

Whitworth University
Plan for Training in Responsible Conduct of Research 2010

Whitworth University is committed to high standards of excellence and integrity in research and scholarly endeavors. We believe that staff, faculty and students who are involved in research should have adequate training in the responsible conduct of research and ethics. In the case of sponsored research, principal investigators (PIs) are expected to use all resources effectively and efficiently, and are responsible for the direction and scholarly activities and training of undergraduate students and laboratory staff. This responsibility includes familiarizing oneself with the appropriate standards of the Responsible Conduct of Research and ensuring compliance with institutional policy, federal and state regulations, guidelines, and sponsor requirements.

National Science Foundation Announcement

The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, education in RCR is considered essential in the preparation of future scientists and engineers. Section 7009 of the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education and Science Act (42 U.S.C. 1862) requires that each institution that applies for financial assistance from the NSF 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. <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-19930.htm>

Implementation date:

Jan. 4, 2010, proposal submissions, including sub-awards

Institutional Responsibilities

1. Each institution must have a plan in place to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be supported by NSF (or NIH) to conduct research. As noted in NSG GPG Chapter II.C.e, institutional certification of this effect is required for each proposal.
2. Training plans are not required to be included in proposals, but are subject to review, upon request.
3. An institution must designate one or more persons to oversee compliance with the RCR training requirement.
4. Institutions are responsible for verifying that undergraduate students, graduate students and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF to conduct research have received training in the responsible and ethical conduct of research.

Nine Instructional Areas

- Data Acquisition, Management, Sharing and Ownership
- Conflict of Interest and Commitment
- Human Subjects
- Animal Welfare
- Research Misconduct
- Publication Practices and Responsible Authorship
- Mentor/Trainee Responsibilities
- Peer Review
- Collaborative Science

Discussions of responsible conduct of research are regularly woven into class instruction, and plagiarism is address in all syllabi. The Institutional Review Board reviews all research proposals involving human subjects to ensure compliance with human subjects' protocol and adherence to professional ethical standards. The university does not currently conduct research with animals; however, by fall 2011, with the addition of a vibrarium, an IACUC committee will be formed. The university's Science & Society Series is designed to address ethical issues at the intersection of science and society.

Covered Population

The RCR training requirement will apply to paid and unpaid undergraduate students, faculty and staff who are supported by federal awards funded from proposals submitted on or after Jan. 4, 2010. Beginning on that date, the university AOR will sign the certification page in proposals stating that the university has a plan to train undergraduate students, graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in RCR.

Training

RCR training will be accomplished with the use of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) RCR training course. The CITI training module includes a test at the end of the course which will be used to assess the competency of the researcher. A minimum "passing" aggregate score is 80 percent for all course modules. The appropriate training module will be designated by the faculty mentor/principal investigator.

Whitworth Training and Verification Process

1. The faculty mentor will provide the RCR administrator with a list of participants and the required competency for each.
2. Each individual researcher affiliated with Whitworth University will register with CITI, complete the required training module, and send a copy of the certificate(s) of completion to the RCR administrator and to the PI.
3. Compliance will be certified when the RCR administrator receives a copy of the certificate of completion. Evidence of training for new team members should be provided for each research period during which new members join the project.
4. Grant accounts will not be released until training is certified.

5. Certification is valid for four (4) years.
6. It is the PIs responsibility to encourage the research team to comply with the training protocols.
7. Institutional records will be kept in the Whitworth Sponsored Programs Office, and PIs will be notified periodically of the status of those under their mentorship using searchable databases. The sponsored programs office will review compliance annually and will provide necessary notifications to faculty and students.
8. The Internal Approval Form which PIs must fill out prior to submission of a grant application will include a question about RCR to remind PIs about their responsibilities.

Implementation Phases

1. Faculty submitting a new education or research grant proposal or supplemental funding request to NSF or NIH after Jan. 1, 2010, must complete the appropriate CITI RCR course with six (6) weeks of the proposal submission.
2. All PIs with active NSF or NIH grants must complete the appropriate CITI RCR course and submit certification by 6/1/10. Further, all researchers involved in research supported by NSF and NIH must complete the CITI RCR course as specified by the PI. This includes student researchers and all other personnel who will receive compensation from NSF and NIH grants.
3. All PIs submitting a new education or research grant proposal or supplemental funding request to any federal agency on or after July 1, 2010, must complete the appropriate CITI RCR course within six (6) weeks of proposal submission.
4. All PIs with an active federal grants involving research and/or education must complete the appropriate CITI RCR course and submit certification by 7/1/10. Furthermore, all researchers involved in this federally funded research must complete the CITI RCR course as specified by the PI. This includes faculty, students and laboratory staff.

Consequences of Not Completing Required Training

A new grant account will not be established until the PI has submitted certification that s/he has successfully completed the course. Researchers – whether PIs or students – will not receive compensation from the grant until they have successfully completed the course and submitted the appropriate certification.

For more information:
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