

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

**UNT RCR Plan**

The University of North Texas is committed to instilling in our community of scholars a shared understanding and adherence to the principles of responsible conduct of research. UNT's RCR training plan (Plan) has been developed in response to Section 7009 of the America COMPETES Act (42 U.S.C. 1862), which 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, we are required to conduct RCR training for all supported undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers. RCR training requirements also apply to all trainees, fellows, participants, and scholars receiving support through any NIH training, career development award, research education grant, and dissertation research grant effective January 25, 2010. The Plan should be considered a working document and may be used in fulfillment of future RCR requirements from other agencies. The UNT Plan is not required to be included in NSF proposals, but is subject to review upon request.

UNT has and will continue to develop a menu of options, both face-to-face and on-line, for meeting the RCR requirements including but not limited to the following:

**On-Line Training**

*Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative Courses.* UNT subscribes to on-line RCR training offered by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) RCR training course. Each CITI training module includes a test at the end of the course which is used to assess the competency of the student or postdoctoral researcher. The basic CITI RCR training offers core elements and training in the context of various disciplinary categories. Additional CITI courses are available in the use of human subjects, and in the use of animals in research.

**Face-to-Face Training**

*Discipline-Based RCR Coursework.* Some academic units at UNT offer coursework with specific training in RCR.

*Ethical Choices Seminars.* The UNT Toulouse School of Graduate Studies plans to develop a university-wide seminar series for trainees affected by these requirements. The seminars would each include an overview of responsible conduct of research and then cover some important topical area such as data ownership, conflict of interest, scientific misconduct, mentor/mentee responsibilities, etc.

*Compliance Workshops.* UNT offers face-to-face compliance training in a number of research areas, such as human subjects, animal welfare, and laboratory safety. This training is offered routinely according to a workshop schedule: <http://research.unt.edu/training/index.htm>. UNT will continue to offer workshops responsive to campus needs and supplement the schedule with additional training as needed to further trainees' understanding of the principles of RCR.

*Laboratory-Specific Training.* In contexts requiring specialized RCR training specific to a research program or laboratory, or when other face-to-face RCR training alternatives are not feasible for the trainee's circumstances, UNT researchers may provide face-to-face RCR training to the students and/or post-doctoral researchers. It is the responsibility of each UNT Principal Investigator (PI) to ensure that her/his trainees achieve basic RCR competency.

## **Monitoring**

The CITI program provides a certificate of completion when the trainee passes the RCR course. Documentation for face-to-face training can include syllabi for academic courses, record of attendance (or certificate of completion) provided by university-wide workshops, and/or written certification of content covered in laboratory-specific RCR training. Monitoring for RCR compliance will be managed as follows:

1. The PI will identify students and postdoctoral researchers supported by awards from agencies requiring RCR training (currently NSF and NIH, but may include others in the future).
2. The PI will ensure that each student and/or postdoctoral researcher has completed the following minimum RCR training within 90 days of beginning work on the project, or before the completion of the project, whichever is sooner:
  - A. A structured academic course in the responsible conduct of research that is both comprehensive in terms of researcher responsibilities, and relevant to the trainee's involvement in the project.

### ***OR***

B. BOTH of the following:

1. The basic CITI RCR on-line course

### ***AND***

2. Appropriate face-to-face RCR training, which can include university-wide Ethical Choices Seminars, Compliance Workshops, and/or Laboratory-Specific Training.
3. The PI will collect and maintain documentation of each trainee's RCR training (certificate from workshops and on-line courses, copy of course syllabus, certification of date and nature of laboratory-specific training, etc.) and will encourage each trainee to keep a copy her/his own training documentation as well. The records maintained by the PI may be requested for review by appropriate UNT administrators (chairs, deans, Graduate School, Office of Research and Economic Development, etc.).

4. The UNT internal proposal routing form will include the following within the PI certification:
  - I certify I have read and understand the UNT policy and procedures for responding to allegations of research misconduct.
  - I certify that, if awarded, I will ensure that all student researchers and/or postdoctoral fellows undergo responsible conduct of research training.

**Institutional Designees:**

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