00'

Jennifer R. Seifert
Associate General Counsel for General Law
United States Patent and Trademark Office

Date

on delegated authority by

Coke Morgan Stewart
Acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and
Acting Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office

Certificate of Service

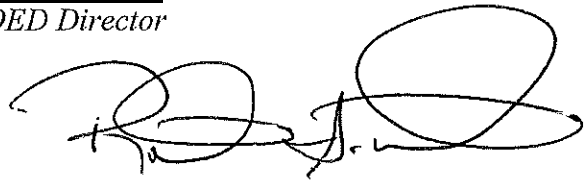
I hereby certify the foregoing Final Order was mailed by first-class certified mail, return receipt requested, and transmitted by e- mail, on this day to Respondent as follows:

Ms. Mimi Y. Rankin
1823 Foxwood Court
Arlington, TX 76012
mimiyyz@hotmail.com
Respondent

And to the OED Director via email at:

Sydney Johnson
Sydney.Johnson@uspto.gov
[REDACTED]
Counsel for OED Director

2/14/2025
DATE



U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
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Alexandria, VA 22313-1450