

Ethics Editorial

A photograph of a group of young women in a classroom or workshop setting. They are smiling and looking down at something on a table, likely participating in a collaborative activity. Several of them are holding white markers with orange tips. The background is a solid orange wall. The overall mood is positive and engaged.

Vol. 7, Issue 1
Spring 2025



Executive Spotlight

Albash Khan shares about his time as Treasurer of CHANGE

M meet Albash Khan! Albash, a senior Biochemistry major who joined CHANGE in Spring 2024, currently serves as Treasurer. In this role, he manages the organization's budget, facilitates expenditure requests, ensures compliance with Clemson's financial policies, and applies for funding opportunities like the J.T. Barton, Jr. Memorial Ethics Award. His role is key in maintaining the organization's financial health, which allows the organization to coordinate events that promote ethical engagement across campus.

"I joined CHANGE after taking a philosophy class that piqued my interest in ethics. I've always been big on open-mindedness and learning from different perspectives, and I saw CHANGE as the perfect opportunity to dive deeper into ethical thinking. One of the tricky things about ethics is that not everything can be written into laws or rules, which makes it so important to discuss."

"Through CHANGE, I get to promote these conversations and plan events that help students explore ethics in ways that relate to their majors," says Albash. For example, he is working with the College of Science on an event called the "College of Science Ethics Rumble," a debate on ethical issues in science.

Albash didn't expect to become Treasurer, but it's been an exciting and rewarding role. "It's been great! Managing the budget, working with spreadsheets, and handling invoices has helped me develop skills that I wouldn't normally get to use as a Biochemistry student. The best part has been seeing how our events impact students across the different colleges here at Clemson. I'm excited to expand our initiatives and to hopefully boost our funding in the coming year."

"Through CHANGE, I get to promote these conversations and plan events that help students explore ethics in ways that relate to their majors."

When asked why others should join CHANGE or take on a leadership role, Albash encourages everyone to give it a try. "I didn't plan on being Treasurer, but I'm so glad I was elected. Being part of CHANGE has been incredibly rewarding and has given me the chance to make a real impact at Clemson. It's also a great way to build skills you might not expect, like management and working with diverse teams. CHANGE has given me the opportunity to do things I hadn't even thought about, so if you're interested in ethics, leadership, or just want to try something new, I definitely recommend getting involved."





Board Member Spotlight

Matt Harrington and Lucy Hart take a look at Jane Dyer's life in and beyond Clemson and her impact on the Institute

Jane Dyer is an accomplished pilot, serving both in the Air Force and commercial industries. She holds a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Clemson University and was one of the first 157 women accepted into the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). Beginning this year, Dyer continues her exceptional service to her alma mater as she takes on the role of the Chair of the Rutland Institute's Advisory Board.

Dyer's father was always supportive of her aspirations from a young age and encouraged her to challenge cultural expectations for women by applying to the Air Force through USAFA. While she decided to apply, she did not expect to attend; she was the first class of women the USAFA had ever accepted. She was shocked to be granted a spot in the Academy and was unsure of what was to come, but once she took her first ride in an aircraft, she immediately fell in love with flying. Throughout her time at USAFA, Dyer was known to always speak her mind, especially when it came to the treatment of women in the Air Force.

Throughout her time in the Air Force, she faced staunch opposition from men in her class. Nevertheless, she and her peers overcame many of the challenges of entering a historically male-only institution. Dyer held firm to her convictions as well as her right to pursue her love of flight for multiple semesters at USAFA. Despite taking a gap year in her hometown of Clemson, SC, she did not give up her hopes of manning the pilot's seat and leaving a legacy of shattering glass ceilings.

Upon her return to Clemson, she spoke with officers throughout the chain of command for Clemson ROTC, knowing exactly what she wanted: a scholarship and a spot in the pilot training program. At each "no" she received from the various levels of leadership, she continued to ask the next person up the ladder until she reached the top, where her determination finally earned her both of those opportunities. After graduating from Clemson, Dyer worked for FedEx as a Boeing 777 Captain.

Having been a pilot for a major corporation like FedEx, she has valuable advice to share when it comes to making challenging decisions. She says, "The most important thing to do is to open your lines of communication, especially when working in a team setting..."

"The most important thing to do is to open your lines of communication..."

