DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RCR) TRAINING

Introduction:
In a recent essay in *Perspectives on History: The Newsmagazine of the American Historical Association*, "Designing a Responsible Conduct of Research Course for Historians," historians Angela N. H. Creager and John F. Haldon offered the following observations about history graduate students and the pressing issues of responsible conduct for research and scholarship: "What are the ethical problems and issues that graduate students conducting historical research need to be aware of? Is it just a matter of guarding against plagiarism, or do the thornier problems with human-subjects research also pertain to historical scholarship? The expansion of research regulation into the social sciences and the humanities has had complex and not altogether positive consequences, particularly when standards and training designed for the treatment of human subjects in the medical and behavioral sciences are applied to historical research."*

Cognizant of such relevant questions pertaining to the meaning and importance of RCR to the historical profession and particularly the training of graduate students, the Department of History, MSU has been committed to RCR and will certainly continue to be. This document outlines the Department of History’s policies and procedures on training in Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). RCR training is required by all of the graduate students in the Department of History. Training will be offered to first year students in the Ph.D. Program in the form of *Initial Training*. Refresher training, in the form of *Ongoing Training*, is also required. Among the most important topics for the historical profession that will be covered in the RCR training include:

1) Research Ethics (Proper conduct and Misconduct)
2) Primary source/data acquisition, management, documentation, sharing, and ownership
3) Permissions from archives for documents and images
4) Publication practices and responsible authorship
5) Adviser/advisee relationship
6) Peer review process
7) Plagarism
8) Human subjects/interviews/oral history
9) Intellectual property
10) Collaborative research

Requirements:
Each student must complete a minimum of five hours of initial training in his/her first semester in the Ph.D. program, followed by annual “updating” sessions (a minimum of three hours annually). The former is called Initial Training; the latter is Ongoing Training. Online activities, university and departmental workshops and training sessions, and work performed in History 803 (Seminar in Methodology of Historical Research) can count toward the required hours of training. At the same time, the Department requires that there needs to also be “in person” discussions between students, their advisers, and, if applicable, their guidance committee members, pertaining to RCR.

Initial Training (minimum 5 hours)
- In the fall semester of their first year in the Ph.D. Program, all graduate students are required to participate in RCR and pedagogy workshops and sessions that are supervised by the Graduate Director. At these sessions, the aforementioned topics will be explored, highlighting the following: research and teaching ethics, plagiarism, the peer review process, adviser/advisee relationships, the protection of intellectual property, and human subjects and oral history. From early September until early December of the fall semester, there will be a total of eight one-hour sessions (a total of 8 hours of training). Attendance will be taken at each session and the participation of the graduate students will be monitored and recorded by the Graduate Secretary.

- At least two total hours of History 803 (Seminar in Methodology of Historical Research)—a required course for all incoming graduate students in the Department of History, MSU—will cover the aforementioned subject matter pertaining to RCR.

- Participation in relevant seminars/workshops organized by The Graduate School RCR Seminar Series (http://grad.msu.edu/rcr).

- Completion of the MSU Human Research Protection Program (http://www.humanresearch.msu.edu).

- Students should be familiar with the most recent edition of the Chicago Manual of Style (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html).


Ongoing Training (minimum of 3 hours each year)
- Reassessment of relevant topics related to RCR with “in person” discussions with major adviser and, if necessary, guidance committee members and Graduate Director.
• If relevant, completion of the renewal and recertification of Human Subjects Research.

• Must at least attend one of the many workshops on the historical profession convened by the Graduate Director every academic year.

**Documenting RCR Training:**

• The Graduate Director and the Graduate Secretary will keep track students’ participation at workshops that are organized and carried out in the Department of History, MSU.

• Other tracking and reporting of RCR training is carried out by the Research Training Tracking System (RTTS) that was developed at MSU by The Graduate School, the College of Engineering, and the Division of Engineering Computing Services (DECS) (see, [https://www.egr.msu.edu/secureresearchcourses](https://www.egr.msu.edu/secureresearchcourses))

• The Graduate Director will comment upon each graduate student’s RCR training in the annual progress reports.