

**REVISITING THE AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION’S ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR STATISTICAL PRACTICE**

Howard Hogan

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The American Statistical Association (ASA) was founded in 1839, but it was 1949 before an ASA committee recommended developing a code of ethical practice. This was followed by years of discussion. In 1981, the ASA Board of Directors approved a Code of Conduct on a “three-year trial basis.” A few years later, the Committee on Professional Ethics was designated as a permanent ASA Committee. Within its duties is to “maintain and promulgate, subject to Board review and approval, the set of ASA Ethical Guidelines that describes the general view of ethics in statistical practice…” The most recent Guidelines were approved by the ASA Board in 1999 (http://www.amstat.org/committees/ethics/index.cfm).

A little background is important to understand the Guidelines and the revision process. First is the role of the Guidelines in the Association. The Guidelines are just that: guidelines. The Committee’s charter specifically states: “The Committee does not have the authority to act on, rule on, or arbitrate ethical matters. Execution of a program of professional certification is not included in this charge.” Indeed the Guidelines are explicitly “for Statistical Practice” and not just “for ASA members.” They are there to help those practicing statistics in its wider definition, not to police them.

Second, the Committee is made up of nine members, chosen by the ASA President to represent the Association. Its membership is diverse with respect to gender and ethnicity. Equally important, the Committee includes those active in government, academic and industry, with the industry “representatives” including those working in biomedical fields. Several members have worked within a legal/litigation context. To a great extent, the Committee includes people who have worked professionally in the field of statistical ethics; for example, taught a course or served on a review board. As this was a multi-year process, the Committee was assisted by previous members who had officially rotated off.

A principal motivation for the current revision was simply the passage of time; the Committee felt that good practice required that the Guidelines be reviewed at least once a decade. Were there developments in statistics that might require changing the Guidelines? Many people mentioned “Big Data.”

A second motivation was to make the Guidelines more accessible to our members. The 1999 Guidelines ran 11 pages, with almost four thousand words. The document also tended to be repetitious with an executive summary, followed by a Preamble and then the Guidelines. Further, the actual “rules” were intermixed with discussion and background in a very confusing way. Could we make the Guidelines more readable on Tablets and Smart-Phones, for example? Could we use hyper-links and nesting to quickly get the reader to the information being sought?

Exactly when the revision process started is hard to say. However, an important early milestone was a summary and comparison of ethics code of the ASA with that of the International Statistical Institute (ISI) and the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) prepared by Ron Wasserstein, Executive Director, ASA, in August 2009. Did the ASA have the right approach to the Guidelines? Were we missing something? The codes of other associations and national statistical offices were reviewed. However, after several years of discussion, the Committee decided there was nothing fundamentally wrong with the 1999 Guidelines and that they would make a good starting point for the revision.

The current effort started in earnest in late 2013, when the Committee on Professional Ethics agreed on a written set of goals for the revision. This included an agreement within the Committee on the purpose of the Guidelines:

- The main purpose of the guidelines is to document shared values that distinguish statisticians as professionals with responsibility for beneficial use of our special knowledge and the privileged insights it grants.

It included a statement of the goals to the revision, highlighting:

- Formatting and accessibility: The revision should not be undertaken as an effort to reduce the scope of the professional code. Revisions should therefore
focus on improving relevance, clarity.

Content:
Any revision should look to see whether there are new issues that the guidelines should address, or changes in the manner in which old issues are addressed to recognize particular new forms in which these issues are emerging. One area involves “Big Data…”

Dissemination and outreach:
The existing ethical guidelines seem to exist in the background and be sought out by the people least in need of exposure to them. It would help frame our work by envisioning a new system of engagement with members on ethics.

Professionalism:
It’s also recognized that “The guidelines may be partially conflicting in specific cases.” Where the guidelines are less forthcoming, however, is in addressing whether and how moral values and/or shared values might contribute to a prioritization of ethical obligations in situations where guidelines may seem in conflict.

With these goals set, the Committee began the process of drafting, discussing, and re-drafting. I count over 30 drafts in my archives, but there were certainly more. The goals and process were discussed at a poster session during the 2014 Joint Statistical Meetings (JSM). By the time of the 2015 JSM, the Committee had a draft ready to distribute and to discuss, which it did at a lobby table and within appropriate sessions. Additionally, the draft was sent to the chairs of all ASA Sections, which represent the different subject-matter interests of the Association.