...that's just life. No matter how much you want to scream at people, you still have to work together to move forward instead of everyone taking their stuff and going home." This perspective was further informed by the impact that the 9/11 attacks had on many people's lives within the pilot workforce. Her time as a pilot during and beyond this national tragedy is what influenced her second piece of advice for students. She asks us to consider, "How do we get the best solution that is fair to everyone and will stand the test of time in retrospect?"

Dyer is an advocate and a lifelong champion for the importance of educating others on ethical decision making to foster a better society in which to make a living and a life.



Left: Delta Phi
Lambda
Right: Beta
Upsilon Chi



Meet our Greek Partners!

The Rutland Institute for Ethics continues to partner with two Greek Life organizations

The purpose of the Rutland Institute’s for Ethics Greek Partnerships is to recognize and cultivate outstanding ethical leadership within Greek organizations serving the campus of Clemson University. Our Greek Partners are campus leaders who exemplify ethical leadership and have an outstanding commitment to service. Our partners this year are Delta Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc. and Beta Upsilon Chi fraternity.

Delta Phi Lambda

Delta Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc. (DPhiL) advocates for Asian awareness, empowers women leaders through its values-based programs, and forges Everlasting Sisterhood through diverse shared experiences. Their vision is that Delta Phi Lambda will be recognized by universities and among the greater fraternal community for its progressive initiatives that aim to develop women into strong, independent leaders. By partnering with the Rutland Institute for Ethics, Delta Phi Lambda hopes to enhance ethical thinking at Clemson.

The sisters of DPhiL understand that in order to have a positive impact on Clemson University, the entire Greek community must strive to make more shared, ethical decisions. Their hope is that their partnership with the Rutland Institute for Ethics allows them to reach more people and improve the Clemson community as a whole.

“The purpose of the Institute’s Greek partnerships is to recognize and cultivate outstanding ethical leadership...”

Beta Upsilon Chi

Beta Upsilon Chi (BYX), a National Christian Fraternity, exists for the purpose of establishing brotherhood and unity among college men based on the common bond of Jesus Christ. They are a lifelong brotherhood of committed Christian men seeking the bonds of brotherhood and unity in Christ through the avenue of a social fraternity on a college campus.

The brothers of BYX look forward to working with the Rutland Institute for Ethics to help Clemson students think more deeply about good decision-making and to encourage ethical discussion.

Andrew Seelig
BYX

Andrew Seelig, a dutiful member of Beta Upsilon Chi, has found a way to balance his faith with his involvement in Greek Life. Andrew rushed BYX in his sophomore year, drawn to the fraternity's focus on Christian brotherhood. Throughout his time in BYX, Andrew has served in various leadership roles, including Academics Chair, Assistant Pledge Captain, Alumni Relations, and now as Treasurer. His leadership reflects his deep commitment to both personal and communal growth within the organization.

For Andrew, ethics serves as a guiding principle, shaping decisions with integrity, fairness, and respect. Additionally, his passion for environmental responsibility drives him to advocate for balancing economic growth with sustainable practices, a cause he sees as vital for future generations. Andrew believes that ethics is central not only to BYX, but also to Clemson's mission of developing leaders who excel academically and contribute positively to society. Through BYX, Andrew is committed to fostering a more ethical climate on campus by encouraging dialogue and collaboration to promote a culture of integrity and responsibility. Andrew is also one of the newest members of CHANGE, serving as a graduate representative for the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Life Sciences.

“...ethics serves as a guiding principle, shaping decisions with integrity, fairness, and respect.”



Left: Andrew Seelig
Right: Hannah Daly

Hannah Daly
DFL

Hannah Daly, a dedicated sister of Delta Phi Lambda at Clemson University, found her home in the sorority after being drawn to its values and causes. Initially nervous about joining on her own, she quickly bonded with the sisters, who made her feel welcome and supported. Over the years, Hannah has taken on leadership roles such as Policy Chair and Recruitment Chair, and she currently serves as Vice President of Internal Affairs. For Hannah, ethics is crucial, shaping not only personal behaviors, but contributing to the positive impact of everyday decisions. She sees ethics as guiding principles that influence how individuals interact with the world around them, fostering thoughtful and responsible decision-making.

