



Getting Started in Research Administration 2025 Training Opportunities and Online Resources

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Introduction

Welcome to Research Administration at Virginia Commonwealth University! Please take advantage of the many training opportunities and online resources offered by the *Division of Sponsored Programs* and *Grants & Contracts Accounting* designed to acclimate those new to research administration. Questions, comments, and suggestions should be directed to Cathy Short, Training Manager (cfshort@vcu.edu).

Online Training

There are several online training opportunities pertaining to various topics in Research Administration. Some of the courses are available in Canvas; whereas, others can be accessed via Talent@VCU. Instructions for enrolling are typically located on the [Sponsored Programs](#) or [Grants & Contracts Accounting](#) and [Effort Reporting](#) training web pages. These opportunities are self-paced and available to be taken online at any time.

Fundamentals of Research Administration e-learning

Course Description:

Fundamentals of Research Administration, a self-paced e-learning curriculum, provides an overview of key topics in sponsored projects management. The content is aimed towards individuals new to research administration or experienced individuals seeking a refresher on fundamental subject areas. Each unit focuses on a primary aspect of sponsored project administration. Learners will review content in an interactive e-learning format and complete activities and assessment questions throughout each unit.

- Unit 1: VCU Organization for Research
- Unit 2: Introduction to Pre-Award
- Unit 3: Introduction to Compliance
- Unit 4: Introduction to Federal Regulations
- Unit 5: Introduction to Award Processing
- Unit 6: Introduction to Post Award
- Unit 7: Introduction to Clinical Trials

Enrollment instructions: [Sponsored Programs Training](#)

Mandatory Sponsored Project and Effort Reporting Training for Principal Investigators

Course Description:

A mandatory course for all Principal Investigators (PIs) and recommended for Co-investigators on sponsored projects. The purpose of the training is to increase awareness and accountability of sponsored project compliance and effort certification and to reduce risk to the University. New regulations and requirements are addressed in the updated training which was released August 2016. As this is a required training, awards or award modifications may be held pending the training completion.

The training consists of two modules (Managing Your Project and Effort Reporting and ECC for Investigators). After reviewing the course modules, two associated exams must be completed. (Scoring 80% or higher on each is passing). Further details can be found on the [Sponsored Programs training website](#).

Location:

Canvas self-enroll instructions:

- 1) This [PI training self-enroll invitation link](#) will step you through enrolling and accessing the course, or
- 2) Email Cathy Short (Training Manager, DSP/G&C, cfshort@vcu.edu) to receive a self-enroll link, or
- 3) Navigate to courses from your Canvas dashboard. Select “All Courses” and “Browse More Courses”. Search on the course name. Click “Join this Course” and then “Enroll in Course”.

Effort Reporting 101: Effort coordinator training

Course Description:

This basic level self-paced e-learning course provides an overview of Effort and the Hybrid Model. The responsibilities of the Effort Coordinator and the Principal Investigator are covered as well as the certification schedule, compliance considerations, and system navigation. This course is required for research administrators requesting primary or secondary access to the Effort Reporting system (ECC) but is open to all and offers an excellent introduction for anyone new to effort or as a refresher for those with more experience.

Location:

- 1) This [Effort Reporting 101 training self-enroll invitation link](#) will step you through enrolling and accessing the course, or
- 2) Email Cathy Short (Training Manager, DSP/G&C, cfshort@vcu.edu) to receive a self-enroll link, or
- 3) Navigate to courses from your Canvas dashboard. Select “All Courses” and “Browse More Courses”. Search on the course name. Click “Join this Course” and then “Enroll in Course”.

RAMS-SPOT Proposal Entry System Training Tutorials

Description:

Introductory and step by step video guides to various topics and processes relevant when using RAMS-SPOT, the Office of Research and Innovation’s proposal development and management system.

Location:

[OVPRI – RAMS systems training](#)

RAMS-SPOT Proposal Entry System Get Started Guides

Description:

Printable guides on various topics and processes relevant when using RAMS-SPOT, the Office of Research and Innovation's proposal development and management system.

