Union College

Policy for Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research

(Last updated 6/17/2015)

1. BACKGROUND

In response to the America COMPETES (Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science) Act, Section 7009, effective January 2010, the National Science Foundation requires that institutions receiving NSF grant funds in which undergraduate, graduate students, or postdocs are listed as research personnel, must provide Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training to those individuals participating in the research project. RCR training is also required for National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant programs with a training component that requires instruction in responsible conduct of research as noted in the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

1.1. National Science Foundation (NSF) Policy on Responsible Conduct of Research

The NSF “Proposal and Award Policies and Procedure Guide”\(^1\) provides detailed information about the assurances required of all grant applicants and award recipients. Background information and details on institutional responsibilities pertaining to RCR are documented in Part II: Award and Administration Guide (AAG), Section IV. Grantee Standards, Part B. Responsible Conduct of Research\(^2\).

1.2. National Institutes of Health (NIH) Policy on Responsible Conduct of Research

The purpose of the NIH “Update on the Requirement for Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research”\(^3\) is to update the agency’s policy on instruction in the responsible conduct of research, convey some of the consensus best practices that have evolved in the research training community over the past two decades, and to provide access to additional information that may be useful to institutions and individuals in meeting their obligations under NIH policy.

2. TRAINING PLAN

This policy and procedures are designed to assist faculty investigators and student researchers, funded through an NSF grant or an NIH grant with a training component, in completing the requirement for training in RCR.

2.1. Training Participants

Only students who are contributing to an NSF or NIH funded research effort as part of a current/active NSF or NIH grant shall be required to satisfactorily complete a training course or module(s) on the RCR. See the Training Methods section below for general guidelines on training methods based on levels of participation in research activities.

2.2. Training Timeframe

Faculty PIs are responsible for ensuring their student research assistants complete the training at the start of work on
the research project or no later than within one (1) academic term or during the summer research period immediately following the initiation of NSF or NIH-funded student research.

2.3. Training Methods
Faculty PIs have the option to:
1. Design customized training modules for their research assistants; or
2. Use the online NSF Ethics CORE Digital Library at http://nationalethicscenter.org/register

2.3.1. Guidelines for Levels of Participation in Training
To determine the amount of training in RCR that is sufficient and appropriate for the student researchers, the PI may wish to consider students’ time commitment and level of involvement in the sponsored research activities. Those participating in research for an abbreviated amount of time may be well suited to take a basic training course, whereas summer research assistants, for example, would need a course with more in-depth exposure to issues relevant to the RCR.

2.3.2. Instructions for Students – Completing the RCR Training Requirement
The faculty researcher will provide the student with training material or direct the student to use the online tool. Students using the online Ethics CORE Digital Library must follow these steps:

1. Set up an Ethics CORE account at http://nationalethicscenter.org/register
   a. Complete the Create New Account web form (note: for the Organization or School you will need to type Union College in the text box)
   b. At the bottom of the page, click the Create New Account button
   c. You will receive an email message from Ethics CORE; click the link provided in the email message to activate your account.
2. Once you are logged into your Ethics CORE account, click the RCR Modules from CMDITR link on the top navigation bar
   a. If this is your first time accessing the RCR modules, click the RCR User Account Registration link in the third bullet for “New Users”
      i. On the New User Registration page, under “What group are you affiliated with?” select Union College from the drop-down list
      ii. Click the Register button
   b. If you are returning to the RCR modules to continue/complete the training tutorial, click the Continue Tutorials link in the second bullet for “Returning Users.”
3. Complete Module 1. Rights and Obligations, sections 1.0 through 1.54
4. Inform the faculty member you’re working with that you’ve completed the RCR training.
2.3.3. Instructions for Faculty – Reporting Completion of the RCR Training Requirement

The Grants Office will email an RCR Training reminder to all PIs and co-PIs in early June, early September, and early January each year. The email will include a link to the RCR Training Activity Sheet (also available on the Grants Office website, under Policies & Forms). Upon completion of the training in a timely fashion, the faculty PI will:

1. Complete the RCR Training Activity Sheet
   - For all NSF grants, list “other” research personnel including undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or post-docs compensated through the grant (i.e., budget category B. Other Personnel, lines B.1., B.3., and B.4.).
   - For NIH grants, list all trainees, fellows, participants, and scholars receiving support through any NIH-funded program that requires instruction in responsible conduct of research (as stated in the relevant funding opportunity announcement).

2. Print, sign, and date the RCR Training Activity Sheet

3. You may attach Certificates of Completion from on-line training programs/modules, if applicable.

4. Return the RCR Training Activity Sheet and any applicable attachments via campus mail to Lisa Mason, Grants Office, College Relations or email masonl@union.edu

3. TRAINING ADMINISTRATION

The Director of Sponsored Programs shall inform PIs of this training in RCR requirement during the pre-award/proposal preparation process. The PIs and co-PIs will receive an email reminder and shall complete the RCR Training Activity Sheet as described above and return to the Assistant Director of Foundation, Corporate & Government Relations.

1 NSF Proposal and Award Policies and Procedure Guide:
   http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf15001/gpg_index.jsp


4 Module 1 satisfies Union’s policy for training in RCR, however faculty are encouraged to also have their students, when appropriate, complete Module 2: Collaboration, Communication and Grants Management and/or Module 3: Intellectual Property