In late 2015, a preliminary draft was presented to the ASA Board for their comments and direction. Their most important input was to adjust the tone of the guidelines, essentially to replace “the ethical statistician shall…” in that draft with “the ethical statistician acts/does/considers…”

This revision was sent by the ASA to the chairs of all its committees, sections and chapters. Only one substantive change was suggested, which would be to include a recommendation for pro bono work. Although interesting, this change was not accepted by the Committee. Many statisticians, because of their employment or community, would not have a meaningful opportunity for such work. This is not to say that pro bono work should not be encouraged; it is just that the Guidelines are not the right venue. Additionally, the ASA and the Committee presented a free webinar, advertised and open to all ASA members. At this webinar, the background, goals and substance of the revision were presented. This allowed for a free discussion by interested members. However, no substantive recommendations or “fatal flaws” were uncovered.

In terms of content, the Guidelines now cover:

A. Professional Integrity and Accountability
B. Integrity of data and methods
C. Responsibilities to Science, Public and Client
D. Responsibilities to Research Subjects
E. Responsibilities to Research Team Colleagues
F. Responsibilities to Other Statisticians
G. Responsibilities Regarding Allegations of Misconduct
H. Responsibilities of Employers

They are guided by the following philosophy:

Good statistical practice is fundamentally based on transparent assumptions, reproducible results, and valid interpretations. Above all, professionalism in statistical practice presumes the goal of advancing knowledge while avoiding harm; using statistics in pursuit of unethical ends is inherently unethical. The principles expressed here should guide both those whose primary occupation is statistics and those in all other disciplines who use statistical methods in their professional work.

The guidelines are now around half the previous length. They may differ from the earlier set in emphasis and tone, but are not a fundamentally different approach.

“Big Data” is not explicitly addressed, but the Committee feels that the ethical questions are well covered by:

D 5: Considers whether appropriate research-subject approvals were obtained before participating in a study involving human beings or organizations, before analyzing data from such a study, and while reviewing manuscripts for publication or internal use. The statistician considers the treatment of research subjects … when evaluating the appropriateness of the data source(s).

D 6: In contemplating whether to participate in an analysis of data from a particular source, refuses to do so if participating in the analysis could reasonably be interpreted by individuals who provided information as sanctioning a violation of their rights.

In March, the Committee met and unanimously voted to forward the current

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draft to the ASA board for approval at its April meeting. If adopted by the Board, the Guidelines will be presented to the Association at the 2016 JSM. The current draft is available at http://www.amstat.org/misc/webinarfiles/ASA_Ethical_Guidelines_Revised_12-30-15.pdf.

In the News

Chinese Survey Reveals Public Perceptions of Scientists

China’s annual report on science communication revealed how the Chinese public perceived scientists in their country. The survey of approximately 1,000 residents in Beijing, Shijiazhuang, and Chengdu overwhelmingly (90%) expressed doubts about the credibility of scientists appearing in advertisements for consumer products, nearly 33% stated they, “definitely mistrust” them [1].

While the majority of respondents described the image of scientists in their country as “fairly good” or “very good,” respondents who were well-educated and between the ages of 26-35 held a poorer image of scientists. Jin Yi, the report’s co-author, attributed this to the two groups’ inclination to challenge authority and established ideas.

The survey also found that the National Space Administration had the highest public image out of the 14 government organizations listed. In addition, the survey revealed that scientists are perceived to have a relatively weak impact on social life. “Scientists, especially those without administrative positions, rarely play a major role in the final decision of government matters. Scientists are regarded as professional and abstract icons, far away from the daily interactions of society, making it hard for them to win public trust,” the report’s authors conclude.

Jin Yi told SciDev.net, “The stereotyped image of present-day scientists has remained at the level of the 1980s. It can even be inferred that science has not been accepted by pop culture and scientists have not entered the public’s awareness.” To overcome this, Jin recommends scientists engage more with the public, uphold ethical standards, and increase the production of science-related films and shows.

Gaurav Dhiman


Medical Journal Editors Propose Sharing of Clinical Trial Data

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) announced a proposal for the responsible sharing of data generated from interventional clinical trials before trial results would be considered for publication [1]. The ICMJE, whose membership includes the editors of The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), The Lancet and the New England Medical Journal, announced the proposal one year after a report by the Institute of Medicine called on stakeholders to address the key challenges associated with sharing clinical trial data so as to “foster a culture in which data sharing is the expected norm” [2].

