

Professional Development Programme

Ethics Teaching: one dilemma after another?

Thursday 26th February, 2004

University of Bristol

This was the third in a series of events in collaboration with our Special Interest Group on Teaching Ethics to Bioscience Students. Over 35 delegates traveled to Bristol to attend the day which was a mix of activities, presentations and opportunities for discussion, as well as the opportunity to hear the results from the Special Interest Group's survey into the provision of ethics teaching in the biosciences

- [Survey of Bioscience Ethics Provision 2003](#) Dr Andy Bond
- [Keynote: Ethics Teaching](#) Prof John Bryant
- [A Code of Ethics for Bioscience](#) Dr Nancy Jones
- [Group activity - 'Challenges in Teaching Ethics' scenarios](#) Facilitator Dr Chris Willmott
- ['How I did it sessions'](#); Dr Andy Bond; Professor John Bryant; Professor Valerie McKelvey-Martin
- [Swapshop](#)
- [Bioethics Briefings](#) Dr Chris Willmott

Survey of Bioscience Ethics Provision 2003

Dr Andy Bond, University of Westminster

Andy gave an overview of the findings from a survey into the provision of ethics teaching in the biosciences. Over 3/4 of the departments were aware of the requirements to provide some ethics provision as mentioned in the benchmarking statements. Over half of the departments used their own staff to teach ethics and there was a strong demand for teaching materials.

[View Andy's 'Survey of Bioscience Ethics Provision' presentation](#)

Ethics Teaching

Prof John Bryant, Convenor of the Special Interest Group in Teaching Ethics to Bioscience Students

John set the scene for the day. He described how, as a result of effects of new technology and scientific advances bioethics had emerged from medical and environmental ethics. Following on from this John challenged the audience on how we should proceed and whether we can derive a series of ethical guidelines to deal with the effects of modern scientific advances.

[View John's 'Ethics Teaching' presentation](#)

A Code of Ethics for Bioscience

Dr Nancy Jones, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, North Carolina, USA

Following on from John's challenges Nancy described the work that she and her colleagues have done to develop a code of ethics for bioscience. The code is based around the Principles of the Practice of Science and the Virtues of a Scientist.

[View Nancy's 'A code of Ethics for Bioscience' presentation](#)

Group activity: Challenges in the Teaching of Ethics

Delegates were split into groups and allocated a scenario (based around the teaching of ethics) to discuss. The groups wrote their strategies to deal with the challenges and Chris Willmott reported back on these after lunch.

View the Challenges in Teaching Ethics Scenarios as: [Word file](#) or [pdf](#)

'How I did it sessions'

Three speakers gave presentations outlining their modules and how they had overcome similar challenges to those mentioned in the scenarios.

A debatable solution. Dr Andy Bond, University of Westminster (Scenario 1)

Andy described how he uses debates as a way of getting students to think about ethics, further their understanding of ethical theories while at the same time developing personal transferable skills, such as oral communication.

[View Andy's 'A debatable solution' presentation](#)

Case Studies. Professor John Bryant, University of Exeter (Scenario 2)

John described how he uses simple questions about the day to day choices students make to introduce them to the topic of ethics. He then moves on to case studies to help them identify how ethical theories relate to real life situations.

[View the slides John used in support of his talk](#)

Development, pilot delivery and evaluation of an internet based module on Scientific Integrity for Bioscientists. Professor Valerie McKelvey-Martin (Scenario 3)

Valerie described how the University of Ulster has trialed a web-based module to teach scientific integrity to post graduate students. The module used discussion boards to exchange views and students were assessed on their contribution to these discussions.

[View Valerie's 'Development, pilot delivery and evaluation of an internet based module on Scientific Integrity for Bioscientists' presentation](#)

Swapshop

Short contributions from attendees

Food Ethics

Dr Victor Kuri, University of Plymouth

Teaching Animal Ethics

Dr Anabela A Pinto, University of Cambridge

The development of taught units between UK and USA universities: a case study in bioethics

Dr Barry Stevens-Wood, Manchester Metropolitan University

Bioethics Briefings

Chris Willmott described the Bioethics Briefings that the Special Interest Group is developing. These are in response to the demand for bioethics teaching materials as identified by the user needs analysis. Topics chosen for the briefings are: Ethics and Bioethics (introducing the series), Xenotransplantation, Genetically Modified plants and Euthanasia. The briefings contain a balance of scientific and ethical input, plus case studies and up to date examples of ethics news items, and as far as possible, follow a standard format. Final versions of the four briefing papers will be made available in print and online via the LTSN Bioscience website in summer 2004.

Ethics learning and teaching bibliography

The ethics bibliography enclosed in delegate packs has been updated to include the titles that were on display at the event. [Download the bibliography](#).

Special Interest Group: Teaching Ethics to Bioscience Students



The Special Interest Group: Teaching Ethics to Bioscience Students Co-ordination Team. (From Left to Right Dr Andy Bond, Prof John Bryant and Dr Chris Willmott)

View reports from related events

[Teaching Ethics to Bioscience Students](#)

[The Rights and Wrongs of Teaching Ethics to Bioscience students](#)

Also;

Ethics audit tool, incorporating sustainability, download as [Word](#) or [pdf](#) document

[Ethics related articles and resource list](#)