

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

Last Updated February 17, 2017

- **Overview and Applicability**

1) *Who does the Georgia Tech RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students apply to?*

Answer: The Policy applies to all doctoral students who have an admit date of Fall 2011 or later. It includes students who enrolled in a master's program in Fall 2011 or later but who have since transitioned to a doctoral program.

2) *Why does a student have to take RCR 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 ethics and the responsible conduct of research (RCR). RCR 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) *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>.

4) *How does the Academic Policy for Doctoral Students differ from the requirements described in the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy?*

Answer: In general, both policies have the same online and in-person RCR training requirements for doctoral students. However, students covered by the Compliance Policy have a stricter deadline for completing their training and may have a re-training requirement (refer to the link in Q3 for more information).

- **The Requirements of the RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students**

5) *What does this Policy require of doctoral students?*

Answer: Applicable doctoral students must complete: (i) an online CITI RCR course (refer to Q6) and (ii) in-person RCR training (refer to Q7).

6) *What do doctoral students need to do to complete the online RCR training?*

They must successfully complete an online CITI RCR course within the initial 90 days of their first full semester as a doctoral student. If a student goes past the 90 day time frame, a hold may be placed on course registration until the student completes the training. The CITI RCR course can be found here: [rcr.gatech.edu/online-training/](http://rcr.gatech.edu/online-training/).

7) *What do doctoral students need to do to complete the in-person RCR training?*

Answer: Students covered by this Policy are required to successfully complete PHIL 6000 OR an academic program's approved in-house RCR training approach. In general, applicable students who need to take PHIL 6000 will be expected to do so **during the first summer session after they begin their doctoral program at Georgia Tech.** Additional sections will be available during the fall and spring semesters for those students who would not be enrolled full time during the summer session. For more information, refer to: <http://rcr.gatech.edu/doctoral-courses>.

8) *Does completing the online training required by this Policy satisfy the training requirements of IRB and/or IACUC?*

Answer: No. The online training required by this Policy (a CITI RCR course) is different than the online courses that must be completed for IRB or IACUC training purposes.

9) *How much time will the RCR training require?*

Answer: The online CITI RCR course takes approximately 3-5 hours to complete. If students take PHIL 6000 to satisfy the in-person requirement, it is a one credit course, and it is offered in a variety of formats (e.g., two hours per week for seven weeks).

- **In-House RCR Training Approaches**

10) *How does an academic program gain approval to implement its own in-house RCR training for its doctoral students?*

Answer: An academic program must submit a proposal to the GT RCR Advisory Committee by the first working day in November of the current academic year for the in-house proposal to be considered for the academic year that follows. A proposed in-house approach must include no less than eight instruction hours on the RCR core topic areas (refer to Q11) in a for-credit course. Proposals must document the courses where material is taught and how it will be ensured that all applicable students will take the described course(s) (e.g., "this course is required for all doctoral students.")

11) *What are the RCR core topic areas that must be covered during in-person training?*

Answer: An in-house approach to RCR training must include all of the following topic areas unless permission has been granted by the RCR Advisory Committee to exclude one or more of the topics: (1) Authorship and publication; (2) Collaborative research; (3) Conflicts of interest; (4) Data acquisition, management, ownership, and sharing; (5) Laboratory safety; (6) Peer review; (7) Policies regarding the use of human subjects in research; (8) Policies regarding the use of vertebrate animals in research; (9) The responsibilities of mentors and mentees; (10) Research misconduct and policies for handling research misconduct; and (11) Science and engineering in society.

12) *Where is the current list of in-house RCR training approaches for doctoral students?*

Answer: The list of in-house training approaches can be found here: <http://rcr.gatech.edu/doctoral-courses>. Successfully completing one of the listed approaches replaces the need to take PHIL 6000.

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

*13) Are there doctoral students who are not required to complete RCR training?*

Answer: Yes, there are some. For example, doctoral students might be exempt if they enrolled prior to Fall 2011 **AND** are not covered by the applicability criteria listed in the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy (refer to Q3).

*14) If a student is admitted to a Georgia Tech master's program prior to Fall 2011 and then transitions to a doctoral program without leaving Georgia Tech, does the student have to complete RCR training?*

Answer: The student should be encouraged to complete RCR training. However, the Doctoral RCR Policy applies to students who were admitted Fall 2011 or later. A master's student who was admitted prior to Fall 2011 and transitions directly to a doctoral program is not strictly required to complete the RCR training as long as the student is not covered by the applicability criteria listed in the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy (refer to Q3).

*15) Is a readmitted doctoral student required to complete RCR training?*

Answer: If the student was first officially classified as being at the doctoral level prior to Fall 2011, and is not covered by the applicability criteria listed in the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy (refer to Q3), then RCR training is encouraged but not required. If the student was first officially classified as being at the doctoral level during or after Fall 2011, then the Doctoral RCR Policy does apply.

*16) If a student is admitted to a Georgia Tech master's program during Fall 2011 or later and then transitions to a doctoral program, is the student required to complete RCR training?*

Answer: Yes. If a master's student was admitted Fall 2011 or later and transitions to a doctoral program, the student is required to complete the RCR training described in the Doctoral RCR Policy. The student must complete an online CITI RCR course within the first 90 days of the first full semester following their official change of level to a doctoral program. The in-person training should preferably be completed within one year of when they officially have a change of level to a doctoral program.

*17) Are there other master's students who are required to complete RCR training?*

Answer: Yes. Master's students are required to complete RCR training if they are covered by the applicability criteria listed in the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy (refer to Q3) and/or by the RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students (<http://rcr.gatech.edu/masters-policy>).

*18) If I am a graduate 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 the policy of your future institutions and the policy of your future sources of funding. For example, if a student's source of funding requires training at each major career stage or that the training be repeated after a given number of years, then the student will have to do so. However, the Doctoral RCR Policy does not currently require re-training.

19) *Are transfer students held to the same time period requirements described in the Doctoral RCR Policy?*

Answer: Yes.

20) *Do I need to receive RCR training at Georgia Tech if I started my graduate degree at another institution and completed RCR 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.

21) *If I am enrolled in a joint degree program with another institution, do I need to complete my RCR training at Georgia Tech?*

Answer: You must complete the online CITI RCR course if you have not already done so. However, the in-person training may occur at the partner institution as long as the student's home department at Georgia Tech has received approval from the GT RCR Advisory Committee that such training is acceptable. The mechanism is similar to an academic program requesting permission to conduct RCR training on its own.

22) *Do graduate students at GT-Lorraine or other international campuses have to complete RCR training?*

Answer: Applicable graduate students (refer to Q1) on Georgia Tech's international campuses must complete an online CITI RCR course within the initial 90 days of their first full semester as a doctoral student. If a student goes past the 90 day time frame, a hold may be placed on course registration until the student completes the training. If these students enroll at Georgia Tech's Atlanta campus for at least one semester, they should complete the in-person training component the first semester that they are present on the Atlanta campus.

- **Administration of the RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students**

23) *How will the RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students be administered?*

The Administrator of Graduate Research Ethics Programs monitors student adherence to the Doctoral RCR Policy. The Office of Graduate Studies will certify that these requirements have been satisfied when a student submits the "Request for Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy" form.

24) *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).