

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

Last Updated June 27, 2019

- **Overview**

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

Answer: The Policy applies to all doctoral students except those who fall into an exemption category (refer to Q19).

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 the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. The RCR Compliance Policy also applies to researchers and staff funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture program or through a President's Undergraduate Research Award (PURA) award. For more information about the Compliance Policy refer to:

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 Q3).

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

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

Answer: Doctoral students must complete: (i) an online RCR course (refer to Q6) from the approved Georgia Tech vendor, currently the CITI Program, 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 will be placed on course registration until the student completes the

training. The CITI RCR course takes approximately 3-5 hours to complete and can be found here: 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, 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: rcr.gatech.edu/doctoral-courses.

8) *Does completing the online training required by this Policy satisfy the training requirements of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)?*

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

- **In-House RCR Training Approaches**

9) *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 in a for-credit course (refer to Q10). Proposals must document the courses where material is taught and how it will be ensured that students will take the described course(s) (e.g., "this course is required for all doctoral students.")

10) *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.

11) *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: rcr.gatech.edu/doctoral-courses. Successfully completing one of the listed approaches replaces the need to take PHIL 6000.

- **Applicability and Other Related Issues**

12) Are readmitted doctoral students required to complete RCR training?

Answer: Yes, readmitted doctoral students are required to complete RCR training. If the in-person training requirement may generate a hardship for a doctoral student who originally had a catalog year prior to 2011-12 but now has a more recent catalog year, refer to Q21.

13) If a student is admitted to a Georgia Tech master's program and then transitions to a doctoral program, is the student required to complete RCR training?

Answer: Yes. If a master's student transitions to a doctoral program, the student is required to complete the RCR training described in the Doctoral RCR Policy. If the in-person training may generate a hardship for a student who originally had a catalog year prior to 2011-12 but now has a more recent catalog year, refer to Q21.

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

Answer: Yes.

15) 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: The Doctoral RCR Policy does not contain a re-training requirement. However, you may have to complete RCR training again if your source of funding and/or your future institution requires it. For example, a source of funding may require training at each major career stage or that the training be repeated after a given number of years (rcr.gatech.edu/compliance-retraining).

16) 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, the online portion of the requirement may transfer over if you have already completed a CITI RCR course. You must log in to CITI through the "Begin CITI RCR Training" button (found here: rcr.gatech.edu/online-training), add Georgia Tech's CITI RCR course to your CITI courses, 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.

17) 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. You will need to check with your graduate program to determine whether such approval has been granted. The

mechanism is similar to an academic program requesting permission to conduct RCR training on its own.

18) Do doctoral students at GT-Lorraine or other international campuses have to complete RCR training?

Answer: Yes. Doctoral students 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 will be placed on course registration until the student completes the training. If the in-person training component is offered at the student's international campus location, the training should be completed as soon as it is offered. Otherwise, if these students enroll at Georgia Tech's Atlanta campus for at least one semester, they should complete the in-person training the first semester that they are on the Atlanta campus.

- **Exceptions to this Policy**

19) Are there doctoral students who are exempt from the RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students?

Answer: Yes, there are some. For example, doctoral students would be exempt from the Policy's online and in-person RCR training requirements if they have a catalog year prior to 2011-12 or if an "Exception" has been formally granted in DegreeWorks. An exemption will also be granted for doctoral students graduating during the Summer or Fall 2019 semesters who originally had a catalog year prior to 2011-12. However, students who are covered by the applicability criteria listed in the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy **must still complete** the RCR training described in that policy (refer to Q3).

20) How would doctoral students check whether they are exempt from the RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students?

Answer: Doctoral students may be able to determine whether they are exempt if the online and in-person RCR requirements do not appear under "Degree Requirements" in DegreeWorks, or if an "Exception" for the RCR training has formally been granted in DegreeWorks. For questions about the exemption process, refer to Q21 or [contact the RCR Program](#). Students who are covered by the applicability criteria listed in the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy **must still complete** the RCR training described in that policy, regardless of whether the requirement appears in DegreeWorks (refer to Q3).

21) I am a doctoral student who originally had a catalog year prior to 2011-12. Now I have a more recent catalog year, and that has resulted in the RCR requirement appearing in DegreeWorks. Is it possible to request an exemption from the in-person RCR training if that training imposes a hardship?

Answer: Yes, a student in this circumstance can send [an exemption request to the RCR Program](#). If the exemption is granted, an "Exception" will be added to the student's DegreeWorks record. Even if the exemption from the in-person RCR training is granted, the student will still need to complete the [online CITI RCR course](#).

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

22) Which offices check whether students have completed the training requirements contained in the RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students?

The Administrator of the RCR Program monitors student adherence to the Doctoral RCR Policy, places course registration holds for not completing online training on time, and manages training and exemption records. The Office of Graduate Education certifies that the RCR requirements have been satisfied when a student submits the “Request for Admission to Ph.D. Candidacy” form. The Registrar’s Office also checks the status of the RCR requirements during a doctoral student’s degree audit.

23) How can it be checked whether a student has completed the requirements of the RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students?

Answer: Students and advisors can check the status of the doctoral RCR requirements in DegreeWorks. For more information, refer to: rcr.gatech.edu/status.

24) Who should I contact if I have questions about RCR training?

Answer: Questions can be sent to the RCR Program by using the RCR Contact Request form: rcr.gatech.edu/contact.