



Online Ethics Center
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

Exercise- Rules

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Description

This exercise is intended to help familiarize you with the regulations, policies, rules, and the like, that you need to follow as a responsible researcher.

Body

As a researcher, you may be subject to governmental laws and regulations at the federal, state, county, or even city level; to the policies of your employer (e.g., a university, a department in a university, a lab within a department); to the code of ethics of your discipline, your professional association, and your scholarly society (if any); and perhaps other entities.

This exercise is intended to help familiarize you with the regulations, policies, rules, and the like, that you need to follow as a responsible researcher. You should work on steps 1-6 for about 50 minutes and on step 7 for about 10 minutes (about 1 hour total). For best results, read all of the instructions before beginning.

Step 1

Take a few minutes to write down the specific entities (for example, “Indiana University” rather than “my university”) that might govern your research. Be exhaustive.

Step 2

Mark each item in your list as being “very important,” “important,” or “not very important.” It’s up to you to decide what “important” means in this context.

Step 3

Select one of the “very important” items on your list and try to find the regulations, policies, rules, etc., that might be relevant to your research. This may be accomplished via the World Wide Web, telephone calls, or other means. Take notes on the steps that you take (what Web site and search terms you use, what office you call, etc.). If possible, save a copy of the rules to your computer or secure hard copy (or the promise that hard copy will be sent to you).

Step 4

Repeat Step 3 for an item that you marked “important.”

Step 5

Repeat Step 3 for an item that you marked “not very important.”

Step 6

Repeat Step 3 with any other item on your list. Continue until you’ve worked for about 50 minutes.

Step 7

Write a few paragraphs describing your experience and findings. You might answer these and similar questions: Are you subject to a lot of rules? Are they easy to find? Do you think you’ve identified them all? Put your list from Step 2, your results from Steps 3-6, and the paragraph from Step 7 together as an informal report. Submit it as directed by your instructor.

Notes

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