

Responsible Conduct of Research

Plan for Training of Post-Doctoral Researchers and Student Research Assistants

Background

Responsible conduct of research is defined as "**the practice of scientific investigation with integrity.**" It involves the awareness and application of established professional norms and ethical principles in the performance of all activities related to scientific research.

Ethical and responsible conduct of research is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, education in the responsible and ethical conduct of research is considered essential in the preparation of future scientists and engineers.

The [America COMPETES](#) (Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science) Act of 2007 focuses public attention on the importance of the national research community's enduring commitment and broader efforts to provide RCR (Responsible Conduct of Research) training as an integral part of the preparation and long term professional development of current and future generations of scientists and engineers. As a result, federal funding agencies are requiring educational institutions to develop training plans to ensure that all post-doctoral, undergraduate, and graduate students engaged in funded research activities receive Responsible Conduct of Research training.

NSF Notice on RCR Training Requirement

In responding to this requirement, the NSF published a revision to its *NSF Proposal & Award Policies and Procedures Guide* requiring that beginning January 4, 2010, institutions must certify that, at the time of proposal submission, the institution has a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who are supported by NSF.

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Notice on RCR

On Nov 24th, 2009, NIH updated its policy for instruction of trainees in the responsible conduct of research. The new updated policy states: "NIH requires that all trainees, fellows, participants, and scholars receiving support through any NIH training, career development award (individual or institutional), research education grant, and dissertation research grant must receive instruction in responsible conduct of research. This policy will take effect with all new and renewal applications submitted on or after January 25, 2010, and for all continuation (Type 5) applications with deadlines on or after January 1, 2011. This Notice applies to the following programs: D43, D71, F05, F30, F31, F32, F33, F34, F37, F38, K01, K02, K05, K07, K08, K12, K18, K22, K23, K24, K25, K26, K30, K99/R00, KL1, KL2, R25, R36, T15, T32, T34, T35, T36, T37,

T90/R90, TL1, TU2, and U2R. This policy also applies to any other NIH-funded programs supporting research training, career development, or research education that requires instruction in responsible conduct of research as stated in the relevant funding opportunity announcements.”

RCR Training at California State University, Fresno (Fresno State)

In an effort to ensure responsible conduct of research on the campus of Fresno State, and in order to provide valuable professional development to current and future generations of scientists and engineers, the University/Foundation requires all post-doc scientists and student research assistants to complete Responsible Conduct of Research training prior to being hired by a federal research grant.

Under the guidance of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Fresno State will utilize an existing on-line training program created by the [Center on Materials and Devices for Information Technology Research](#) with the support of the [National Science Foundation](#) as a minimum training requirement for both NSF and NIH grants.

Steps for Completing Required RCR Training

- Go on-line to www.responsible-research.org
- Register as an individual, selecting California State University, Fresno as the affiliate organization
- Complete all 3 modules of training (approximately 3 hours)
- Print out certificates of completion for each module
- Present Certificates of Completion of all modules to Foundation HR with other hiring forms

Students must provide proof of completion of the training to the Foundation Human Resources office **prior to commencing** any work on a federally funded grant.

If a student begins work on a grant prior to providing training certification to Foundation HR, students will be asked to cease all work immediately on the grant, complete the required training, and provide proof of completion to Foundation HR. Foundation HR will notify the Principal Investigator of the grant when the student has provided the proof and may begin work on the grant.

Principal Investigators on federal grants are responsible for ensuring that students are aware of the RCR training requirements and that the training has been completed and Certificates have been presented to Foundation HR.

Training certification will be good for a period of two (2) years. After two years, post-docs and students must be re-certified.

Additional RCR Training

Additional RCR training required in certain circumstances in the areas of human subjects protections and animal care and use can be completed as needed by visiting <http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php> and by face-to-face meetings between the PI and post-doc/student researcher.