

The Georgia Institute of Technology Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students - Frequently Asked Questions

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- **Overview and Applicability**

1) *Who does the Georgia Tech RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students apply to?*

Answer: The Policy applies to all master's students who register for thesis hours (courses numbered 7000).

2) *Why does a student have to complete 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). For more information about the Compliance Policy and its applicability criteria refer to: <http://www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/research-support/responsible-conduct-research-compliance-policy>.

4) *How does the Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students differ from the requirements described in the Georgia Tech RCR Compliance Policy?*

Answer: The RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students requires at least one of three RCR training options, whereas the RCR Compliance Policy generally requires both online and in-person training. Thus, **the Academic Policy does not necessarily satisfy the training requirements of the Compliance Policy**. Master's thesis students who fall within the applicability criteria of the RCR Compliance Policy must satisfy the training requirements of that Policy as well as the requirements of the Academic Policy. Students covered by the Compliance Policy also 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 Master's Thesis Students**

5) *What does the Academic Policy require of master's thesis students?*

Answer: Master's thesis students must complete at least one of three training options delineated in the [RCR Master's Policy](#). Each master's program should inform its thesis

students about this Policy and whether the program has any specific degree requirements relating to RCR.

6) *Where can master's students find the online RCR course described in the **First Option**?*

The online RCR training through Georgia Tech's approved vendor, currently the CITI Program, can be found here: <http://rcr.gatech.edu/online-training/>.

7) *Where can master's students find the information about the courses described in the **Second Option**?*

Answer: Information about the courses described in the Second Option can be found here: <http://rcr.gatech.edu/doctoral-courses>.

8) *Where can master's students find the information about the courses described in the **Third Option**?*

Answer: Information about the courses described in the Third Option can be found here: <http://rcr.gatech.edu/masters-courses>.

9) *What is the time frame within which master's thesis students must complete the RCR training?*

Answer: RCR training must be completed and verified before the Request for Approval of Master's Thesis Topic Form will be processed by the Office of Graduate Education.

10) *How can it be checked whether a master's thesis student has completed RCR training?*

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

- **Exceptions to this Policy and Other Applicability Issues**

11) *If master's students do not enroll in 7000 hours, are they still required to complete RCR training?*

Answer: In general, they are not required to do so unless: (a) they fall within the applicability criteria contained in the [RCR Compliance Policy](#), (b) their program or PI requires them to complete RCR training, and/or (c) they plan to transition to a doctoral program.

12) *If a master's thesis student completes the RCR training required by this Policy but then transfers to a different Georgia Tech master's program or returns to Georgia Tech for another master's degree, does the student need to take the specific RCR training option required by the new program?*

Answer: That determination should be made by the student's new program. This Policy requires master's thesis students to complete RCR training at least once.

13) If I am a master's student and have completed my RCR training at Georgia Tech, will I have to receive RCR training again in the future?

Answer: It depends on a variety of factors including whether the student will transition to a doctoral program, the policy of the student's future institution(s), and the policy of the student's future source(s) of funding. For example, if a master's student transitions to a doctoral program, then the [RCR Academic Policy for Doctoral Students](#) will apply to the student. Also, if a student's [source of funding](#) requires additional training or if it requires training at each major career stage, the student will have to do so. However, this Policy does not currently require re-training.

14) Do I need to receive RCR training at Georgia Tech if I started my graduate degree at another institution and completed the 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.

15) Are Georgia Tech master's thesis students located at international campuses or who are part of a joint program required to complete the training described in this Policy?

Answer: Yes. They are encouraged to complete the First Option (an online CITI RCR course) unless their master's program specifies otherwise.

- **Administration of the RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students**

16) How will the RCR Academic Policy for Master's Thesis Students be monitored and enforced?

Answer: The Administrator of the RCR Program, the Office of Graduate Education, and the Registrar's Office will monitor student adherence to this Policy. However, master's programs must inform their thesis students about this Policy. RCR training must be completed and verified before the Request for Approval of Master's Thesis Topic Form will be processed by Graduate Education. Noncompliance will also result in DegreeWorks indicating an RCR deficiency for a master's thesis student.

17) 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.