UCLA Implementation of the NSF RCR Requirement - FAQs

Q1. *Who is required to take this training?*

The federal America COMPETES Act requires that at a minimum, all students (undergraduate and graduate) and postdoctoral scholars supported under awards resulting from NSF proposals submitted on or after January 4, 2010 to support research or research training, receive formal education in the responsible and ethical conduct of research.

Under UCLA's implementation of the NSF requirements, **_all_** individuals supported by (that is, receiving salary or a stipend) these NSF awards are expected to complete the on-line RCR course that was developed by a UCLA faculty committee.

Please note: The Principal Investigator and others who are working on an NSF project, but who do not receive salary or stipend support are not required to take the course. They are, however, encouraged to do so.

Q2. *How will people know that they must take the training?*

Employees, including Graduate Student Researchers and Postdoctoral Scholars who have been assigned department e-mail addresses, who are supported on an NSF award, and who are required to take the course, will receive an initial notice and several reminder e-mails via the UCLA Learning Management System (LMS).

Other students (undergraduate and graduate) and Postdoctoral Scholars working on NSF grants will receive e-mail notifications that provide them with instructions about how to access the course through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) website.

Q3. *When does the training need to be completed?*

The course should be completed as soon as possible after an individual begins receiving NSF support.

Q4. *Where can the UCLA implementation plan be found?*

The UCLA implementation plan is posted on the Research Policy and Compliance website:
http://ora.research.ucla.edu/RPC/Documents/RevisedPlanforNSFRCREducationalProgram.pdf

Q5. *Can completion of other training be substituted for the UCLA NSF RCR course?*

No. The UCLA on-line course is required.

Individuals who may have completed an RCR course at another academic institution will be expected to complete the UCLA NSF RCR course. Individuals who have completed the course while supported on one NSF award at UCLA will not have to retake the course if they move to another NSF award.

Please note that the RCR course is distinct from other training modules such as the use of human or animal research subjects.

Q6. *Is completion of the on-line RCR course all that is required to meet the NSF requirement?*

Yes. Completion of the course will fulfill the minimum NSF requirements. However, Principal Investigators are encouraged to augment this core course with additional reading, discussion and other mentoring and training activities.

Q7. *What does the course cover*?

The course is based on the National Academy of Sciences text *On Being a Scientist* (3rd edition), which can be downloaded at no cost. Instructions for downloading the text are given within the UCLA NSF RCR course. Topics covered include advising and mentoring; protection of research subjects; treatment of data; mistakes and negligence; research misconduct; sharing of research results; suspected violation of professional standards; laboratory safety; and authorship and the allocation of credit.

Q8. How long will it take to complete the course?

It should take an average of 2-2½ hours to complete the course. The course does not have to be completed in a single log-on session. If an individual leaves the on-line training session before completing it, LMS will remember where the session was interrupted and will start from there.

Q9. *Can an individual retake the course once it has been completed?*

Yes. The completed course can be revisited at any time using LMS or CITI.

Q10. *What is the America COMPETES Act?*

The America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act, otherwise known as the America COMPETES Act, was signed into law on August 9, 2007. The overarching goals of the America COMPETES Act are to increase research investment; strengthen educational opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics from elementary through graduate school; and develop an innovative infrastructure.