The ICMJE proposal supports the notion that “Sharing data will increase confidence and trust in the conclusions drawn from clinical trials. It will enable the independent confirmation of results, an essential tenet of the scientific process. It will foster the development and testing of new hypotheses. Done well, sharing clinical trial data should also make progress more efficient by making the most of what may be learned from each trial and by avoiding unwarranted repetition. It will help to fulfill our moral obligation to study participants, and we believe it will benefit patients, investigators, sponsors, and society” [1].

The proposal includes the following requirements:

- As a condition of consideration for publication of a clinical trial report in our member journals, the ICMJE proposes to require authors to share with others the deidentified individual-patient data (IPD) underlying the results presented in the article (including tables, figures, and appendices or supplementary material) no later than 6 months after publication.

- That authors include a plan for data sharing, including information about where and how the data will be stored as a component of clinical trial registration and consideration for publication.

- Safeguards to ensure the reasonable rights of investigators and trial sponsors are protected through the following proposals: First, ICMJE editors will not consider the deposition of data in a registry to constitute prior publication. Second, authors of secondary analyses using these shared data must attest that their use was in accordance with the terms (if any) agreed to upon their receipt. Third, they must reference the source of the data using a unique identifier of a clinical trial’s data set to provide appropriate credit to those who generated it and allow searching for the studies it has supported. Fourth, authors of secondary analyses must explain completely how theirs differ from previous analyses. In addition, those who generate and then share clinical trial data sets deserve substantial credit for their efforts.

- If enacted, requirements would be deferred for 1 year to allow investigators, trial sponsors, and regulatory bodies time to plan for their implementation.

The proposal places a strong emphasis on a shared responsibility for successful data sharing, writing “Editors of individual journals can help foster data sharing by changing the requirements of the manuscripts they will consider for publication in their journals. Funders and sponsors of clinical trials are in a position to support and ensure adherence to IPD sharing obligations. If journal editors become aware that IPD sharing obligations are not being met, they may choose to request additional information; to publish an expression of concern; to notify the sponsors, funders, or institutions; or in certain cases, to retract the publication” [1].

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However, some skeptics have expressed concerns over the ICMJE proposal. They argue that “a new class of research person will emerge — people who had nothing to do with the design and execution of the study but use another group’s data for their own ends, possibly stealing from the research productivity planned by the data gatherers, or even use the data to try to disprove what the original investigators had posited” [3]. These data scientists who analyze the data of others have disparagingly been called “research parasites” and skeptics have expressed their concern with the dynamic shift the ICMJE proposal would have. “How would data sharing work best? We think it should happen symbiotically, not parasitically” [3].

Because many questions and details have yet to be resolved - How will data sharing work? How will appropriate credit be recognized? Who will pay for it? - the ICMJE is encouraging public feedback on the proposed requirements at www.icmje.org until April 18.

Gaurav Dhiman


Report Concludes Mitochondrial Replacement Techniques to be Ethically Permissible

A committee assembled by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine released a report, Mitochondrial Replacement Techniques: Ethical, Social, and Policy Considerations, supporting clinical investigations of mitochondrial replacement techniques (MRT) in humans as ethically permissible as long as significant conditions and principles are met. The committee found, “that the most germane ethical, social, and policy issues could be avoided through limitations on the use of MRT or are blunted by meaningful differences between the heritable genetic modification on nuclear DNA and that of MRT” [1]. Mitochondrial replacement techniques (MRT) entail the modification of human oocytes and zygotes to prevent the transmission of mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) diseases from mother to child. This is done by creating an embryo with nuclear DNA (nDNA) from the intended mother and mtDNA from a woman with nonpathogenic mtDNA; two primary techniques being considered are maternal spindle transfer and pronuclear transfer.

As the committee explains, “If effective, MRT could satisfy the desire of women seeking to have a genetically related child with a significantly reduced risk of passing on mtDNA disease, yet the techniques raise ethical, social, and policy issues” [1].

