Being the Chief

Author(s)

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Year

2000

Description

A scenario about a journal editor who realizes that a manuscript submitted for review is similar to his student's dissertation.

Body

You are the editor of a respected technical journal that has been publishing for about a dozen years and publishes new work in a small but rapidly growing and increasingly important area within your discipline. You and a colleague at another university founded the journal as co-editors because you recognized the importance of this new area, an area in which you and he have been leading figures. Your co-editor recently suffered a heart attack, is awaiting bypass surgery and has resigned from being an editor, leaving you as sole editor.

One of your best students, Rising, is finishing the dissertation and has just left on your desk for your comments the draft of a manuscript to be submitted for publication, which is based on the second chapter of the dissertation. In today's mail you receive a paper from a group at a third university, which from the title seems likely to overlap with Rising's dissertation. Usually you skim a submitted manuscript so as to better judge whom to ask to review it, but you wonder whether

to do so, given the comments you must give Rising on what may be a competing manuscript.

- How do you handle the situation?
- What are the risks and possible pitfalls in the situation?

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 Some information in these historical modules may be out-of-date; for instance, there may be a new edition of the professional society's code that is referred to in an item.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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Topics

Authorship
Conflict of Interest
Mentors and Trainees
Peer Review
Publication Ethics
Research and Practice

Discipline(s)

Computer, Math, and Physical Sciences

Engineering
Life and Environmental Sciences
Research Ethics
Social and Behavioral Sciences

Publisher

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