

Dear Faculty and Graduate Students,

Recently, June Pierce Youatt, the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Stephen Hsu, the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, issued a memo to the university community regarding **Responsible Conduct of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities** (RCR). In response, the program must provide graduate student training in RCR.

From Provost Youatt and Vice President Hsu's memo:

MSU Responsible Conduct of Research Plans

Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research is essential in the preparation of future scholars and professionals. An understanding of the issues concerning the conduct of research in an increasingly complex world has become critical in successfully navigating the research landscape. To help prepare Michigan State University graduate students for their future scholarly work, a plan for providing the foundation of responsible conduct has been developed in coordination with the Graduate School, the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies Office, and college associate deans for graduate education. The plan is predicated on the principles that a basic understanding of issues is necessary through didactic training and a periodic reinforcement of the principles through discussion. It is the belief that this plan will provide a foundation for all graduate students as well as others pursuing a career in research and will offer the basic information to meet most, if not all, federal agency granting requirements.

The plan below represents the basic university plan. Each department/program or college will develop a plan that at a minimum incorporates these university-level requirements.

The Graduate School RCR Workshop series may be used to help fulfill both the annual refresher and discussion-based training requirements.

*Students who are supported by NSF, NIH, or USDA grants may be required to complete additional specific training; they must meet the timeline and content requirements of training for that grant.

*Students engaged in research involving human subjects or animal use must complete the Michigan State University training modules for those subjects before submitting IRB or IACUC approvals. These modules may be completed as part of the training requirements below, or in addition to them, depending on the department/program or college plan.

What this means for AAAS M.A. and Ph.D. students

1) Year 1 - Initial Training (*minimum 5 hours*)

- In the fall semester of their first year in the Ph.D. Program, all graduate students are required to participate in RCR and pedagogy workshops and sessions that are supervised by the Program Director. At these sessions, the aforementioned topics will be explored, highlighting the following: research and teaching ethics, plagiarism, the peer review process, adviser/advisee relationships, the protection of intellectual property, and human subjects and oral history. From early September until early December of the fall semester, there will be a total of eight one-hour sessions (a total of 8 hours of training). Attendance will be taken at each session and the participation of the graduate students will be monitored and recorded by the Graduate Secretary.
- Participation in relevant seminars/workshops organized by The Graduate School RCR Seminar Series (<http://grad.msu.edu/rcr>).
- Completion of the MSU Human Research Protection Program (<http://www.humanresearch.msu.edu>).

2) Ongoing Training (*minimum of 3 hours each year*)

- Reassessment of relevant topics related to RCR with “in person” discussions with major adviser and, if necessary, guidance committee members and Graduate Director.
- If relevant, completion of the renewal and recertification of Human Subjects Research.
- Must attend at least **ONE** of the many workshops convened by the Program Director every academic year (See Year 1 Initial Training).

Documenting RCR Training:

- The Program Director and the Graduate Secretary will keep track of students’ participation at workshops that are organized and carried out in African American and African Studies (AAAS).
- Other tracking and reporting of RCR training is carried out by the Research Training Tracking System (RTTS) that was developed at MSU by The Graduate School, the College of Engineering, and the Division of Engineering Computing Services (DECS) (see, <https://www.egr.msu.edu/secureresearchcourses>)
- The Graduate Director will comment upon each graduate student’s RCR training in the annual progress reports.