



Online Ethics Center
FOR ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE

Introduction

Description

Introduction to the [Instructor's Guide to Prepare Research Group Leaders as RCR Mentors](#)

Body

November 9, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted you are interested in using this curriculum to facilitate discussions with your colleagues about introducing ethics conversations into their research environments. We hope that these approaches will help make those discussions relevant, engaging, and useful for your colleagues and their trainees.

Curriculum Development: The tools and approaches in this curriculum were developed in collaboration with subject matter experts in the field of research integrity / research ethics / responsible conduct of research (RCR). Our goal was to find content for and approaches to introducing conversations about the ethical dimensions of practice in the research environment. Both content and approach needed to work well across many disciplines and kinds of practice, and be easily integrated into quite varied research environments. Finally, an important consideration was that the impact of the chosen approaches could be meaningfully assessed. Five approaches met these criteria and are included in the curriculum.

Our goal in designing this curriculum as a train the trainer workshop was that participants could use these approaches to facilitate important conversations with

their own trainees. It is also plausible that workshop participants could go on to train their peers (e.g., faculty in their department or division, or at a professional association annual meeting workshop, or institutional administrators charged with providing or tracking training in RCR).

Overview of Curriculum: The curriculum has been pilot tested more than a dozen times across 7 institutions and as a pre-conference workshop at the 2014 annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The current curriculum has been refined and redesigned in many ways based on feedback received from workshop participants and the instructors of this train the trainer curriculum.

The curriculum begins with an overview of research ethics – how it has been defined, and why it’s necessary to have purposeful, explicit conversations with our trainees about the ethical dimensions of our practice. We then have discussion points about the importance of having ethics conversations in our research environments, rather than relying on the more common classroom and/or online delivery, both of which are divorced from the actual practice of science.

Following the introduction you’ll find the five approaches, each with a brief introduction and definition; suggested questions for discussion; and an activity to engage workshop participants.

How to Use the Materials: This workshop is meant to be customized to be relevant for the specific audience and institution. In fact, it is expected that this curriculum will not work well if left unchanged. There are some obviously necessary changes: your institutional logo should be placed on the title page, the instructor biographies should be replaced by your own, and you should cite other research ethics training opportunities at your institution. In addition, we note both here and throughout the instructor’s handbook, other changes/suggestions for your consideration.

Workshop Title: There have been other titles used and suggested for this curriculum. You should choose a title that makes sense to you and your audience, and one which is also consistent with the content and purpose of your final version of the curriculum.

Agenda: The tools presented here were initially designed to be presented in a day-long workshop, with approximately an hour spent on each approach, combining

interactive discussion and activities for the participants. However, we understand the increasing burdens on our faculty, and a full day workshop may simply not be a possibility for many of those who would otherwise be interested. The course has been taught in an abbreviated fashion, with all topics covered in a half-day workshop; it can also be offered as a half-day session for a few topics, followed by another half day for the remaining topics, or each topic can be offered as a separate seminar in a series. Some institutions are considering teaching the workshop as a series of one hour brown bag lunches. In short, you can and should customize the agenda to best meet your particular environment and needs. This Instructor's Guide is based on a full day workshop, but examples of one or more additional formats are available along with this guide.

Even if you do choose to present this workshop in a full day, keep in mind that the agenda as presented here is only a guide. Depending on your audience – both size and disciplines represented – you are likely to spend more time on some topics and less on others.

Guiding Discussion: As you conduct the workshop, we cannot stress enough the importance of asking participants for their perceptions of the feasibility and efficacy of using these approaches to engage their trainees in conversations about the ethical dimensions of science and research. Where the participants express doubt about the usefulness of any particular approach, it can be useful to encourage them to articulate perceived limitations and ask for suggestions about how, if at all, to get around them. Throughout the annotated instructor's version of the syllabus you'll find notes to give you as the instructor a bit more background, and tips and resources to help make the discussion more robust.

Resources: The extensive resources section at the end of the syllabus includes citations referenced throughout this guide. We have tried to provide enough resources to supplement the pedagogical material in the curriculum, but not so many that it seems definitive or exhaustive; we encourage you to look through the resource list to find materials you might want to include in your workshop, but we also suggest that you bring in other materials you consider appropriate for the disciplines likely to be represented in your workshop.

Research Ethics Workshop:

Mentoring for Responsible Research

[DAY]

[DATE]

[TIME]

[YOUR INSTITUTIONAL
OR ORGANIZATIONAL
LOGO(S) CAN BE
PLACED HERE]

Sponsored by

[YOUR INSTITUTION or ORGANIZATION]

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Notes

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Resource Type

Instructor Materials