Instruction in Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

Overview

It is expected that all researchers in the Temple community carry out their work according to the highest ethical and professional standards. Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Training is a framework for imparting these “best practice” standards, and is increasingly regarded as a critical component of scholarly and career development. For 20 years, Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training has been mandated for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows and faculty funded by NIH training grants and career awards, and there are new standards for this training as of January 24th 2010: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-10-019.html. As of January 4th 2010, RCR training is also required for undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-19930.htm. Beyond these regulations, RCR training is strongly encouraged for all researchers, regardless of funding source or field of study. Accordingly, a number of academic programs at Temple are integrating RCR topics into their curricula. The recent expansion of RCR beyond biomedicine to a diversity of disciplines provides all investigators at Temple, from undergraduate to faculty member, with the opportunity to learn about the principles and practices that govern and enhance their work.

Topics covered in an RCR training program:

Publication Practices and Responsible Authorship
Peer Review
Mentor and Trainee Relationships
Conflicts of Interest and Commitment
Collaborative Research
Data Acquisition, Sharing, and Ownership
Research Misconduct
Protection of Human Subjects
Animal Welfare
Contemporary Ethical Issues in Science

RCR at Temple

For students and postdoctoral fellows affiliated with Biomedical Graduate Programs at TUSM contact Dr. Scott Shore at sks@temple.edu. All other students and fellows
(e.g. those training at Temple’s main campus) should contact Dr. Zebulon V. Kendrick at zkend@temple.edu.

Be sure to check with your mentor or professor to determine which of the other regulatory compliance courses or modules you should complete (see http://www.temple.edu/ovpr/ehrs/course_finder/index.asp).

**RCR Regulations**

*Requirements effective January 4, 2010*

- At the time of proposal submission, institution must certify that the institution has a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in RCR to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF.

- Training plans are not required to be included in the submission to NSF (but are subject to review upon request by NSF).

- An institution must designate one or more persons to oversee compliance with the RCR training requirement.

- 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.

**NIH RCR Training Requirements**

Training grant and career award applicants are required to include a plan for their training in RCR. It is important to review the specific terms of the award announcement to determine what is required as this may vary with the type and level of award. However, NIH recently released a notice outlining new standards for RCR training and these requirements are effective January 25, 2010. Note that training plans must address in full the 5 instructional components: format, faculty participation, subject matter, duration, and frequency of instruction, and that on-line training alone is not considered sufficient.

NIH Notice: Update on the Requirement for Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research, November 24, 2009
To access this notice, go to http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-10-019.html

Here is summary of the current requirements:

- Effective January 25, 2010 for new and renewal apps and January 1, 2011 for continuations
- Covers a broad range of training and career development awards

This Notice applies to the following programs: D43, D71, F05, F30, F31, F32, F33, F34, F37, F38, K01, K02, K05, K07, K08, K12, K18, K22, K23, K24, K25, K26, K30, K99/R00, KL1, KL2, R25, R36, T15, T32, T34, T35, T36, T37, T90/R90, TL1, TU2, and U2R.

- Provides definition and six “basic principles” of RCR that refer to value of training and importance of faculty participation
- RCR to be evaluated on the criteria of 5 “Instructional Components”: Format, Subject Matter, Faculty Participation, Duration, and Frequency
  - Format: On-line alone is not acceptable; “substantial” face-to-face discussion required; combination of didactic and small-group discussion is highly encouraged
  - Subject Matter: 9 topics to be covered
  - Faculty Participation: Training faculty and sponsors/mentors are highly encouraged to contribute to formal and informal instruction; senior fellows and awardees may fulfill their requirement by participating as lecturers or discussion leaders; rotation of faculty is suggested
  - Duration of Instruction: “Substantive contact hours” is required – minimum of eight contact hours; semester long courses preferred over single day workshops
  - Frequency of Instruction: Tailor RCR training to each career stage; must be taken once at each stage and at a frequency of no less than once every four years. Instruction beginning in graduate school is highly encouraged

- There are special considerations by type of award
  - Institutional programs (T’s, K12, K30) are encouraged to provide training for all individuals associated with the program regardless of their source of support
  - On-line training may be appropriate for short-term programs (i.e., those lasting less than 6 months)
- **Individual awardees** are encouraged to tailor their programs to their own needs (going beyond formal instruction...individualized plan to supplement institutional RCR program)

- Applications must include detailed plan covering above 5 criteria

- Peer Review: Plans for, and past record of, instruction in RCR will be rated as ACCEPTABLE or UNACCEPTABLE. Results of the review will be reported as an administrative note in summary panel with explanation. Applications with unacceptable plans will not be funded until plan is revised.

- Reporting Requirements
  - Continuation applications must describe RCR instruction in terms of 5 instructional components.
  - Reporting requirements are slightly different for each type of award

- Compliance: It is expected that course attendance is monitored and that a certificate or documentation of participation is available upon course completion. NIH expects the institution to maintain records sufficient to demonstrate that NIH-supported trainees, fellows, and scholars have received the required instruction.