

## Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) – Weinberg College

**The National Science Foundation (NSF)** mandates that, at time of proposal submission, institutions must have a plan in place to provide appropriate RCR training and oversight to all undergraduate students, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows conducting research supported by NSF. This document focuses on compliance with the NSF regulations.

The **National Institutes for Health** also requires training in the responsible conduct of research.

NSF training policy can be found [here](#).

Training conducted at prior institutions does not fulfill Northwestern's requirements. Refresher training is required any time a trainee transitions to a different level appointment. For example, a graduate student who completes their degree and is appointed postdoctoral fellow is required to repeat both online and in-person training.

### Department Administration

Each department with undergraduate students, graduate students, or postdoctoral fellows supported by NSF funding is responsible for the submission of an annual written NSF RCR plan (9/1) to the Weinberg Dean's Office for review and submittal to the Office for Research Integrity. Departments are responsible for all personnel appointed in their department regardless of the unit in which the NSF grant is managed. The plan must include:

- The department contact for RCR coordination
- Training identified by audience
- Topics covered
- Time frame for completion
- Method of delivery
- Process for dealing with non-compliance
- **A minimum of 4 hours of in-person instruction is required for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows.** The Graduate School created a common number (e.g., TGS 519) that can be used by departments for their discussion course. This will be a zero-credit course, graded P/N, based minimally on attendance in the course. Departments also have the flexibility to incorporate RCR training into existing courses.

## Graduate Students & Postdoctoral Fellows

It is the responsibility of the principal investigators with NSF funding to inform graduate students and post-doctoral fellows about the following RCR training requirements. Notifications from myHR Learn will also be auto-generated to these individuals.

- Complete the appropriate online [CITI course](#) within one year of salary charges
- Attend all seminar sessions (TGS 519) organized by the home department at the first available opportunity. The course must be completed within one year of salary charges.
- **If training is not complete within one year of initial salary and benefit charges, all charges will be moved from the grant to the department operating chartstring.** If the graduate student or postdoctoral fellow leaves Northwestern within one year and has not completed training, all salary charges must be moved from the grant to the department operating chartstring.

## Undergraduate Graduate Students

It is the responsibility of the principal investigators with NSF funding to inform undergraduate students about the following RCR training requirement. Notifications from myHR Learn will also be auto generated to these individuals.

- Complete the appropriate online [CITI course](#) within 60 days of salary charges
- **If training is not complete within 60 days of initial salary and benefit charges, all charges will be moved from the grant to the department operating chartstring.** If the student leaves Northwestern within the 60-day period and has not completed the training, all salary charges will be moved from the grant to the department operating chartstring.

## Faculty

- Faculty, particularly those funded by NSF or those who lead RCR discussion sections, are encouraged, but not required, to complete the CITI online course.

### Useful Resources and Links

[NSF FAQ](#)

[CITI Program](#)

[Office for Research Integrity](#)

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