**AGU Scientific Ethics: 10-Minute Challenge**

**About the 10-Minute Challenge**

The purpose of this exercise is to provide an active learning experience in a safe setting where ethical issues can be explored. This training will help participants be prepared to recognize and address ethical problems. By grappling with the sorts of ethical problems that arise regularly in professional life in this safe, non-threatening role-play setting, participants can think through the problem and gain some skills and tools to use should they ever encounter such a problem. We hope that by practicing these conversations you become better able to resist confusion and anxiety when questions of ethical research arise.

**Directions**

Each team will be given a Role-Play scenario based on a real-life ethical issue. The teams will be given 10 minutes to read their scenario and discuss the ethical issue that relates. In the discussion, please consider the following:

1. What are some of the issues that arise from this ethical dilemma?
2. What would you do to resolve the situation?
3. Who is potentially affected by this misconduct?
4. What are some of the rules and regulations that could be used to evaluate or resolve this dilemma?
5. What are some of the resources that you could refer to?
6. What are your options to move forward?
7. What are some takeaway lessons?

Keep in mind, there are no “right” answers in these role-play scenarios. There are no grades. These scenarios are based on real situations that real people encountered. After the role-play we will discuss the experience and the takeaways.

Challenge 2: Committee Conflict of Interest?

Dr. Kim is on the organizing committee for a climate change conference that his university is hosting, that will include many speakers from diverse fields. Dr. Kim's colleague, Dr. Mason, is at the same university but was told that there was not space in the conference for him to speak, even though his work is directly relevant.  Dr. Kim noticed this was odd, as the organizing committee's deliberations suggested there would be sufficient space. Dr. Mason tells Dr. Kim that he believes that his exclusion from the conference is due to his outside work advocating for climate change policy and because the conference is primarily funded by an oil company that is known to oppose greenhouse gas regulations.  Dr. Kim had noticed that the sponsoring company has played a prominent role in the conference organizing but hasn't observed any inappropriate influence directly. What should Dr. Kim do?

Issues

1. Should Dr. Kim find out if there is any other prominent colleagues that may have been excluded for similar reasons?
2. As a member of the organizing committee, is it Dr. Kim’s responsibility to investigate Dr. Mason’s inquiry, beyond general observation?
3. If sufficient space is available, should Dr. Kim, as a representative of the organizing committee, extend an invitation to Dr. Mason?
4. Should Dr. Kim bring Dr. Mason’s concerns to the attention of the entire organizing committee?

Rules and Regulations

1. University policy on integrity and ethics
2. Federal and state regulations on environmental reporting

Questions

1. Should Dr. Kim’s loyalty be to his colleague or the interests of his university affiliation?
2.

Resources

1. University ethics officer
2. Sponsoring company’s Conflict of Interest policy

Options

1. Conduct additional investigations to the reason of Dr. Mason’s exclusion.
2. Do nothing.

Takeaway Lessons

1. Conflicts of Interest are not always easy to identify.
2. Corporate influence can undermine determinations of right and wrong.