

Biological Sciences First Year Seminar on Research Ethics

Conflicts of Interest & Research Misconduct

As you read the material for our next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the readings:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Remember that your **Reading Response #4** is due by Wednesday, February 12th at 12:00PM (noon) via TurnItIn. This write up should contain brief answers to these questions, totalling 500–600 words in length and conforming to the to the course's "General Technical Requirements for Formatting Assignments". Be sure to also print out a copy of your response for your own reference. This will help prepare you to speak intelligently about these issues during our next class meeting.

Readings

- Ezekiel J. Emanuel & Dennis F. Thompson, "The Concept of Conflicts of Interest".
- David Resnik, "Fraud, Fabrication, and Falsification".

Questions

1. According Ezekiel J. Emanuel and Dennis F. Thompson, what are the three fundamental elements of a conflict of interest? In light of this understanding of conflicts of interest, what are the two purposes of safeguards against them? What safeguards do Emanuel and Thompson consider and how do they fulfill those purposes?
2. What is the United States federal definition of research misconduct? Why do you think the individuals discussed by David Resnik committed research misconduct? Is there anything that can realistically be done to curb research misconduct?