

## **University of North Texas Plan for Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)**

### **Purpose of UNT RCR Plan**

Research institutions and researchers have an obligation to certify to funding agencies that they have a plan for appropriate instruction and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research.

The University of North Texas (UNT) is committed to instilling in our community of scholars a shared understanding and adherence to the principles of responsible conduct of research (RCR). UNT's RCR training plan was developed in 2010 in response to requirements adopted by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

### **NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)**

For NSF funding proposals, Section 7009 of the America COMPETES Act (42 U.S.C. 1862) requires that "each institution that applies for financial assistance from the Foundation for science and engineering research or education describe in its grant proposal a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers participating in the proposed research project."

For NSF awards received on proposals submitted on or after January 4, 2010, award recipients are required to conduct RCR training for all supported undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers.

This NSF RCR requirement can be satisfied by the learner's completion of an on-line CITI training course available through UNT's subscription to the **Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI)** administered by the University of Miami. The CITI website is located at: <https://www.citiprogram.org/>. Here are the CITI options for RCR courses by academic discipline:

- Engineering;
- Life Sciences;
- Physical Sciences;
- Social & Behavioral; and
- Arts & Humanities.

The CITI online RCR courses include a short quiz at the end of each module to assess the comprehension of the module by the student or postdoctoral researcher. Upon successful completion of all modules, a "Certificate of Completion" may be printed by the learner and provided to the Principal Investigator.

Principal Investigators are also encouraged to complete the CITI online RCR training and to initiate an ongoing dialogue with students and postdoctoral students about the responsible conduct of research.

(In addition to RCR topics, additional CITI online courses are available to UNT learners on the topics of human subjects research, live vertebrate animal research, and U.S. export controls compliance.)

## **NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH)**

The NIH also adopted RCR training requirements that apply to all trainees, fellows, participants, and scholars receiving support through any NIH training, career development award (individual or institutional), research education grant, or dissertation research grant with a new or renewal application submitted on or after January 25, 2010, and for all continuation (Type 5) applications with submission deadlines on or after January 1, 2011.

For these types of NIH awards, the RCR training must consist of a **combination** of:

- The **CITI online RCR course** for the appropriate academic discipline (as described above for NSF awards);

**AND**

- **Appropriate face-to-face training** presented by the Principal Investigator, the UNT Toulouse School of Graduate Studies, the UNT Office of Research & Innovation, or other sources; while the NIH guidelines do not include specific curricular requirements, the NIH provides the following as the topics which have been incorporated into most acceptable plans for instruction:
  - conflict of interest – personal, professional, and financial;
  - policies regarding human subjects, live vertebrate animal subjects in research, and safe laboratory practices;
  - mentor/mentee responsibilities and relationships;
  - collaborative research including collaborations with industry;
  - peer review;
  - data acquisition and laboratory tools; management, sharing and ownership;
  - research misconduct and policies for handling misconduct;
  - responsible authorship and publication;
  - the scientist as a responsible member of society, contemporary ethical issues in biomedical research, and the environmental and societal impacts of scientific research.

### **Documentation of RCR Training for NSF and NIH Awards**

1. The Principal Investigator (PI) will identify all students and postdoctoral researchers supported by awards from agencies requiring RCR training (currently the NSF and the NIH).
2. The PI will collect and maintain documentation of each trainee's RCR training (completion certificates from workshops and on-line courses, certification of date and nature of laboratory-specific training, etc.) and will encourage each trainee to keep a copy of her/his own training documentation as well. The records maintained by the PI may be requested for review by the funding agency and by appropriate UNT administrators (Chairs, Deans, Graduate School, Office of Research and Innovation, etc.).

**Institutional Designees:**

Associate Dean for Research and Professional Development  
Robert B. Toulouse School of Graduate Studies  
University of North Texas  
1155 Union Circle #305459  
Denton, TX 76203-5017

Research Integrity Officer  
Office of Research and Innovation  
University of North Texas  
1155 Union Circle #310979  
Denton, TX 76203-5017