

Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering
RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH POLICY (RCR)

Preamble:

Olin College has long had in place processes for ensuring that students are trained in the responsible conduct of research. These include coverage of ethical obligations, issues relating to human subjects, and other relevant topics in required and specialized courses as well as supplemental training by PIs of students involved in NSF-sponsored and other research projects. While this approach may satisfy Olin's obligations to provide RCR training, it does not include an easily managed audit trail. Further standardization of key aspects of RCR training and centralization of the record-keeping effort will ensure Olin's continued compliance with NSF regulations. The plan below is intended to document, augment, and increase verifiability of Olin's RCR training activities.

Training for RCR:

- 1) Olin will continue to include RCR topics in required classes.
Required courses early in the Olin curriculum include introductory coverage of ethical issues in research, including discussions of intellectual honesty, plagiarism, and research involving human subjects. Primary courses that address these issues include User Oriented Collaborative Design (taken by all sophomores), Modeling and Simulation (taken by all freshmen), and the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences foundation courses (taken by all freshmen).
- 2) Individual PIs will continue to provide specialized RCR training for their students and post-docs, augmenting the standardized training provided to all Olin students, ensuring that these individuals connect broad RCR issues with the specifics of their individual research projects.
- 3) Olin will supplement existing RCR training mechanisms through the use of a standardized and centrally certifiable tool, the CITI RCR Module. The CITI program, in which Olin is currently a member for human subjects training, has a separate RCR training module available to us, at no extra cost. As a prerequisite to payment through NSF grants, students will be required to complete the RCR module in the CITI system. Upon successful completion of the online training, the CITI system generates a certification of the training. Claire O'Sullivan currently monitors and is automatically notified when faculty, staff or students have completed CITI training for human subjects. In addition, she will assist with keeping track of the completion of RCR training to meet this NSF requirement. Olin College has a separate policy that specifically pertains to human subject's research, as guided by the directives of the federal Office of Human Subjects Protections Office (OHRP). This policy is, as well as the RCR policy, is located on the Portal under Faculty/Institutional Documentation.
- 4) Olin's Sponsored Research Office will add to the *Proposal Transmittal Form* a statement regarding the PIs responsibility to support and comply with the RCR training (if an award is made and students or post-docs are to be paid from an NSF grant). By signing this certification, PIs will explicitly acknowledge this obligation.
- 5) The Dean of Faculty will propose that the following text, or its equivalent, be added to the faculty manual at the next revision:

All Olin faculty recognize the requirement to educate our students in the responsible conduct of research (RCR), and Principal Investigators, in particular, recognize additional responsibility to train any students and post-docs working on their projects in RCR. As a result, certain RCR topics will be covered in the required Olin curriculum, including an introduction to the ethical issues appropriate to the profession; other topics regarding the responsible conduct of research and other professional practices will be integrated into more specialized courses. In addition, each PI will acknowledge these RCR obligations; Olin will provide an RCR training path for students and post-docs involved in research; and the college will require and certify their training to meet grantor obligations.

- 6) For those students or post-docs who have already been paid through grants whose full proposal was submitted to NSF since the RCR requirement date of January 4, 2010, Olin's Sponsored Research Office will conduct an audit to ensure that these individuals have received adequate RCR training and/or to supplement their training as appropriate.
- 7) Olin's Sponsored Research Office will maintain documentation of compliance with this requirement and will make it available to NSF upon request.

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