

Mentor's Role in Shaping the Ethical Behaviors of Mentees

Dr. Tiera S. Coston, J.D., Ph.D. (CAT+FD)



Preparing Mentors and Advisors at Xavier

Workshop Objectives

- Mentors will have the knowledge and skills to:
 - Articulate ethical issues they need to discuss with their mentees
 - Clarify their roles as teachers and role models in educating mentees about ethics
 - Manage the power dynamic inherent in the mentoring relationship



Cultivating Ethical Behavior

- Mentors:
 - play an important role in teaching and modeling ethical behavior.
 - must address scientific research-related issues concerning conduct and reporting.
 - manage the power dynamic inherent in the mentoring relationship.
 - need to discuss ethical behavior with both their colleagues and mentees.



Cultivating Ethical Behavior

- The ethical responsibility of a scientist exists at three levels:
 1. personal responsibility for the integrity of the research, relationships with colleagues and subordinates, and the role as representative of the home institution
 2. a measure of disciplinary responsibility for the promotion, oversight, and collective activity of a specialized field of inquiry
 3. the social responsibility to science as a public enterprise



Professional Society Ethical Guidelines

American Psychological Association

Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct

Section 8: Research and Publication

8.01 Institutional Approval

When institutional approval is required, psychologists provide accurate information about their research proposals and obtain approval prior to conducting the research. They conduct the research in accordance with the approved research protocol.

8.02 Informed Consent to Research

(a) When obtaining informed consent as required in Standard 3.10, Informed Consent, psychologists inform participants about (1) the purpose of the research, expected duration, and procedures; (2) their right to decline to participate at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled; (3) the anticipated benefits and risks of the research; (4) the limits of confidentiality; (5) the availability of alternative procedures; (6) the research and research participants to ask questions and to seek clarification; and (7) the right to withdraw from the research at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled.

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AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOELCULAR BIOLOGY

CODE OF ETHICS

Members of the ASBMB are engaged in the quest for knowledge in biochemical and molecular biological sciences with the ultimate goal of advancing human welfare. Underlying this quest is the fundamental principle of trust. The ASBMB encourages its members to engage in the responsible practice of research required for such trust by fulfilling the following obligations.

In fulfilling OBLIGATIONS TO THE PUBLIC, it is EXPECTED that:

- investigators will promote and follow practices that enhance the public interest or well-being;

The Chemical Professional's Code of Conduct

The American Chemical Society expects its members to adhere to the highest ethical standards. Indeed, the Federal Charter of the Society (1937) explicitly lists among its objectives "**the improvement of the qualifications and usefulness of chemists through high standards of professional ethics, education and attainments...**" The chemical professional has obligations to the public, to colleagues, and to science.

"The Chemist's Creed," was approved by the ACS Council in 1965. The principles of The Chemist's Code of Conduct were prepared by the Council Committee on Professional Relations, approved by the Council (March 16, 1994), and replaced "The Chemist's Creed". They were adopted by the Board of Directors (June 3, 1994) for the guidance of Society members in various

of their research;
requirements regulating research
comfort and humane treatment
public funding in a full, open,
developed through publicly-funded



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Tweaking the Data

Dr. Norman is mentoring Della, an undergraduate student working in his lab whom he has assigned to collect data for a very important experiment. When the dataset is complete, he sits down to analyze it and finds his predictions completely disconfirmed. He calls Della into his office and asks her to describe what she did when collecting the data. He wants to be sure that these anomalous results can't be more easily explained by mistakes in the lab. Their conversation lasts quite a while, but, at the end, Dr. Norman is still frustrated and puzzled by the data. Later that day, Dr. Norman overhears Della speaking to a friend of hers in the cafeteria. Sounding upset, she tells her friend "I think Dr. Norman is mad at me," and describes the recent meeting. Dr. Norman is surprised that Della took the questioning so personally.



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Tweaking the Data

When Della finishes venting, her friend replies “If he’s so mad, you probably did make a mistake somewhere. After all, he’s the expert. Maybe you should tweak the data a little next time to keep him happy.”

- Who are the stakeholders in this situation?
- What are the facts and what assumptions are you making about the situation?
- What courses of action are possible? Which are preferable and why?
- What, if anything, could have been done to prevent the situation?



Reflection

Think about one immediate change you would make in your mentoring to communicate and model ethical behavior in your mentoring relationships.



Resources and Materials

- Wolpe, P.R. (2006). Reasons Scientists Avoid Thinking about Ethics. *Cell*, 125 (6), 1023-1025. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2006.06.001>
- Pfund, C., Branchaw, J. L., and Handelsman, J. (2014), *Entering Mentoring: A Seminar to Train a New Generation of Scientists*, 2nd ed., W.H. Freeman & Company.
- American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Code of Ethics. Retrieved from <http://www.asbmb.org/Advocacy/CodeOfEthics/?terms=ethics>.
- American Chemical Society. The Chemical Professional's Code of Conduct. Retrieved from <https://www.acs.org/content/dam/acsorg/careers/profdev/ethics/chemical-professionals-code-of-conduct-2012.pdf>.
- American Psychological Association. Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/>.



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