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Preparing for CARE-Q Certification

The UC Merced Institutional Review Board (IRB) is in the process of reviewing and updating their policies and procedures in preparation for The Consortium for Applied Research Ethics Quality (CARE-Q) certification! CARE-Q is a quality assurance program developed at the University of California and Stanford University to provide external, independent evaluation of IRB offices. The goal of CARE-Q is to assure that each IRB office has clearly written procedures for protecting human research participants that accurately conform to regulatory requirements and are being followed consistently.

UC Merced Maintains Full AAALAC Accreditation!

UC Merced continues to be part of the more than 1,100 companies, universities, hospitals, government agencies and other research institutions in 50 countries/regions who have earned AAALAC accreditation, demonstrating our commitment to responsible animal care and use. The AAALAC International accreditation program evaluates organizations that use animals in research, teaching or testing. Those that meet or exceed AAALAC standards are awarded accreditation. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) office would like to thank all those involved in maintaining AAALAC Accreditation!

Post Approval Monitoring Program (PAM)

The Research Compliance and Integrity Office is finalizing procedures for a post approval monitoring program to monitor IACUC-approved research protocols. The PAM policies and procedures will be finalized by the end of the year and monitoring will start sometime next year. We will share more information about the PAM program with IACUC researchers in the next few months. Contact Assistant Director of Research Subjects, Danielle Benziger, with questions or comments about the PAM program.

NASA Conflict of Interest (COI) Policy

On August 21, 2023, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) announced new conflict of interest (COI) disclosure requirements. These requirements are nearly identical to existing National Science Foundation (NSF) disclosure requirements. Details of the new requirements may be found here and goes into effect on **December 1, 2023**. Starting 12/1/2023, applicants to NASA must disclose project-related financial interests for themselves and all other project investigators at the proposal submission stage. Visit the RCI website on NASA COI for detailed information about this new COI policy as well as the COI disclosure process.

Responsible Conduct of Research Training Monitoring for NSF Awards

In the Summer RCI Newsletter, we shared that National Science Foundation (NSF) revised its Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Training requirements to include that the Principal Investigators and all senior personnel undergo RCR training for all proposals submitted after July 31,2023. All individuals supported by NSF funds (for awards proposed after July 31, 2023) must complete RCR training within 90 days of the start of their engagement in the NSF-supported project. The RCI Office will monitor RCR training to ensure that our NSF researchers are adhering to the revised NSF RCR policy.

The Research Compliance and Integrity Office provides the following RECR trainings options.

> 1. **Online Training**: UC Merced has contracted with the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) to provide online training in RCR.
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> UC Merced instructions for using the CITI course
>
> Go to the CITI homepage and register to get started
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> The RCR courses available on CITI include:
>
> - Biomedical Responsible Conduct of Research Course: For investigators, staff members and students in biomedical research
>
> - Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research Course: for investigators, staff members and students in social and behavioral research
>
> - Physical Science Responsible Conduct of Research Course: for investigators, staff members and students in physical science research
>
> - Humanities Responsible Conduct of Research Course: for investigators, staff members and students with an interest or focus in humanities research
>
> If you are unsure which course to select, please contact the Office of Research Compliance and Integrity at rci@ucmerced.edu
>
> 2. **In-Person Training**: The Office of Research Compliance and Integrity will perform in-person RCR training for lab groups, graduate groups or classes, post-doctorate groups, etc., by request. All in-person training sessions must have at least eight people in attendance. To set up an in-person RCR training session for any campus group, please contact RCI@ucmerced.edu.

Meet The RCI Staff

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