College of Communication Arts and Sciences

Michigan State University

Policy Regarding Training in the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research[1]

Background:

Michigan State University (MSU) College Communication Arts and Sciences (CAS) strives to foster a research environment of ethical and responsible research conduct. CAS discourages research misconduct, and responds promptly to allegations or evidence of possible research misconduct. This document outlines the CAS policy on training and regulation of integrity in research and publication.

The Federal and Michigan State University Offices of Research Integrity outline procedures to help ensure the quality and integrity in research. These bodies recommend a combination of self-regulation, adherence to individual and professional standards, and reference to research traditions and best practices that characterize academic research institutions.

Purpose:

This policy is to establish a plan for complying with Section 7009 of the America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) as implemented by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the NIH Responsible Conduct of Research Notice (NOT-OD-10-019), to provide training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to **undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral researchers** supported by NSF and NIH funding to conduct research and research-related activities. Adherence to this policy is also strongly recommended for individuals from CAS who engage in any type of research activity.

Responsible Conduct of Research is defined as conducting research in ways that fulfill the professional responsibilities of researchers, as those responsibilities are defined by their professional organizations, Michigan State University (MSU) and, when relevant, governmental and other entities that support and regulate research. *Research integrity* is defined as the quality of possessing and steadfastly adhering to high professional principles, standards, and obligations, as prescribed by professional organizations, MSU, and, when relevant, governmental and other entities that support and regulate research. *Research Ethics* is defined as the critical study of the moral problems associated with, or that arise in the course of, pursuing research.

Applicability:

This policy applies to the following individuals, henceforth referred to as "Researchers":

- Undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers supported by NSF funding to conduct research and research-related activities[2].
- Scholars receiving NIH Institutional Research Training Grants, Individual Fellowship Awards, Career Development Awards (Institutional and Individual), Research Education Grants, Dissertation Research Grants, or other grant programs with a training component.
- Graduate and postdoctoral students working on research activities in CAS. [3]

Procedure:

Applicable parties are required to complete 5 hours of training, and will be responsible for documenting the completion of their training using the Research Training Tracking System (RTTS) devised by the College of Engineering.

Tracking:
- Log into the RTTS Web site at https://www.egr.msu.edu/secureresearchcourses/ and follow the instructions for creating an account.
- Indicate primary department and enter the MSU Net ID of trainee's "Faculty Advisor" (project PI for students on research grants, and major professor/advisor for all others).
- As training is completed, trainees must indicate compliance by selecting the completed course from the "Training Description" drop-down menu, entering the training date and number of hours and clicking "Save".
- RTTS and other RCR training data will be accessible to PIs and other administrators for reporting, tracking and compliance purposes.
- PI's will certify a completion of training report to be included in the research project file.
- PhD students will initial in GradPlan www.gradplan.msu.edu that they understand RCR training is a requirement of CAS.
- Visit www.cas.msu.edu/research for additional information regarding tracking hours in RTTS.

For researchers funded by grants, the Principal Investigator (PI) is responsible for encouraging attendance, and documenting and confirming researcher compliance with this policy. In coordination with RTTS, the CAS Office for Research will facilitate collection of compliance information.

This policy, which matches the NSF requirements, takes effect 1/1/2013. It revises the prior CAS policy that required 8 hours of training in the first 12 months to 5 hours of training. This new policy also limits the number of training options from what was contained in the prior policy.

NOTE: All documented training that began prior to 1/1/2013 will be "grandfathered" in for compliance purposes.

Initial Training – Applicable to All (defined above under Applicability):

The initial 5 hours of training will consist of one of the below options:

1. Attendance at the annual Fall Orientation RCR workshop PLUS attendance at one 2.5 hour, face-to-face CAS Research Integrity workshops

OR

2. Attendance is required at two separate 2.5 hour, face-to-face CAS Research Integrity workshops held throughout the academic year, conducted by faculty researchers

OR

3. Enrollment in, and successful completion of, a one-credit Summer Course on Research Integrity offered by CAS

TRACKING: Tracking for the initial training will be handled as indicated above under "Procedure".

Refresher Training – Applicable to Researchers supported by NSF or NIH funding:

The refresher training (minimum of 3 hours annually after the initial 5 hour training requirement after the first year) can consist of any of the following:

1. CAS Research Integrity workshops

2. Completion of on-line courses sponsored by Epigeum, which address research integrity from the perspective of individuals in Natural & Physical Sciences, Biomedical Sciences, Social & Behavioral Sciences, Arts & Humanities, and Engineering & Technology. Individuals can register for and access these courses at no cost through their D2L account. Log On to D2L at https://d2l.msu.edu/ and click on **Self Registration**. Click the link next to the **Course Offering Code – ResearchScholaryInegrity-Epigeum** entitled "ResearchScholarlyIntegrity-Epigeum" to enroll. *If you are not already registered for the Course Offering, click "Register", complete Registration Form and click "Submit", click "Finish" for confirmation, then click on "Go to course offering Research and Scholarly Integrity (Epigeum)".* Click the course option for "Research Integrity: Social & Behavioral Sciences". The course list will then appear.

TRACKING: Tracking for the refresher training will be handled as indicated above under "Procedure".

Overall, what do I need to do?

1. Participate in five hours of training, as indicated in this document, within my first year of employment (funded students only) or over the course of your career as a graduate/postdoctoral student.

2. **Funded students only** - Maintain three hours of training each year after the initial training

3. Make sure the training is recorded in the RTTS and in GradPlan

Policy Violations:

Researchers who are employed by Michigan State University on grants covered by this policy who do not demonstrate compliance within their first 12 months are subject to termination from the federal funded project.

Endnotes:

[1]The CAS Office for Research acknowledges the College of Nursing and the Graduate School draft policy documents from where the language for this policy was drawn.

[2]An exception will be made for students who are appointed on a grant for one semester or less, i.e., students on short term NSF REU appointments. Those students will be required to either complete one CAS Research Integrity Workshop, or completion of on-line courses sponsored by Epigeum. They will also be required to complete 2 hours of individual "face to face" training on responsible research conduct. This can be done through informal discussions with Principal Investigators in the course of conducting research, or through a more formal means such as the Engineering summer RCR program.

[3] While the training requirements in this policy are mandated as a condition of employment for funded grant employees, training is not a condition of employment for students with other types of appointments. However, the Graduate School and CAS strongly recommends all graduate students working on research obtain the five initial training hours identified in this policy.