

# Lawyers, scientists urge ethics in biological advances

[Sociology](#), [Ethics](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In this news article, the concerns of scientists toward an amoral approach to the advances of biological sciences and engineering are examined. Much of the article centers on a keynote address delivered by Harvard Law School professor Einer Elhauge where the professor states “ The issue is that people tend not to focus on the consequences of certain forms of human re-engineering.”

The professor goes on to comment that the great strides in biological science may yield a great number of advances in helping humanity overcome a number of diseases and afflictions, but he also acknowledges that there is great potential for abuse. Examples of such abuse include issues such as altering the sex of a child in the womb or even a deaf family biologically engineering the deafness of their offspring.

Ultimately, the Elhauge’s focus is to convince the scientific community that, even though it has biological technology to alter evolution, it should use ethical standards before embarking on the proverbial “ playing God” concept that Mary Shelly warned science about 250+ years ago.

To a great degree, the article is accurate in terms of its presentation and call for moral and ethical consciousness. Just because science reaches the technological or biological advances of a highly evolved society does not mean that science can now re-orchestrate what is considered morally acceptable in the hearts and minds of the population. As such, science should understand the limits of ethical and moral behavior and not approach advancements with total mindlessness and amorality.

Congressman Calls out Tech Firms on China Ethics.

<https://assignbuster.com/lawyers-scientists-urge-ethics-in-biological-advances/>

The bulk of the purpose of this article is to put the onus on American and international businesses to reconsider their actions when empowering China by conducting extensive business with the nation.

In the article, it is reported that Congressman Chris Smith has taken internet companies such as Yahoo, Google, Sysco Systems, etc to task for going along with China's internet censorship program. This may not seem like an entirely important issue, but one needs to keep in mind that China is primarily a military-industrial complex dictatorship that has a horrible record for human rights violations. As Smith points out, when American businesses work in tandem with nations with such abominable track records they enable such dictatorships and help perpetuate significant human rights violations.

Furthermore, it is noted that journalists in China have been censured and punished and imprisoned for exercising their free speech. Smith suggests that American businesses that contribute to such a scenario should be fined and sanctioned.

What Smith is essentially doing here is he is compelling American companies to conform to ethical standards of behavior and that is commendable. However, these companies have limited ability in terms of being able to shape domestic Chinese law. Furthermore, in such a highly competitive international business environment, it is difficult to impose ethics as defined by one nation onto another nation, no matter how noble the cause. Smith's statements are commendable, but it is not entirely clear if they will be successful.

Ethics board fines Dow for giving state workers airplane ride

<https://assignbuster.com/lawyers-scientists-urge-ethics-in-biological-advances/>

As the title of the article infers, the center of the ethics controversy this article deals with is a fine levied at Dow Chemicals to the tune of \$2, 500. 00 for flying three state college employees to an out of state training program. At the time of the issue of contention, Dow was launching a co-operative training program with the state college (Louisiana Community and Technical College) and provided free airline tickets to employees for meeting purposes. This, however, was a violation of state ethic laws, hence the fine.

This scenario strikes one as, well, silly. For Dow to compensate the airline tickets of three state workers so all parties can hash out a co-operative venture hardly seems like unethical behavior, although it is defined as such under state ethics laws. While the whole scenario comes off as much ado about nothing (actually, \$2500 to a multi-billion dollar company such as Dow is basically nothing), it technically is a violation of state laws and the levied fine is valid. However, it does not seem like any real, serious ethical violations actually took place.

If anything, the situation appears more like an error as the result of an oversight as opposed to a deliberate ethical violation. Oversights, however, are not an excuse for not following directions. In that regard, the decision against Dow was valid and the fine levied justified.

#### Bibliography

Anon. (2007, February 9) Ethics board fines Dow for giving state workers airplane ride.

The Associated Press. Retrieved February 12, 2007 from

<https://assignbuster.com/lawyers-scientists-urge-ethics-in-biological-advances/>

[http://money.aol.com/news/articles/\\_a/](http://money.aol.com/news/articles/_a/)

<ethics-board-fines-dow-for-giving-state/n20070209095709990003>

Schwankert, Steven. (2007, February 12) Congressman Calls out Tech Firms on

China Ethics. IDG News Service, Retrieved February 12, 2007, from

[http://www.infoworld.com//07/02/12/HNcongressmanchinaethics\\_1.html/](http://www.infoworld.com//07/02/12/HNcongressmanchinaethics_1.html/)

article/ sourcedomain = www.dailyfreepress.com

&MIIHost= media.collegepublisher.com

Zerey, Ralpa. (2007, February 12) Lawyers, Scientists Urge Ethics in Biological

Advances. The Daily Free Press. Retrieved February 12, 2007, from

<http://media.www.dailyfreepress.com/media/storage/paper87/news/2007/02/12/>

<http://media.www.dailyfreepress.com/media/storage/paper87/news/2007/02/12/>

News/Lawyers.Scientists.Urge.Ethics.In.Biological.Advances-2712941.

shtml?