Hannah believes ethics is the backbone for what we learn, teach, and even activities that we attend. Without it, Clemson University wouldn't have a code of conduct to serve as a reliable standard from which our community can learn and grow. She hopes that DPhiL will continue setting an example on campus, upholding virtues like honesty, dedication, and integrity. Hannah is confident that through these values, DPhiL will inspire a stronger ethical culture at Clemson, contributing to the University's legacy of excellence.

“...ethics is the backbone for what we learn, teach, and even activities that we attend.”





Ethics in Academia: Striving for Transparency and Responsibility in Research

Emily Shewchuk, CHANGE Member

In 2023, over 10,000 scientific papers were retracted due to fraudulent and flawed research (1). Alarming, falsified data in academic papers is increasing, even at respected institutions. Marc Tessier-Lavigne, former Stanford president and Alzheimer's researcher, resigned in July of 2023 after 12 papers he oversaw were found to contain false information (2). Tessier-Lavigne is not alone, as Harvard professor, Francesca Gino, was terminated after an 11-month long inquiry revealed research misconduct (3). There is a rising epidemic of research fraud in academia, which raises the question: why? It is evident that researchers are facing an ethical dilemma between publishing and research integrity.

To analyze the complex aspects of this dilemma, it may be helpful to take on the perspective of a researcher. A portion of the questionable conduct can be credited to monetary strain; scientists may feel the need to publish papers to achieve or maintain prestigious jobs. Ivan Oransky, a journalist dedicated to discovering research fraud, claims that academic institutions may disproportionately evaluate potential faculty based on their publishing prowess in order to further their own prestige (4). This evaluation creates incentives for falsified data to attain more impactful and better chances of employment.

A 2013 analysis of National Science Foundation data found that around 35% of doctorate holders were unemployed at graduation (5). Further, the percentage of graduates with jobs is decreasing, while the average loan balance for doctoral students is increasing (5), (6). Based on this data, a portion of researchers are likely in deep financial trouble, which may incentivize them to participate in unscrupulous research practices in order to gain employment.

Another aspect that contributes to inaccurate studies pertains to academic journals. Most studies that journals publish are required to have statistically significant data. This makes sense as these articles are disseminated on a large scale. However, null data, or data that is not statistically significant, is valuable and common, yet it is rarely published. An analysis of 221 social science experiments found "two-thirds of the social science experiments that produced null results [...] were simply filed away. In contrast, researchers wrote up 96% of the studies with statistically strong results" (7). The fact that scientists rarely draft null reports demonstrates that they do not see the data as publishable, despite the research being incredibly important.

Null data can provide insight into hypotheses that did not work or experimental designs that failed to produce the expected results, deterring future scientists from repeating flawed experiments. Recall that many universities hire based on a candidate's ability to publish. It is possible that scientists who commit data fraud may be frustrated by null results and infrequent publishing, which can result in the falsification of statistical significance to increase their number of published papers.

Although monetary and circumstantial factors play a role in why scholars engage in fraudulent studies, it is crucial to recognize the impacts. Universities are entrusted with the pursuit of truth and objectivity through science and rationality; however, false data is an obstruction to institutional credibility. With the reputation of universities being put into question, there may be fewer sources that people are willing to trust to provide objective data, leading to skepticism amongst the public, students, and even researchers. This situation parallels the parable of a boy who cried wolf: if universities gain a reputation for dishonesty, few will believe them, even if they are truthful.

At Clemson, over 4,600 undergraduate students participate in research, with the university planning to double research by 2035 (8), (9). It is crucial that with these goals, students and faculty alike are aware of signs of academic dishonesty and how to avoid it. An indicator of violations may include withholding data or observations and analyses conducted by only a single person. Additionally, incentives must be in place to foster truth in research, as opposed to dishonesty.

“...if universities gain a reputation for dishonesty, few will believe them, even if they are truthful.”

Overall, financial and corporate factors push academics to participate in fraudulent studies at the cost of scientific credibility. This dilemma demonstrates the necessity for honesty among academic institutions to ensure trust that the truth prevails in scientific research.

About the Author

Emily Shewchuk



Emily Shewchuk is a sophomore Chemical Engineering student from Westfield, New Jersey. She is involved with CHANGE, Delta Gamma sorority, and the engineering society, Tau Beta Pi. In her free time, she enjoys writing and spending time with friends.





