Goals of Ethics Education, Audiences, and Content

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April 27-29, 2009
U.S.-China Workshop on Ethics Education in Science
美中科学道德教育研讨会

Federal Responses to Research Misconduct

• Health Research Extension Act of 1985
• Definition of Research Misconduct: 1987
• Office of Scientific Integrity: 1989
• Office of Research Integrity: 1992
• Responsible Conduct of Research Education: 1990
Research Misconduct: What is it?

Research misconduct means fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing or performing research funded by NSF, reviewing research proposals submitted to NSF, or in reporting research results funded by NSF.

National Science Foundation
Title 45—Public Welfare Chapter VI—National Science Foundation. Sec. 689.1(a)

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Research Misconduct Policy,
National Endowment for the Humanities
http://neh.gov/grants/guidelines/researchmisconduct.html
Since July 1990, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has required all applications for Institutional National Research Service Award (NRSA) Research Training Grants (T32, T34) to include a description of a program to provide instruction in the responsible conduct of research.

Frequency of Research Misconduct

Lower Limit
0.001% (Steneck, 2000)

Upper Limit?
33% (Martinson et al., 2005)
3% (Titus et al., 2008)
0.2-0.5% (Martinson et al., 2005)
1.3% (Kalichman and Friedman, 1992)

It’s not working…

Is Research Misconduct a Disease or a Symptom?
Research Misconduct
Necessary Failures

• **Collaboration** (Transparency, Openness)
• **Authorship** (Credit and Responsibility)
• Understanding of risk of **Bias**
• Understanding of meaning of **Publication**
• **Data Management** (incl. Recordkeeping)
• **Peer Review**
• **Whistleblowing** and asking questions
• **Mentoring** - adequate training

Who is the audience?

• Graduate Students
• Postdoctoral Researchers
• Faculty
• Staff
• Undergraduate Students
• The Community
• Other?
Goals for RCR Education

• Selected examples of goals recommended by 50 RCR Instructors interviewed in 2003 and 2004 (Kalichman and Plemmons, 2007)

• Should not be considered:
  – Comprehensive
  – Consistent
  – Feasible
  – Ideal

Knowledge

• Ethics: definitions, principles, biomedical ethics, international ethics
• Law: general principles, liability
• Noncompliance: personal and institutional impact
• Power: uneven power situations, vulnerable populations
• Psychology: psychology of conflict of interest
• Intellectual property: copyrights, patents
• Science: scientific method, scientific uncertainty
• Resources: where to find help
• Other: health disparities, health rights, HIPAA, biosafety, grant writing, standards in translational, genetics, and aging research, knowledge systems
Skills

- Make ethical decisions
- Think critically, Solve problems
- Look for consequences of actions, violations of rights
- Manage stress
- Work in a multidisciplinary research team
- Manage people
- Communicate
- Resolve conflicts
- Balance risks and benefits
- Find and evaluate RCR information and resources
- Other: Identify collaborators, Use the IRB as a resource

Attitudes

- Research ethics is serious and deserving of the attention of all researchers
- Researchers have a personal responsibility to model and promote RCR
- Researchers have a responsibility to society
- Excellence in research includes RCR
- Research often characterized by ethical dilemmas that are amenable to mitigation or resolution
- Researchers have many tools and options to question deviations from RCR
- Open communication with others is a part of RCR
- Regulations were developed in response to real problems
- Other: Senior researchers should not abuse power differential, Individual differences should be respected
Behavior

- Model the highest standards of scientific conduct
- Identify ethical dilemmas in the practice of research
- Engage in effective communication with others

Research Ethics Education: What are the topics?

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Can’t do it all

What should we do?

1. **Empowerment:**
   Awareness of Rules, Issues, and Options

2. **Understanding:**
   Purpose and value of ethical decision-making
   Roles and responsibilities for asking questions

3. **Attitude:**
   Positive disposition toward research ethics