To address these issues, “the committee recommends that any initial MRT clinical investigations focus on minimizing the future child’s exposure to risk while ascertaining the safety and efficacy of the techniques.” As stated in the report, these initial conditions for clinical investigations of MRT include [2]:

• Clinical investigations limited to investigators and centers with demonstrated expertise in and skill with the relevant techniques;

• Limiting clinical investigations to women who are at risk of transmitting a serious mtDNA disease, where the mutation’s pathogenicity is undisputed, and the clinical presentation of the disease is predicted to be severe, as characterized by early mortality or substantial impairment of basic functions; and

• Transferring only male embryos for gestation to avoid introducing heritable genetic modification during initial clinical investigations.

In addition to proposing several conditions for initial investigations, the report recommends principles to guide the potential trajectory of MRT from research to clinical applications. These include: transparency through timely public sharing of information; public engagement; partnership with other regulatory authorities within and outside the US; maximizing data quality; and circumscribed use of MRT; and long-term follow-up of children born as a result of MRT.

The FDA, which would regulate MRT and had requested the report, is prohibited from moving forward due to the language in a budget bill. The omnibus fiscal 2016 budget bill (H.R.2029 - Consolidated Appropriations Act 2016) passed in December 2015 contained language prohibiting the government from using funds for experiments that genetically alter human embryos. The FDA released a statement explaining that the congressional ban prohibits the agency from reviewing applications “in which a human embryo is intentionally created or modified to include a heritable genetic modification. As such, human subject research utilizing genetic modification of embryos for the prevention of transmission of mitochondrial disease cannot be performed in the United States in FY 2016” [3].

In the United Kingdom a law passed early last year made the UK the first country to explicitly allow MRT. The law permits the country’s Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) to allow the technique to be used in fertility clinics on a case-by-case basis [4].

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[2] See the complete list of conditions at: http://www.nap.edu/read/21871/chapter/1

Researchers Propose Using Big Data to Predict Life Expectancy, Statistically Speaking

 Researchers at the University of East

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Anglia (UEA), Norwich, UK, recently began a project that aims to use big data to predict life expectancy. Professor Elena Kulinskaya of UEA’s School of Computing Sciences will lead the research team that will include technical experts from Aviva, a British multinational insurance company. [1]

The team will develop software tools that identify statistical life expectancy trends, based on primary care data collected during routine medical visits by 3.4 million British citizens. In an interview with CNN, Kulinskaya emphasized the Big Data nature of the project, noting that it was collected over a long period of time and is completely anonymous. [2] Goals of the project include (1) identifying statistical trends in key factors affecting mortality, such as lifestyle and other medical conditions; (2) modeling these trends across time; (3) evaluation of potential future scenarios; and (4) creation of software tools to forecast longevity. [3] Special interest will be placed on how chronic diseases and their treatments play a role in these trends.

The research team says that benefits of knowing predicted longevity include the ability to make more informed healthcare decisions by both physicians and patients, especially regarding the prescription of particular drugs for chronic diseases. Additionally, Kulinskaya noted that predicting life expectancy can provide a framework for planning retirement. She also stressed that the data will only provide estimates on average, not for particular individuals. [1] Though it is assumed that the findings will be used primarily by life insurance companies, they will be available to the public. [2]

The research program is supported by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries (IFoA) and will receive £800,000 in funding. In August 2015, IFoA published a Call for Research that sought proposals for large scale research projects in actuarial science. This project, entitled “Use of Big Health and Actuarial Data for Understanding Longevity and Morbidity Risks,” was one of three winning proposals, and will become part of the core of IFoA’s newly expanded Actuarial Research Centre. [1]

Ellen Platts

World Conference on Research Integrity Summary Report

The summary report of the 4th World Conference on Research Integrity (WCRI), held between May 31 and June 3, 2015 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, was recently released. The conference was attended by over 400 delegates from 42 countries to discuss the overall theme of, Research Rewards and Integrity: Improving Systems to Promote Responsible Research [1]. The conference theme addressed the link between research integrity with the way research is decided on, conducted, reported, and rewarded in the research environment [2].

The summary report of the conference highlights the following topics:

- The role of research integrity in assessing the quality of research as well as the reward mechanisms adopted by research systems;
- The reliability of the scientific literature, reproducibility initiatives and their relationship with publication ethics;
- The types and development of institutional initiatives to handle research misconduct, including consideration of legal issues, such as confidentiality during investigations; and
- The role of research integrity in the very structure of contemporary science, addressing cultural practices in its publication system, current ethical challenges in peer review and its consequences regarding the reliability of the research record.