Q&A with Robert Chesnut

This semester, CHANGE hosted Former AirBnB Chief Ethics Officer and Author of *Intentional Integrity: How Smart Companies Can Lead an Ethical Revolution*, Robert Chesnut. Mr. Chesnut visited campus and provided insight into the world of professional and legal ethical practices.



References

1. Bik, Elizabeth. "Science Integrity Digest, June 2024." Science Integrity Digest , 1 Aug. 2024, scienceintegritydigest.com/.
2. Archie, Ayana. "Stanford President Resigns after Fallout from Falsified Data in His Research." NPR, 20 July 2024, www.npr.org/2023/07/19/1188828810/stanford-university-president-resigns.
3. Isaac, Benjamin. "Harvard Business School Investigation Report Recommended Firing Francesca Gino." The Harvard Crimson, 15 Mar. 2024, www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/3/15/gino-harvard-investigation-report/.
4. Dugan, Kevin T. "Why Scientific Fraud Is Suddenly Everywhere." Intelligencer, Vox, 21 May 2024, nymag.com/intelligencer/article/why-scientific-fraud-is-suddenly-everywhere.html.
5. Weissmann, Jordan. "The Ph.D Bust: America's Awful Market for Young Scientists-in 7 Charts." The Atlantic, Atlantic Media Company, 7 Aug. 2013, www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/02/the-phd-bust-americas-awful-market-for-young-scientists-in-7-charts/273339/.
6. Hess, Abigail Johnson. "Here's How Much Student Debt Americans with PhDs Have on Average." CNBC, 13 May 2019, www.cnbc.com/2019/05/13/heres-how-much-student-debt-americans-with-phds-have-on-average.
7. Mervis, Jeffrey. "Why null results rarely see the light of day." Science, vol. 345, no. 6200, 29 Aug. 2014, pp. 992–992, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.345.6200.992>.
8. "Undergraduate Research Opportunities at Clemson." Clemson University, www.clemson.edu/research/student-research.html#:~:text=Each%20year%2C%20more%20than%204%2C600%20undergraduate%20students%20at,mentors%20on%20research%20projects%20that%20ignite%20their%20interests. Accessed 14 Sept. 2024.
9. "Clemson Unveils Bold New Strategic Plan – Clemson Elevate." Clemson News, Clemson University, 26 Apr. 2023, news.clemson.edu/clemson-unveils-bold-new-strategic-plan-clemson-elevate/.
10. Gopalakrishna, Gowri, et al. "Prevalence of questionable research practices, research misconduct and their potential explanatory factors: A survey among academic researchers in the Netherlands." PLOS ONE, vol. 17, no. 2, 16 Feb. 2022, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0263023>.

Welcome to our New Members!

This fall, we admitted 15 new members to CHANGE. We are excited to have them with us!



Abbie Taylor
COB



Abby Daschbach
CAFLS



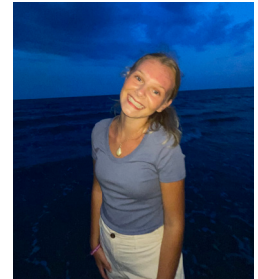
Andrew Seelig
CAFLS



Bailee Tayles
CAH



Brianna Blake
COE



Isabella Longo
COE



James Moran
CAH



Jassaira Diaz Melgar
CBSHS



Logan Dowling
CAAC



Morgan Stone
COB



Olivia Wendland
COB



Sofia Salvino
CAFLS



Stephanie Beitle
CECAS



Virginia Lee
COE



Will Davidson
CAFLS

Dilemma!

Ridge Kaauwai and Emma Hardy, CHANGE Members

We interviewed several Clemson students to explore the ethical dilemmas they have identified during their time at Clemson. Here's what they had to say...



Olivia Mucci

Environmental Engineering, 2026
Boston, MA

Disclosing Medical Information

As a Nursing major, an ethical dilemma that comes to mind is the issue of disclosing medical information. There are instances where families will request that patients not be informed of their diagnosis or medical condition. Family members may want to withhold medical information to protect the patients' emotions or because of their own beliefs. The nurse must consider the patient's right to know about their diagnosis and the family's wishes. The nurse has an obligation to the patient and the ethical principles of nonmaleficence and autonomy. The nurse has a responsibility to prevent harm to patients and respect a patient's right to make their own decisions. Additionally, honesty is a vital part of the nurse-patient relationship. Nurses have an ethical obligation to share the truth with their patients, whether good or bad, thereby allowing them to make informed decisions.

