

Responsible Conduct of Research Policy and Training Plan

Randolph College and Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

Randolph College is committed to active participation in the creation of knowledge and engagement in the broader community of scholars. The College community recognizes that we as scholars have an obligation to ourselves and to one another to conduct and communicate our research bound and informed by standards of ethical conduct of research such as are addressed in this document. As a community of honor, we embrace integrity, respect for others and respect for truth, and the value of inquiry. Our commitment to ethical research is grounded in our conviction that it is intrinsically good and that it is instrumentally critical to the shared, sustainable creation of knowledge.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to commit to writing a set of principles and practices through which we communicate to one another and to external constituents, such as funding entities, our commitment to the ethical conduct of research.

In 2007, the America COMPETES Act went into effect and required that all institutions submitting proposals to the National Science Foundation (NSF) have a plan for the “appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research.”¹ The NSF requires applying institutions to certify that a plan is in place for training and oversight of student researchers participating in NSF sponsored projects. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) requires that grant applicants provide a plan for RCR and includes specific guidance about the training subject matter, format of instruction, frequency, degree of faculty participation, and trainee attendance.²

Research integrity is of the upmost importance to the Randolph College community, therefore all individuals performing federally funded research must complete RCR training. All individuals performing research, funded or not, are highly encouraged to complete the online RCR training.

Sources

¹ National Science Foundation – Responsible Conduct of Research

² National Institutes of Health – Research Integrity

Oversight of RCR Training Compliance at Randolph College

The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College holds overall responsibility for compliance with the College’s RCR policy and training plan. The Sponsored Programs Officer supports compliance efforts and makes recommendations for the improvement of the RCR training plan. See *Principal Investigator RCR Training Responsibilities* (below) for the Principal Investigator’s role in RCR training compliance.

A RCR working group advises the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College. The working group consists of the Director for the Center for Student Research, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee chair, the Institutional Review Board chair, the Sponsored Programs Officer, and the Research Compliance Officer.

Principal Investigator RCR Training Responsibility

Principal Investigators have the primary responsibility for assuring that all individuals performing federally funded research with them complete RCR training. This includes anyone receiving wages, working as a volunteer, or receiving academic credit for participating in federally funded research.

Principal Investigators submitting federal proposals must indicate on the College's Sign-Off Transmittal that they will comply with the RCR training requirements. The Sign-Off Transmittal must be completed and approved before a proposal can be submitted.

Principal Investigators and individuals trained in RCR must document and certify completion of all grant-related RCR training on the Research Training Certification Form. Training must be finalized prior to the start of the research. Completed certification forms, signed by the researcher and Principal Investigator, must be submitted to the Sponsored Programs Officer prior to the start of the research.

Training Plan

Faculty

Faculty participating in federally funded research must complete online RCR training through Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). The CITI training is valid for four years. If a faculty member does not have a federal grant at the end of the four years, retraining does not need to occur again until another federal grant is awarded. Faculty are encouraged to stay abreast of research ethics when working on any research project.

Faculty members need to submit a copy of the CITI certification (electronic or paper) to the Principal Investigator upon completion of the online training, who in turn will submit it to the Sponsored Programs Officer.

Principal Investigators are responsible for training participating students and volunteers in RCR. Such faculty should familiarize them with the entirety of the College's RCR policy and training plan.

Students

All Randolph College undergraduate and graduate students participating in federally funded research must complete RCR training. Students from other institutions participating in federally funded research at Randolph College must also complete the RCR training.

Training is required for students once every four years and must occur *before* work on the federally funded research project begins. In addition to certification of completion of CITI training, student researchers must receive discussion-based content from faculty in face-to-face sessions addressing issues and challenges in research ethics. For information about additional NIH funded project requirements, see *NIH Funded Projects and RCR Requirements*.

RCR Online Training

Each researcher must successfully complete CITI's Basic RCR training. CITI will provide all individuals with a certification of completion, which should be submitted to the Principal Investigator, who will submit it to the Sponsored Programs Officer.

The required CITI Responsible Conduct of Research Basic Module includes the following sections:

- Authorship
- Collaborative Research
- Conflicts of Interest
- Data Management
- Financial Responsibility
- Mentoring
- Peer Review
- Research Misconduct
- Plagiarism
- Research Involving Human Subjects
- Using Animal Subjects in Research

Optional Responsible Conduct of Research Modules available from CITI:

- Environmental and Social Dimensions of Engineering Research
- Export Controls and National Security
- Research, Ethics, and Society*

*The Research, Ethics, and Society module is required for all NIH funded projects. For more information about NIH funded project requirements, see *NIH Funded Projects and RCR Requirements*.

Visit the [CITI website](#) to complete the RCR modules. To create a new account with CITI, click Register. To access a current account, click Log In. Any of the modules listed above can be added to any Randolph College student, faculty, or staff CITI account.

Face-to-Face/Discussion-Based Training

Faculty who work with students on federally funded projects must also provide discussion-based training. At a minimum, each of the topics addressed in the CITI modules need to be discussed as they apply to particular research endeavors. Faculty are encouraged to discuss additional relevant topics such as lab safety. Other training resources are listed in *Additional RCR Training Resources* at the end of this policy. Projects funded by the NIH require a minimum of eight contact hours of face-to-face training between faculty and students.

Discussion-based training sessions must be certified on the Responsible Conduct of Research Training Certification Form.

NIH Funded Projects and RCR Requirements

Individuals performing research on NIH funded projects need to complete the online CITI training, including the additional *Research, Ethics, and Society* CITI module, and at least eight hours of face-to-face discussions. NIH Principal Investigators must read the NIH guidelines about Responsible Conduct of Research and provide all necessary training as described by the NIH to individuals performing research on his/her NIH grant. The guidelines may be found on the NIH website, [Update on the Requirement for Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research](#). Guidelines for the instructional component include format, subject matter, faculty participation, duration of instruction, and frequency of instruction. There are additional special considerations by type of award.

Additional RCR Training Resources

[Council of Graduate Schools – Project for Scholarly Integrity: Resources](#)

[National Institutes of Health: Responsible Conduct of Research Training](#)

[National Science Foundation: Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

[Randolph College Institutional Review Board](#)

[Randolph College Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#)

[Randolph College Research Misconduct Policy](#)

[The Office of Research Integrity: RCR General Resources](#)

[The Office of Research Integrity: The Lab \(interactive videos\)](#)