RCR/ Professional Ethics Training at the University of Oklahoma

Council of Graduate Schools
2009 Summer Institute

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VP for Research
Dean of the Graduate College

Context and Opportunity

▸ America Competes Act (2007) mandates RCR training

▸ I/O Psychology research project at OU (NIH/NSF/CGS) developed an ethical decision-making model for RCR, and

▸ 2-day training course

▸ Formal assessment

▸ This course will meet the needs of America Competes

▸ Opportunity – can we use this to broaden research ethical training across the graduate arena, not just the areas supported (and mandated) by NSF (and NIH)

Building the Base

‣ Graduate College endorsed and engaged in promoting the training program

‣ Expanded case studies (e.g. to Fine Arts and Humanities)

‣ Train the trainer workshop for faculty

‣ Gathered objective assessment results and endorsements

Results for Student Reactions

▸ "Are you motivated to use the training content in your own research?"

  ▸ "Yes I will take more time to reflect on ethical decisions using the strategies suggested."

  ▸ "Yes, this shows how to create good work environments."

  ▸ "Yes, I will use the ideas and concepts from this in research and in all University and private dealings. The ideas and concepts presented here can be applied in many realms other than just research!"

  ▸ "Yes, it was good practice to try and apply ethical guidelines to realistic, complex scenarios. Now I feel more comfortable with how I might approach an ethical dilemma."

  ▸ "Yes! I think I've gained an insight into the process rather than just principles, and that seems much more helpful."

Student Quotes

▸ "I found the training to be very constructive. The information presented in the seminar has much inherent value for a scholar from any academic field of study. The training teaches a researcher how to be ethical, and in today's society the teaching of ethics is essential."
-Eric E., History

▸ "I found the most value in going through real and fictitious ethical dilemmas to practice applying the analysis and resolution techniques discussed in the training. It gave me an opportunity to consider issues that could come up and how I might address them."
-Tom P., Computer Science

▸ "Prior to taking this training, I truly had no clue of how serious and important the ethical dimensions of research really are, nor the implications of unethical research. During the first day of our RCR training, I truly felt out of place due to the fact that I was the only Social Work student in the room, but that soon changed right after the break. Learning that ethical integrity is indeed cross-disciplinary, and that OU's RCR training sessions truly united us as future researchers, scholars, and teachers in the 21st century as a cohesive unit put any of my initial feelings of separation behind me."
-Skylar J., Social Work

▸ "I found the RCR training to be very beneficial. The training is applicable to all disciplines and offers the participants an in-depth look into the complexities of ethical conduct. Participants receive excellent resource materials and have the opportunity to engage in discussions with their peers and the instructors on the various aspects of RCR. I would recommend this course to all graduate students."
-Andrea D., Education

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▸ To date, 200 students from 34 disciplines have participated

  ▸ Anthropology, biology, computer science, chemistry, drama, economics, education, engineering, English, history, human relations, library and information sciences, mathematics, meteorology, modern language, physics, political science, psychology, social work, sociology

Training for All?

▸ Engage broad participation and buy-in

- ▸ Student participants and outcomes
- ▸ Faculty participation through Train the Trainer

▸ Graduate Student Senate

- ▸ Fall2009, Spring 2010 presentations, meetings and discussions
  - ▸ Led to substantive changes in the details, GSS buy-in
- ▸ RCR/Professional Ethics - competitive credentialing
- ▸ GSS Resolution endorsing Professional Ethics training Spring 2009

▸ Graduate Council

- ▸ Briefings and discussions since 2008, vote scheduled for Fall 2009

▸ Faculty Senate

- ▸ Engaged Senate Exec Committee Spring 2009
- ▸ Present to Senate Fall 2009

Implementation Issues

- Name – RCR/Professional Ethics
- Credit/NonCredit?
  - Cost – Workshop charge vs Credit/Fee
  - Formal Degree Program Change versus Sign Off
    - Masters (Comprehensive Exam/Defense)
    - Doctoral (General Exam)
- Costing – One Time Charge vs Semester Fee
  - e.g. $100 Masters charge versus $25/semester fee
  - Uniform cost of $150 versus $100 Masters/$200 Doctoral
- Billing – Bursar versus direct pay
- Charge to Grants?
- Alternate Department-based programs?
  - Require formal assessment

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Current Students

Professional Ethics Training - Responsible Conduct of Research

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RCR) TRAINING SEMINAR OFFERED IN THE FALL 2009

Graduate Students are invited to attend this two-day seminar

- Learn about real-world issues encountered by researchers
- Acquire strategies for tackling research challenges
- Engage in discussion with graduate students in other disciplines
- Learn from experienced instructors

ELIGIBILITY: Graduate students enrolled in a Ph.D. or Masters program at OU and students or post-doctoral researchers assigned to grant-funded projects.

TIMES: Training sessions begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. (registration begins at 8:30 a.m.)

LOCATION: Sessions will be held on the OU-Norman South Research Campus. Students will receive an email specifying the exact location.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT? See the message from the Graduate College Dean T.H. Lee Williams

"Fabricating data is a heinous scientific sin. It steers people down paths that do not lead anywhere and discourages them from following those that do." See the article from the Economist: "Fraud in Science: Liar, Liar!", Jun 4th 2009.

COST: There is an enrollment fee of $150, which will be billed to your Bursar account or may be charged to an NSF grant. This will help cover costs associated with teaching and course materials you will receive.

ATTENDANCE AND CANCELLATION POLICY: Make sure you have read and understood the Attendance and Cancellation Policy prior to registering.

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