When Funding Runs Low

Author(s)

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Description

A scenario that covers ethical issues that arise when one researcher discovers that another researcher is mischarging in the lab.

Body

The following conversation occurs between grad students F and P, who are roommates in an off-campus apartment, but who are in different research groups within Great Engineering Lab.

F: Well, the lab is really pushing on the rules and procedures these days. Today at the lab meeting, there was more talk about being sure to use the On-Line Log for all machine use. You should have been there. Some of the students complained about the hassle factor and the slow response, but the lab manager made the usual comments about how it was essential to provide accurate lab charges, they were fixing the system to make it faster, and everybody had to use it, period.

P: My attitude is to finesse the whole thing.

F: What do you mean?

P: Well, my project just lost its funding, and my supervisor is really worried about whether there will be enough funds left in the kitty to complete my thesis. I figure if I punt on the On-Line Log from time to time I can save my project enough money so that when I really NEED to make runs, we'll have the money to pay for them.

- What does/should F do now?
- More generally, what should the lab as a whole do if it discovers that P is mischarging?

Notes

Caroline Whitbeck introduced methods and modules for discussing numerous issues in responsible conduct of research at a Sigma Xi Forum in 2000. Partial funding for the development of this material came from an NIH grant.

You can find the entire sequence on the OEC at [Scenarios for Ethics Modules in the Responsible Conduct of Research](). Some information in these historical modules may be out-of-date; for instance, there may be a new edition of the professional society's code that is referred to in an item. If you have suggestions for updates, please contact the OEC.

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Resource Type

Case Study / Scenario

Parent Collection

Scenarios for Ethics Modules in the Responsible Conduct of Research

Topics

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Research and Practice

Research Misconduct
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Discipline(s)

Research Ethics

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