

## The Georgia Institute of Technology Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students - Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated May 11, 2016

- **Overview and Applicability**

- 1) *Who does the Georgia Tech RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students apply to and when does it start?*

Answer: The Policy applies to all master's students who register for thesis hours (courses numbered 7000) starting Fall 2014.

- 2) *Why does a student have to take RCR or ethics training if it is not required by the student's source of funding?*

Answer: As a premier technological university at the cutting edge of education, research, and innovation, Georgia Tech is committed to providing leadership in the realm of the responsible conduct of research (RCR) and professional ethics. Ethics training is central to Georgia Tech's mission to ensure that students are prepared with the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct themselves professionally and with integrity.

- 3) *How does the Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students differ from the requirements described in the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy?*

Answer: Under the **Academic Policy**, a student's source of funding is not relevant. **The RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students does not necessarily satisfy the training requirements of the RCR Compliance Policy.** If master's thesis students meet the applicable criteria of the RCR Compliance Policy, they must satisfy the training requirements of that Policy as well as the requirements of the Academic Policy.

- 4) *Who does the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy apply to?*

Answer: The **RCR Compliance Policy** applies to certain categories of undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers funded by NIH and NSF. The RCR Compliance Policy also applies to researchers and staff funded by the USDA NIFA program or through a PURA award. For more information about the Compliance Policy and its applicability criteria refer to: <http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/research-support/responsible-conduct-research-compliance-policy>.

- **The Requirements of the RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students**

- 5) *What does the Academic Policy require of master's thesis students?*

Answer: Master's thesis students must complete at least one of three training options delineated in the Master's Policy. Each master's program should inform its thesis students about this Policy and whether the program has any specific degree requirements relating to RCR.

6) *Where can master's students find the online CITI RCR course described in the **First Option**?*

The CITI RCR course can be found here: <http://rcr.gatech.edu/online-training/>.

7) *Where can master's students find the information about the courses described in the **Second Option**?*

Answer: Information about the courses can be found here: <http://rcr.gatech.edu/doctoral-courses>.

8) *Where can master's students find the information about the courses described in the **Third Option**?*

Answer: Information about the courses can be found here: <http://rcr.gatech.edu/masters-courses>.

9) *What is the time frame within which master's thesis students must complete the RCR training?*

Answer: RCR training must be completed and verified before the Request for Approval of Master's Thesis Topic Form will be processed by the Office of Graduate Studies.

- **Exceptions to this Policy and Other Applicability Issues**

10) *If master's students do not enroll in 7000 hours, are they still required to complete RCR training?*

Answer: In general, they are not required to do so unless: (a) they meet the applicability criteria contained in the RCR Compliance Policy, (b) their program or PI requires them to complete RCR training, and/or (c) they plan to transition to a doctoral program.

11) *If a master's thesis student completes the RCR training required by this Policy but then transfers to a different Georgia Tech master's program, does the student need to take the specific RCR training required by the latter program?*

Answer: That determination should be made by the program into which the student transfers. This Policy requires master's thesis students to complete RCR training at least once.

12) *If a thesis student completes the training required by this Policy, graduates with a Georgia Tech master's degree, and then returns to Georgia Tech for another master's degree, does the student need to take the specific RCR training required by the new program?*

Answer: That determination should be made by the student's new program. This Policy requires master's thesis students to complete RCR training at least once.

*13) If I am a master's student and have completed my RCR training at Georgia Tech, will I have to receive RCR training again in the future?*

Answer: It depends on a variety of factors including whether the student will transition to a doctoral program, the policy of the student's future institution(s), and the policy of the student's future source(s) of funding. For example, if a master's student transitions to a doctoral program, then the **RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students** will apply to the student. Also, if a student's source of funding requires additional training or if it requires training at each major career stage, the student will have to do so. However, this Policy does not currently require re-training.

*14) Do I need to receive RCR training at Georgia Tech if I started my graduate degree at another institution and completed the training there?*

Answer: Yes. As a Georgia Tech graduate student, you must receive RCR training here. However, if you have already completed an online CITI RCR course, the online portion of the requirement may be satisfied. You must log in to CITI through the green button (found here: [rcr.gatech.edu/online-training/](http://rcr.gatech.edu/online-training/)) and complete any additional RCR modules required by the Institute. The CITI system may ask you to provide the log on information for your previous CITI account.

*15) Are Georgia Tech master's thesis students located at international campuses or who are part of a joint program required to complete the training described in this Policy?*

Answer: Yes. They are encouraged to complete the First Option (an online CITI RCR course) unless their master's program specifies otherwise.

- **Administration of the RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students**

*16) How will the RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students be enforced?*

Answer: RCR training must be completed and verified before the Request for Approval of Master's Thesis Topic Form will be processed by the Office of Graduate Studies. The Administrator of Graduate Research Ethics Programs and Graduate Studies will monitor student adherence to this Policy. However, master's programs must inform their thesis students about this Policy.

*17) Who should faculty and students contact if they have questions about RCR training?*

Answer: Dr. Jason Borenstein, Director of Graduate Research Ethics Programs, at [borenstein@gatech.edu](mailto:borenstein@gatech.edu) or Judy Willis, Administrator of Graduate Research Ethics Programs, at [judy.willis@gatech.edu](mailto:judy.willis@gatech.edu).