

## Plan for Instruction in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR):

Through January 2020, Harvard University researchers and research staff are able to attend several face-to-face courses of instruction in the responsible conduct of research (RCR) that fulfill the NIH requirement set forth in Notice Number NOT-OD-10-019.

One of these courses is administered by the Research Administrative Services.

**Format:** *Describe the required format of instruction, i.e., face-to-face lectures, coursework, and/or real-time discussion groups. A plan with only on-line instruction is not acceptable.*

The **Harvard University RCR** program is an in-person course of instruction administered twice annually (January and August) by Research Administration Services, Harvard University Faculty of Arts and Sciences and School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Beginning in August 2020 and for the duration of the COVID-19 response, the RCR course will be delivered via online platforms, offering synchronous interactive learning sessions, asynchronous learning modules and synchronous case study sessions.<sup>1</sup> The course consists of a minimum of eight hours of contact time, which includes lectures, case studies and discussion modules. Each participant must complete a minimum of eight contact hours. To earn a Certificate of Completion, participants must attend all mandatory sessions participate in class discussions and complete pre-work and homework assignments.

**Subject Matter:** *Describe the breadth of subject matter, e.g., conflict of interest, authorship, data management, human subjects and animal use, laboratory safety, research misconduct, and research ethics.*

Harvard University RCR covers multiple topics including: i) the context and history of ethical research practices within scholarship; ii) scientific rigor and reproducibility; iii) data acquisition, storage, and privacy and electronic data management; iv) publication practices, responsible authorship, and the peer review process; v) international research collaboration and issues regarding foreign influence on research; vi) sexual harassment in the research setting; vii) the mentoring relationship and associated responsibilities of mentors and trainees; viii) recognizing and navigating conflicts of interest; ix) research integrity and misconduct; x) intellectual property.

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<sup>1</sup> In response to the COVID pandemic, this modification is permitted by the NIH “NIH will allow for special circumstances for trainings and instruction that typically require in-person attendance, such as training in the responsible conduct of research (NIH GPS 11.3.3.5). Training can be completed online during this declared public health emergency. Prior approval is not required in these specific cases.” (Retrieved on April 8, 2020 from <https://grants.nih.gov/faqs>)

Participants are encouraged to take other training modules that are pertinent to their research, including the practical and ethical considerations in animal research, human subjects research, embryonic and stem cell research and grants management.

**Faculty Participation:** *Describe the roles of mentor(s) and other faculty involvement in the instruction.*

Harvard University faculty and other relevant subject matter experts with advanced topic knowledge are engaged in instruction and facilitating discussion in every class. The sessions are predominantly case-based, and include mixed-media presentations, panel discussions, and in-class discussions of hypothetical and real scenarios drawn from current literature and news media. The emphasis is on dialogue and the contextualization of ethical decision making in academic research.

**Duration of Instruction:** *Describe the total number of contact hours of instruction.*

Harvard University RCR offers over ten hours of instruction; participants must complete a minimum of eight hours of instruction to earn a Certificate of Completion.

**Frequency of Instruction:** *Instruction must occur during each career stage and at least once every four years. Document any prior instruction during the applicant's current career stage, including the inclusive dates instruction was last completed.*

Harvard University is committed to ensuring that RCR instruction occur throughout the stages of a scientist's career, and no less frequently than once every four years. Postdoctoral researchers and early career faculty with career development awards are also welcome to complete refresher requirements by participating as lecturers in the main RCR course.