

Research Project

How to decide who decides - Membership rules and organisational frameworks in university ethics committees and their influence on ethical decision making

Project funded by own resources

Project title How to decide who decides - Membership rules and organisational frameworks in university ethics committees and their influence on ethical decision making

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Organisation / Research unit

Ethik / Bio- und Medizinethik (Elger)

Project Website <http://ibmb.unibas.ch/research/how-to-decide-who-decides/>

Project start 01.08.2011

Probable end 31.12.2015

Status Completed

With the emergence of numerous new possibilities in all spheres of research, and the on-going technological progress, the number of ethical commissions world-wide has increased. A growing number of research projects are developed in collaboration with ethics committees, both for advice and final approval. In universities too, important academic ethical standards have to be assured – additionally to the work of university or cantonal based research ethics committees. Different universities tend to handle the pressure to react to those new demands in a variety of ways; some of them have research ethic committees that also decide about academic misconduct such as plagiarism, while others have separate committees to deal with these problems.

Not only assigning tasks but also the composition of the committees can cause trouble for universities. How to announce new members and how to decide who could be an expert for ethical decisions is another problem universities have to face nowadays. Additionally, relationships between members (colleagues, co-authors or friends) can cause several conflicts of interests as soon as it comes down to decide about some other member's work or student. This research project seeks to address the lack of knowledge about how organisational frameworks and membership rules structure different university committees and how these committees address their different tasks and problems.

From an ethical point of view the goal of every commission should be to make the most independent decision, including all pro and contra arguments. Therefore the way in which new members are recruited or how tasks are assigned is very important to prevent negative side effects such as conflicts of interests or dual role problems as mentioned above.

Based on a sample of 70 universities in Switzerland, Austria and Germany, this research project tries to identify what kind of future model of membership can prevent possible negative effects that may disturb the decision making progress and to elaborate a guideline for this purpose. The findings will be used to discuss different possible organisational frameworks of university ethics committees and their ethical implications.

Keywords Ethic committees

Financed by

University funds

Add publication

Published results

1167160, Jung, Corinna, Die Analyse von Entscheidungen in Ethikkommissionen. Ein Blick auf die Diskussionen zur rechtlichen Regelung von Patientenverfügungen in Deutschland., ISBN 978-3-89404-946-1, Publication: ConferencePaper (Artikel, die in Tagungsbänden erschienen sind)

Add documents

Specify cooperation partners

ID	Kreditinhaber	Kooperationspartner	Institution	Laufzeit - von	Laufzeit - bis
1016840	Elger, Bernice Simone	Bondolfi, Alberto , Prof., Thesis Referee	Faculté de Théologie, Université de Genève	01.05.2011	30.04.2014
1016878	Elger, Bernice Simone	Ravitsky, Vardit, Prof., Co- Referee	Assistant Professor, Bioethics Programs, Faculty of Medicine University of Montreal	01.06.2011	02.03.2013