Gaurav Dhiman


Resources

Exemplary Programs for Engineering Ethics Education Highlighted

A new report published by the National Academies Press provides examples of exceptional programs and activities focusing on the ethical development of engineers. The National Academy of Engineering’s Center for Engineering Ethics and Society Advisory Group and

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the Infusing Ethics Selection Committee undertook this project to create a resource for higher education institutions that wish to pursue similar activities. The report describes 25 programs, chosen from a pool of submissions. Submitters hailed from a variety of institutions across the United States and represented a variety of program types, including undergraduate and graduate courses, multiyear programs, and extracurricular activities. Each chosen program shows special success in developing the ethics education of engineering students. Members of the selection committee chose these programs based on how well they exhibited one or more characteristics from a selection criteria list. These characteristics ranged from emphasizing innovation and creativity to the support of ethics training through institutional faculty reward.

Across the 25 programs and activities, three themes appear. These are the use of case-studies to frame discussion, an emphasis on contextualization, and incorporation of the student’s own professional experiences into educational activity. In many of the programs described, case-studies form the backbone of the syllabus. Recognized as a “best practice” in professional ethics education, the case-study enables understanding of specific ethical challenges as they occur in real-world circumstances. [1] The use of case-studies supports the second theme of contextualization. In these programs, students discussing case-studies often take on the roles of specific characters in the case and must make mock decisions from that point of view. This ensures the student considers all elements of the case and recognizes the social context that surrounds engineering issues. Additionally, some of the programs include conversation with affected communities. Stanford University’s “Global Engineers’ Education Course” includes a weekly Skype session with community members in rural India, providing an opportunity to understand how engineering for underserved communities plays out in the lives of real people. [2]

The third theme draws upon students’ professional experiences, fostering discussion of ethical issues that students may have already encountered. As noted in one program description, “practicing engineers report that their training in [ethics and social responsibility] occurs at work, rather than in their undergraduate study.” [3] By providing space to reflect on ethical dilemmas that may have already been encountered, these programs connect the students’ education with their practical experience in cooperative education activities, internships, or research positions. [4]

Though these themes appeared in many of the programs, unique and innovative approaches are also highlighted in the report. Submitters were invited to add comments regarding challenges they faced in implementing ethics programs and provide suggestions to overcome these challenges, which include lack of interest from students, faculty resistance, and disagreement on what topics are most important. A follow-up workshop hosted by the National Academy of Engineering in 2016 will provide a forum for educators to address these challenges and develop plans for the effective implementation of ethics in engineering education.


Ellen Platts


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### Announcements

**Relaunch of NAE Online Ethics Center Website**

The National Academy of Engineering has relaunched the [Online Ethics Center for Engineering and Science (OEC)](https://www.nae.edu/ethics), which now encompasses ethics issues in the sciences more broadly. Resources such as case studies and bibliographies are available to help engineers, scientists, faculty, and students understand and address ethical issues in scientific and engineering practice.

**Keeping the Pool Clean: Prevention and Management of Misconduct Related Retractions**

Colorado State University

July 20 – 22, 2016

Fort Collins, Colorado

The Office of Research Integrity, Colorado State University, and the CSU Ethics Colloquium will host a conference on retraction, identifying fraudulent submissions, whistleblowing, retraction notices, and more. For further information and to register, visit [https://vprnet.research.colostate.edu/oricoference/](https://vprnet.research.colostate.edu/oricoference/)

**2016 Ethics Bowl Summer Workshop**

Indiana University

June 24 – 26, 2016

Bloomington, IN

The Association for Practical and Professional Ethics is hosting the 2016 Ethics Bowl Summer Workshop. Sessions on coaching, judging, student voices, future directions of the Ethics Bowl, and other topics will be held. For more information, visit [http://appe.indiana.edu/ethics-bowl/ethics-bowl-summer-workshop/](http://appe.indiana.edu/ethics-bowl/ethics-bowl-summer-workshop/)

**CALL FOR PAPERS AND SUBMISSIONS**

**2016 AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition Student Essay Competition**

Undergraduate and graduate students are invited to submit papers to the AAAS

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Science and Human Rights Coalition Essay Competition. Submissions should be in the form of an analytical or critical paper that addresses a topic at the intersection of science and human rights and raises thought-provoking questions. The winning essays will be considered for publication in Professional Ethics Report. Winners will also receive a year of membership in AAAS and a one-year subscription to Science. For more information, visit www.aaas.org/event/science-human-rights-coalition-2016-student-essay-competition.

