What is “Ethics in context”?

Ongoing education in the context of the research environment is likely to be the most appropriate and effective means to promote research ethics. One of the most important mechanisms by which knowledge is passed from one generation to the next is mentoring. In the sense that a mentor is an individual who has succeeded by overcoming the hurdles to success, he or she is in the best position to help a trainee with facing those same hurdles. Mentoring might include many topics, one of which is the responsible conduct of research or research ethics. Unfortunately, such mentoring is infrequent or even nonexistent (Brown and Kalichman, 1998; Swazey and Anderson, 1998). One purpose of this discussion will be to consider the proper role for such one-on-one mentoring in teaching research ethics, the topics that should be covered, and specific strategies for mentoring in research ethics. Although one-on-one mentoring is an important part of graduate student training, much of training in practice occurs in the context of research groups. Very little has been written about teaching research ethics in this setting, but it is clear that much can be learned about the roles, responsibilities, and joys of science through the process of conducting research.

Approaches

1. Handout / Guidelines
2. Regular individual meetings
3. Journal clubs
4. Research lecture series
5. Group discussion to generate policies
6. Recommended readings

Discipline-Specific Topics and Approaches

1. In your discipline area, what research ethics topics should mentors and research advisors be discussing with their trainees?
2. What have you seen mentors do in the past in this regard? What worked and what did not?
3. What are some best practices you would recommend?

**Mentoring Resources**

The following resources are excellent starting points to better understand the roles and responsibilities of mentors and trainees.

**Articles on Mentoring:** Science’s “Next Wave: resources for the next generation of scientists”
http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org


HHMI A Practical Guide to Developing Programs in Scientific Management

How to Get the Mentoring You Want: A Guide for Graduate Students at a Diverse University, Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan.

How to Mentor Graduate Students: A Guide for Faculty in a Diverse University, Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies, University of Michigan.


http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=5789


University of Oregon: Guidelines for Good Practice in Graduate Education
http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/?page=goodPracticeGuidelines
http://www.springerlink.com/content/70w5wu2142w6151g/fulltext.html

**Graduate Student Training Resources**

The following resources are good examples of readings, typically written by scientists, that help provide a perspective on what it means to be a scientist.


