

New Mexico State University Institutional Plan for Responsible Conduct in Research Student Training

Requirements. A growing number of funding agencies require that all sponsored undergraduate students, graduate students and postdoctoral scientists receive training and oversight in the responsible conduct in research (RCR). Because of the oversight responsibility, faculty and research staff working with these students must meet the same training requirements and their training should be included in project plans. Because the records of training are subject to audit, training must be tracked and logged in a central system, in a manner similar to the tracking of safety, animal subject research, and human subject research training. This plan is designed to meet those requirements, by inclusion or reference in funding proposals. Current versions of this plan, related forms, links to online training, and links to other available training resources will be maintained at <http://research.nmsu.edu/rcr>.

Background. Some funding agencies do not specify the content of the RCR training. Instead, institutions and principal investigators (PIs) must independently determine what is required, how participants will be trained, how participant training will be tracked, and how frequently the training will be repeated. The following nine areas are commonly used to develop RCR training: 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; and Collaborative Science. Due to the breadth of research at NMSU (engineering, education, life and physical sciences, behavioral science, etc.), we do not believe it an effective strategy to provide extensive broadly mandated training; instead practices should emerge from the research needs and issues of the different constituencies as they engage in these discussions. Moreover, some fields, such as engineering, already have rigorous RCR training in place. Eventually, our goal is to develop institutional training workshops and online training in response to faculty requests as the training is implemented.

Procedures. For any award for which an RCR training requirement applies, PIs must submit an RCR training plan for all sponsored students and the faculty and staff working with them. The plan shall include any training required by the funding agency, and may also include any additional training the PI believes should be required of sponsored students and research staff on the project. A template form is available to facilitate documentation of the plan. It is the PIs responsibility to designate any additional training required for participants in this award and the frequency with which the training must be repeated, and to semi-annually report on the training of grant participants. Another template is available to report the actual attendance of those required to be trained.

NMSU PIs will draw on four institutional courses that will form the core of the required training. All grant researchers must complete (or have completed) online training in a general RCR course (contract pending) and Research Conduct Policies and Procedures – RCPP (currently under development) as quickly as feasible after their engagement on the project. Additionally:

- Grant researchers who work with vertebrate animals must complete IACUC training; see [website](#) for more information.
- Grant researchers who work with human participants must complete IRB training; see [website](#) for more information.

In addition, faculty are encouraged to require all sponsored graduate students to complete a formal course incorporating research ethics within their first two years of graduate study. A list of all graduate and undergraduate courses that address RCR and social, ethical and legal implications of research is posted at <http://research.nmsu.edu/rcr>.