4th National Communication Ethics & 2016 International Association for Dialogue Analysis Conference Duquesne University June 1 – 4, 2016 Pittsburgh, PA

Papers and panels are welcomed for the 14th National Communication Ethics and 2016 International Association for Dialogue Analysis (IADA) conferences. Papers should address one of the conference’s four content areas: (1) Dialogic Ethics; (2) Organizational Language and Dialogue; (3) Rhetoric and Dialogue; and (4) Semiotactics. Send abstracts of 200 – 500 words, or completed papers of no more than 30 pages, including references to cec@duq.edu by April 30, 2016. For additional information, email cec@duq.edu or call 412-396-6446.

Engineering for You Video Contest 3: Mega Engineering

The National Academy of Engineering welcomes submissions of 1 – 2 minute videos that highlight the importance of a mega-engineering project to people and society. Mega-engineering projects address important needs of large populations, require cross-cultural and international teams, and involve multiple disciplines, including engineering. A Grand Prize of $25,000 will go to the most inspiring video. For more information and to enter the competition, visit http://www.nae.edu/e4u3/. Entries must be submitted by May 31.

10th International Conference on Applied Ethics: The Past, Present and Future of Applied Ethics
Hokkaido University October 28 – 30, 2016 Sapporo, Japan

The Center for Applied Ethics and Philosophy invites papers on applied ethics that address philosophical, political, economic, social, and cultural issues for the 10th International Conference on Applied Ethics. Themes of interest include but are not limited to: normative ethics, engineering ethics, information ethics, moral psychology, and global ethics. Send a 150 – 300 word abstract to caep@let.hokudai.ac.jp by May 31, 2016. Presented papers may be considered for publication in the CAEP print and electronic journal. For further information, email caep@let.hokudai.ac.jp.

SoCIA 2016: An Interdisciplinary Workshop on Social and Conceptual Issues in Astrobiology
Clemson University September 24 – 25, 2016 Clemson, SC

Many astrobiologists believe that we are on the brink of discovering definitive evidence of life beyond Earth. The SoCIA 2016 workshop is designed to foster discussion from many disciplines on the complex challenges this discovery would present. The workshop is open to researchers in any discipline. Presentations should address broad question such as “What impact would the discovery of extraterrestrial life have on human society?” and “How should we utilize space-based resources and/or colonize space, if at all?” Send abstracts of no more than 400 words to Dr. Kelly Smith at kcs@clemson.edu by June 1, 2016. For more information, visit http://kcs098.wix.com/socia.

18th International Conference on Ethics Across the Curriculum
Utah Valley University October 6 – 8, 2016 Salt Lake City, UT

The Society for Ethics Across the Curriculum invites papers for the 18th International Conference. The theme is “Social Justice and Bioethics: The Rich, the Poor, and the Rest of Us.” Papers are invited on any area of ethics across the curriculum, but especially on welfare, genomic research, cancer treatment, and palliative care. Submissions may include full papers or abstracts of no more than 500 words and are due by August 22. For more information, visit http://www.rit.edu/cla/ethics/seac/confennces.html.

Fall 2016 Journal of Health and Human Experience Special Edition

In honor of the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare, the Journal of Health and Human Experience welcomes ideas and proposals for possible academic or commentary articles focused on the importance of the humanities for human health and healthcare. The Journal is open to possibilities for articles, commentaries, film or book reviews, or creative writing pieces. Contact Dr. Edward F. Gabriele at egabriele@comcast.net and Dr. Bruce Boynton at bruce.boynton@gmail.com with proposals.

Big Data Special Issue on Social and Technical Trade-Offs

This special issue will highlight exciting work in machine learning, artificial intelligence, data mining, and data science that addresses the technical and social trade-offs involved in the analysis and interpretation of big data. It will also pose challenges for researchers in these fields to motivate research. What are the ethical implications of the choices involved in working with big data? Areas of focus include but are not limited to: surveillance and privacy; healthcare, medicine, and public health; criminal justice and policing; education and learning. Submissions may take the form of descriptions and evaluations of methods or trade-offs, or position papers that highlight sociotechnical challenges. Contact the Guest Editors at bd-tradeoffs@lists.datasociety.net with questions. Submit manuscripts here by September 15: http://www.liebertpub.com/manuscript/big