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Journal Contact:
Kari Wester
jmbe@asmusa.org

Now Available – Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education’s Scientific Ethics Section

Washington, D.C. (January 30, 2015) — The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) is pleased to announce the arrival of an inaugural special section devoted to scientific ethics, published in tandem with volume 15, issue 2, of the scholarly, peer-reviewed Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education (JMBE). Guest Editors for the section, Dr. Beth A. Fischer, University of Pittsburgh; Dr. Frederick Grinnell, University of Texas Southwestern; and Dr. Michael J. Zigmond, University of Pittsburgh reviewed and collated an impressive 45 articles that provide a comprehensive look at ethics in science, including the responsible conduct of research (RCR), ethics in science education, scientific publishing and authorship, and ways to incorporate ethics into STEM education.

Drs. Fischer, Grinnell, and Zigmond emphasize in their letter "Introductory Comments for the Scientific Ethics Theme," that “Providing instruction in research integrity is an obligation, not an option.” By publishing this special section, JMBE encourages the educator community to consider ways to incorporate ethics instruction into the classroom and laboratory, and supports the responsible conduct of research in the pursuit and publication of “good science.”

The scientific ethics section is a valuable resource for undergraduate and graduate science educators. Two of the seven ethics sub-categories, “Ethics in the Classroom” and “Instructional Approaches to Ethics” provide vetted activities and tools that can be used in a classroom or laboratory setting. Furthermore, the “Reviews of Ethics-Related Resources” sub-category discusses and recommends print and electronic resources to help inform ethics instruction.

The scientific ethics section is also essential for the ongoing education of active researchers, who should be encouraged to examine their own practices for influences—promise of funding, research competition, authorship—that may compromise research integrity. This self-reflection is especially important for the researchers who mentor undergraduates, graduates, and young professionals, as they are the ones shaping the integrity of future scientists. To that end, sub-categories titled “Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR),” “Ethics in Science,” “Research Community,” and “New Perspectives on Research Integrity” include articles on why RCR training is necessary in the research environment and ways to incorporate and evaluate RCR training.

Visit JMBE online (jmbe.asm.org) to view the complete table of contents for the scientific ethics section, learn more about the journal, and explore the various author resources and tools that JMBE offers.

JMBE is freely available, internationally indexed, and all aspects of the publication process are completely online. All issues of JMBE are indexed in PubMed Central, Cross Ref, and DOAJ.

ASM is the world’s largest scientific society of individuals interested in the microbiological sciences. Its mission is to advance the microbiological sciences as a vehicle for understanding life processes and to apply and communicate this knowledge for the improvement of health and environmental and economic well-being worldwide.

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