“Nurses have an ethical obligation to share the truth with their patients...”

Sustainability and Saving Our Environment

I face ethical issues concerning sustainability every day, and I am passionate about supporting our environment. We must balance the needs of the current generation with those of future generations, while ensuring that we never compromise our access to vital resources. During my internship this summer, I worked with a wastewater treatment company and saw the aftermath of companies being negligent about disposing their waste properly. By being ethical in our decision-making and emphasizing sustainable practices, we work towards maintaining an important balance between our actions and the effects of our actions on the planet.

“...maintaining an important balance between our actions and the effects of our actions on the planet”



Hayley Dixon
Nursing, 2025
Clover, SC



Hannah Reilley
Management, 2025
Ridgeland, SC

Ethical Travel and Responsible Tourism

While spending my Spring 2024 semester abroad in Spain, I traveled to many different countries in Europe. The sights were breathtaking, but it also made me realize that many visitors, like myself, often take from these places without giving back. The ethical ramifications of travel and tourism can leave these beautiful parts of the world in disarray, diminishing the experience for future travelers. This realization made me question the sustainability of our travel habits and the impact we have on these communities. Since my time abroad, I've become involved in regenerative tourism projects to encourage better stewardship of tourist spots and help rebuild communities. These projects focus on sustainable practices, such as supporting local businesses, reducing waste, and participating in community service activities.

“This issue made me question the sustainability of our travel habits and the impact we have on these communities”

Nepotism and Workplace Ethics

An ethical dilemma I recently encountered during my internships is the issue of nepotism. In my industry, it's common for general contractors to hire family members as a way to cut costs, with the assumption that familial bonds will compensate for the need to prioritize company culture. However, this practice can backfire, leading to workplace tension, reduced productivity, and division among employees. As an outsider, it's difficult to address these problems without crossing professional boundaries or getting involved in what may seem like a personal, family issue between the contractor and their relatives. Reporting such concerns can feel unprofessional and may not lead to a solution. This dilemma raises questions about fairness, accountability, and the impact of personal relationships on workplace dynamics. It's a challenge to find the balance between respecting family ties and maintaining a healthy, functional work environment.

“This dilemma raises questions about fairness, accountability, and the impact of personal relationships on workplace dynamics”



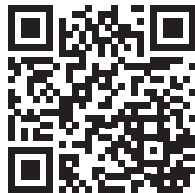
Logan Stern
Real Estate Development, 2025
Charleston, SC

Be the CHANGE You Want to See

CHANGE

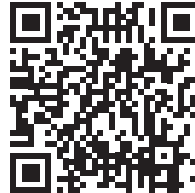
Creating Habits and Norms Guiding Ethical Decisions (CHANGE) is Clemson's student ethics committee and a delegated student organization of the Rutland Institute for Ethics. Among its activities, CHANGE is the creator of the Rutland Institute for Ethics semiannual Ethics Editorial.

For more information about CHANGE and to learn how to join, scan the QR code below or contact Lucy Hart at lhart3@g.clemson.edu.



Distinguished Ethics Scholars Program

The Distinguished Ethics Scholars Program allows students to earn one of two designations, each accompanied by an item to enhance regalia at graduation: Ethics Scholar (graduation cord) or Distinguished Ethics Scholar (graduation medallion). Students will also receive a co-curricular certificate giving them a competitive edge in the professional interviewing process upon graduation. Scan the QR code below to enroll now!



CLEMSON ETHICS

Rutland Institute for Ethics

ANNUAL ETHICS DAY 2024

Keynote Address

When Ethical Norms Collide: A Viewpoint from Multi-Disciplinary “People First” Engineering

Wednesday, October 23rd

Student Q&A Panel: 2:00–3:00 pm

Faculty Session: 4:15–5:00 pm

Keynote Address: 5:30–7:00 pm

Sessions offered online & in-person!

Scan for Information



Nancy G. Love, PhD

University of Michigan

Borchardt and Glysson Collegiate Professor
and JoAnn Silverstein Distinguished Professor
Civil and Environmental Engineering

EmpowHER Week

February 17th-20th, 2025

CHANGE colleges are teaming up to host a series of events focused on ethical issues impacting women in Spring of 2025. EmpowHER week will be a time to raise awareness of and celebrate women across fields.

