Responsible Conduct of Research – NSF Training Requirements

To help ensure that the next generation of researchers is well prepared to conduct research of the highest scientific and ethical quality, the National Science Foundation (NSF) requires UTC to confirm that students and trainees receiving support from NSF grants have completed training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). The requirement applies to any faculty, senior personnel, undergraduate student, graduate student, or postdoctoral trainee who will conduct research in any capacity while supported by NSF, whether for a grant-funded project or to satisfy an academic course or degree requirement.

What Do I Need to Do?

Take the required course(s). The RCR training requirement can be met by completing coursework offered online through UTC's CITI Program subscription.

If you are a new CITI Program user, a tutorial on how to register for a CITI account and access the required courses is available here (see the link near the bottom of the page).

If you already have a CITI account:
- Log in and click the "Courses" menu link at the top of the page, then the "View Courses" button.
- Next, click the "Learner Tools" and "Add a Course" links.
- On the "Select Curriculum" screen, scroll down to Question 4, "Responsible & Ethical Conduct of Research." Check the box next to the discipline-specific course that best aligns with your major field of study.
- If you are a faculty, senior personnel, graduate student or postdoc, also click the box next to the "Advanced Topics in RCR" course.
- Scroll to the bottom of the page and click the "Submit" button. You may be required to respond to one of the optional course selection questions; if so, you will be prompted by the system.
- The RCR course(s) should now be visible on your "Active Courses" list. Click "Start Now" to begin.

The discipline-specific RCR course typically takes approximately 4 hours to complete, and the Advanced Topics in RCR course takes approximately 2 hours. Each course includes several modules with brief quizzes at the end. You can work on the course at your own pace; progress will be saved after you complete each module. You do not have to complete the entire course in one session.

Send completion certificate(s) to the Office of Research Integrity at rcr@utc.edu. In the subject header of your e-mail, note "NSF" plus the last name of the Principal Investigator of the grant that is supporting you, e.g., "NSF – Jones."

Discuss any questions you may have about the training with the Principal Investigator or other faculty mentors involved in the project.