Location:

[Sponsored Programs / RAMS systems training](#)

Banner Online Training

Course Title:

Banner Basic Navigation and System/Data Security

Course Description:

An introduction to the Banner system as used at VCU. This course gives an idea of how to navigate through the VCU Banner system. It also provides VCU's System/Data Security policies and procedures. Please note that this course is a requirement to obtain Banner Finance Access.

Enrollment instructions: <https://controller.vcu.edu/training/banner-finance-courses/>

Research Administration Professional Organizations – Webinars and Workshops

Webinars and workshops from various professional organizations (for example: NCURA, SRAI) are made available on a regular basis through a joint effort by the Office of Research, the Office of Sponsored Programs, and Grants & Contracts Accounting. Subscribe to the [RES-ADM listserv](#) to stay informed of current opportunities.

Subscribe to Listserve & the Procurement Blog

RES-ADM Listserve:

Sponsored Programs uses the RES-ADM Listserve as a means of getting information to the research community. Examples include: special program announcements, sponsor-issued changes, and training opportunities. [Subscription instructions can be found on the OVPRI website.](#)

Procurement Blog:

In addition to using the RES-ADM Listserve, Grants and Contracts Accounting uses the monthly Procurement Blog (<https://blogs.vcu.edu/procurement/>) as a means of getting information to the research administrative and fiscal administrative community. Subscription options are available.

Instructor Led Training

Instructor led training classes on various topics in Research Administration are offered on a regular basis by the Office of Research and Innovation, Sponsored Programs, and the Office of Grants and Contracts Management.

Grants & Contracts Post Award Accounting Training

Course Description:

Monthly sessions are designed for employees with less than one year of experience working with sponsored agreements. The session provides those who are new to grant administration an overview of Grants & Contracts policies and procedures and commonly used Banner forms.

Pre-requisite: Prior to taking *Grants Accounting Training*, attendees are encouraged to take the on-line Canvas course (PAA001) *Banner Basic Navigation & System/Data Security* (required for Banner access). Attendees may self-enroll for the course. The course consists of two presentations (Part 1: Banner Forms and Part 2: Functionality of Forms) and a quiz.

Check Talent@VCU for descriptions and current opportunities.

Post Award Compliance training

Course Description:

This post-award compliance training is designed for individuals who would like to gain a better understanding of the compliance guidelines that govern post-award financial management. Topics that will be covered include: Cost Transfers, Award Closeouts, Compliance Reviews (Salary Cap, Overcommitted Faculty, and more), and contemporary research administration issues.

Check Talent@VCU for descriptions and current opportunities.

Effort Reporting (ECC) Classes

Fundamentals of Effort Reporting

Course Description:

This session is designed for staff and effort coordinators with less than one year of experience working with effort and/or ECC or those who would like to revisit general effort topics. The session provides an overview of effort reporting, ECC, and compliance.

Check Talent@VCU for descriptions and current opportunities.

Additional Training Opportunities

Additional classes, workshops, and forums in Research Administration are offered by the Office of Research and Innovation, Sponsored Programs, and Grants and Contracts Accounting throughout the year (for example: Cost Sharing, Export Control, and Research Compliance).

Small group training for RAMS-SPOT, the Office of Research and Innovation's proposal development and management system, is also available upon request.

Please contact Cathy Short, Training Manager, (cfshort@vcu.edu) with any training needs, ideas, or suggestions.

Research Administration Back to School Meetings (RABTS)

Research Administration Back to School Meetings (RABTS) are held twice a year in January and September. All individuals involved or interested in research administration and compliance are welcome to attend. The meeting schedule as well as agendas and presentations are sent via the [RES-ADM listserve](#). (Video recordings and slides are available in the [RABTS meeting archive](#).)

Research Websites & Links:

Pre-Award:

[Sponsored Programs – Proposals and Awards](#)

Post-Award:

[Controller's Website](#)

[Grants & Contracts & Effort Reporting:](#)

[Effort Reporting](#)

[Fiscal Handbook](#)