

Responsible Conduct of Research Requirement for NSF

Beginning on Jan. 4, 2010, for any grant submission to the National Science Foundation (NSF), the AOR (Authorized Organizational Representative) is required to certify that the institution has a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be supported by NSF to conduct research. Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) is defined as following by the NSF:

1. Background

The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, education in RCR is considered essential in the preparation of future scientists and engineers. Section 7009 of the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) Act (42 U.S.C. 1862o-1 requires that "each institution that applies for financial assistance from the Foundation for science and engineering research or education describe in its grant proposal a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers participating in the proposed research project."

The language specified below provides NSF's implementation of Section 7009.

2. Institutional Responsibilities

- a. An institution must have a plan in place to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be supported by NSF to conduct research. As noted in GPG Chapter II.C.1e, institutional certification to this effect is required for each proposal.
- b. While training plans are not required to be included in proposals submitted to NSF, institutions are advised that they are subject to review, upon request.
- c. An institution must designate one or more persons to oversee compliance with the RCR training requirement.
- d. 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. (http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf10_1/aag_4.jsp)

St. Norbert College's Responsible Conduct of Research Plan

All St. Norbert College undergraduate, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be supported by the NSF to conduct research will be required to have a current certificate on file demonstrating that they have successfully completed human subjects training and/or animal subjects training, as relevant to the research project.

Because the content and context of each research project matters and training can vary by discipline, undergraduate, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be supported by the NSF to conduct research will also receive mentoring from the faculty principal investigator regarding the ethical conduct of research as it pertains to their field. Principle Investigators will work with their researchers to help them recognize and identify ethical issues in their field, including, but not limited to, adequate sample size, accuracy of data collection,

developing alternative hypotheses, developing a non-biased approach to research, and transparency of methodology. Principal investigators will briefly summarize (1 page maximum) how they have mentored their researcher(s) regarding the responsible and ethical conduct of research.

The Chair of the Institutional Review Board will oversee compliance with the RCR training requirement and is responsible for verifying that undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF to conduct research have received the training in the responsible and ethical conduct of research outlined above.

At the end of each grant period, a copy of 1. the student's certificate(s) of completion for human subjects training and/or animal subjects training and 2. the principal investigator's summary (1 page maximum) must be on file with the Chair of the Institutional Review Board.