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Research Questions
How effective are role-play scenarios in teaching the responsible conduct of research?
Can role-plays help students identify ethical issues in research and negotiate workable solutions?

Method

Role-Play Scenario Development
We developed nine role-play scenarios: Authorship, Conflict of Interest, Mentoring, Peer Review; compliance with regulations on Human Participants, Animal Subjects, and Hazardous Substances; and potential whistle-blowing situations Professional Relationships and Data Management

Formative Assessment
Survey to assess participant reactions: 576 participants in 14 depts/groups

Summative Assessment
Interviews to assess long-term reactions
Case analyses to assess learning

Students valued communication and negotiation skills more than RCR content

It seems like “ethics training” could be subsumed by good assertiveness training plus a set of ethical guidelines. The biggest problem people will have is not identifying unethical situations but dealing with others who perhaps have power or influence over them and do not act ethically.

Reported advantages of role-play
Captures attention; provides motivation and experiential learning; improves the depth of understanding; shows different perspectives

Reported disadvantages of role-play
Students feel awkward; lack of prior experience to play roles; some resist participating; covers fewer issues than lecture in same time

Conclusions
Reactions to role-plays are generally positive; students value motivation and building communication skills, rather than compliance with rules

Long-term outcomes from role-plays might extend beyond the ability to understand and analyze only a specific RCR topic

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