EmpowHER: Conversations with Greek Life

Monday, February 17th, 2025



Breaking Barriers: A Case Analysis on Women in Venture Capital

Monday, February 17th, 2025



EmpowHER: One Game at a Time

Tuesday, February 18th, 2025



GatHER: Reflections on Ethics & Women Empowerment

Thursday, February 20th, 2025



Spill the Tea with New Teachers and CHANGE

Thursday, February 27th, 2025



Constructing Ethics: LEGO Building Competition

Thursday, March 27th, 2025



Getting the Scoop on Bacterial Ethics Ice Cream Bar

Tuesday, April 8th, 2025



Sustainable Thrift Swap with CHANGE

To Be Announced



For the most up to date information regarding our events calendar and registration, scan the QR code or visit clemsun.edu/ethics/change/





Opinion: Are We Paying More, but Living Less?

Jasmine Sampson, CHANGE Member

Life expectancy was one of the first measures of health used by epidemiologists in the 17th century and is a useful method for assessing the overall health of a population. Today, life expectancy and mortality rates are health measures that the public can appreciate because they are relatively intuitive. However, what is not intuitive for many Americans is the plethora of health disadvantages in one of the world's wealthiest countries.

Healthcare spending is significantly higher in the United States when compared to that of other high-income countries. In theory, the more we spend on healthcare, the better our health should be. But, surprisingly, the U.S. has the lowest life expectancy, the highest maternal and infant mortality, and among the highest suicide rates compared to our peers (1). More than 50 countries outperform the U.S. in life expectancy. Some countries are nowhere near as wealthy as ours and even spend less than we do (1). So, why is the U.S. spending so much on healthcare, but continuously doing worse?

Initially, some may think that these other countries must have low job demand-control or high racial health equity overall. However, in the American Journal of Public Health podcast, hosted by Alfredo Morabia, a professor of clinical epidemiology at Columbia University, Morabia discusses how this line of thinking is a misconception. As addressed in the podcast, research has shown that even the most advantaged Americans (whether white, rich, or nonsmokers) are doing worse in health measures than their peers in other countries (2).

Many social and structural domains can explain why population health in the U.S. is failing. First, we do not have universal healthcare. Second, deep inequalities create a social gradient of health in the U.S. Third, Americans are dying from preventable issues like poor diets and gun violence. Additionally the U.S. built environment is causing poor health, too. While these are all domains we can see in real time, the critical domain that is often overlooked is the role of policy. Health policies, or the lack thereof, can directly influence our health outcomes.

Policy implementation is much more complex for the U.S. because of the unique amount of independence granted to each of the fifty states. Perhaps we could use this uniqueness to our advantage, treating each state as a democratic trial for new healthcare policies. In some ways, this is already being done, such as the differences with insurance coverage across states and regions to meet the needs of unique communities. Unfortunately, the necessary bipartisan support is missing that would allow us to enact equitable policies nationally once we determine that a policy works on a state level.

We are plagued by inaction and non-cooperation, but it is time to work together. We need to move beyond incremental changes and embrace bold reforms that address the root causes of health disparities. It is not just about my life or yours. It's also about those who will come after us.

“We need to move beyond incremental changes and embrace bold reforms that address the root causes of health disparities.”

So, as the U.S. continues to shell out money, it's time to ask ourselves: are we spending for a better life or just buying to be buying?

About the Author

Jasmine Sampson



Jasmine Sampson is a senior Health Science student with minors in Biological Sciences and Public Policy. She lives in Aiken, SC, and is a part of the Honors College. She plans to pursue an MD/MPH to then

practice as a physician while developing a career in community health programming and policy.



References

1. Petrullo, Justina. 2023. "US Has Highest Infant, Maternal Mortality Rates despite the Most Health Care Spending." AJMC. January 31, 2023. <https://www.ajmc.com/view/us-has-highest-infant-maternal-mortality-rates-despite-the-most-health-care-spending>.
2. Morabia, A. (Host). (2023, October). Decline In US Life Expectancy [Audio podcast episode]. In American Journal of Public Health. <https://youtu.be/CEoiOrTAUyq?si=b5YmAC18YwXDq-9S>

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY



CREATING HABITS AND NORMS GUIDING ETHICAL DECISIONS