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DURHAM, N.H. – How do students learn about professional and ethical standards of behavior in research and scholarship? Such issues may include ownership of data, what constitutes plagiarism, and considerations when involving human subjects in their research. As graduate students face such issues in their research and scholarly work, it is important that they are prepared to address them.

The University of New Hampshire’s Graduate School recently received a $15,000 grant to develop and promote graduate education in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) at UNH. UNH’s proposal was one of 10 funded nationwide by the Council of Graduate Schools and the Office of Research Integrity. RCR education is a growing movement within academia and the research community to more formally integrate instruction in best practices, guidelines, and regulations pertaining to the conduct of research into curricula and professional development. It also emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills to address decision-making around ethical dilemmas where there is not necessarily a right answer.

Activities supported by the grant will complement work ongoing at UNH since 2001 in the area of RCR. The grant will help the university formalize training by establishing a graduate course in Responsible Conduct of Research as well as help to establish an academic program in professional practice. Harry Richards, dean of the Graduate School, noted that this innovative program will be a great step forward in research ethics education at UNH as well as serve as a model for other institutions. For more information on UNH’s RCR initiative, contact Julie Simpson in the Office of Sponsored Research at (603) 862-2003 or Julie.simpson@unh.edu.