



# WHITMAN COLLEGE

## Responsible Conduct of Research Training Policy

The 2007 America COMPETES Act directs the NSF to require that all funded students and postdoctoral researchers undergo training in the responsible conduct of research (RCR) (see <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/rcr.jsp>). The implementation of this requirement (effective January 4, 2010) requires that all institutions submitting proposals to NSF must certify that they have a training plan in place for undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral scholars who will be supported by NSF to conduct research.

In addition, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has declared that all institutions receiving PHS funding must have written policies and procedures for addressing allegations of research misconduct and that research trainees must receive instruction in the responsible conduct of research (see [http://grants.nih.gov/grants/research\\_integrity/index.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/grants/research_integrity/index.htm)). Further information can be found at the NIH's [Office of Research Integrity](#).

Whitman College has determined that all students who are conducting federally-funded research must receive instruction in the responsible conduct of research. Institutions are responsible for verifying that their undergraduate students (as well as graduate students and postdoctoral scholars) receive training.

To fulfill the RCR requirement, all federally-funded research students at Whitman College are required to take an online RCR tutorial. The tutorial, provided by Ethics CORE, can be accessed here: [https://nationalethicscenter.org/index.php?option=com\\_rcrtutorial](https://nationalethicscenter.org/index.php?option=com_rcrtutorial).

You must register as a new user, affiliate yourself with the "Whitman College RCR" group and then proceed through the online tutorial modules. The Sponsored Program Coordinator will provide further instructions. It is recommended that the students' supervisor discuss the issues involved in the responsible conduct of research with the students and reinforce the ethical concepts taught in the modules. It is estimated that the on-line training will take 1-2 hours to complete. A student does not have to complete the training in one sitting. Once a student has taken the RCR training course, his or her certification will be valid until graduation. He/she will not have to retake the course each year.

Whitman's Sponsored Program Coordinator will generate a list of federally-funded student researchers each spring. Students who have not undergone RCR training will be sent a message informing them that they will need to complete the Ethics CORE course *before they start work*. The students' faculty mentors will also be informed that their students must fulfill this requirement. The Sponsored Program Coordinator will manage the online group and ensure through the online system that students are fulfilling the RCR requirement. Through the system, the Sponsored Program Coordinator will also be able to provide documentation if necessary.

### D. Institutional Biosafety Committee

If required by the funding agency, protocols for research conducted by faculty and/or students using Genetically Modified Organisms/Recombinant DNA must be approved by the Whitman Institutional Biosafety Committee. Not all funding agencies require institutional approval, and it is up to the applicant to determine whether his or her experiments require approval. Most federal agencies use the National Institutes of Health guidelines, which can be found at [http://oba.od.nih.gov/rdna/nih\\_guidelines\\_oba.html](http://oba.od.nih.gov/rdna/nih_guidelines_oba.html).

If research involves recombinant DNA:

- a. Look at the required forms in the grant application. Is there one that mentions recombinant DNA safety or approval?
- b. If there's a box to check for recombinant DNA safety, contact that agency to see what you need to do.
- c. Peruse the NIH recombinant DNA rules carefully to see if your experiments are exempt from any restrictions, note what exemptions apply, and make copies of those exemptions for your files. Determine whether your experiments are exempt from institutional biosafety approval.
- d. If a funding agency requires biosafety committee approval, contact Tana Park (Sponsored Program Coordinator) for guidance.