

UAMS Certified Research Specialist

Program Catalog
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Registration Process

Candidates may register online, through the CRS website, or they may contact the Research Education Manager directly and provide the following information:

- First Name
- Middle Initial
- Last Name
- Email
- Department/ Division
- Supervisor
- Slot Number
- Work Phone

Registration is mandatory. Individuals are not considered candidates until they complete the registration process.

Course of Study

In order to become certified as a Research Specialist, a candidate must successfully complete a total of 26 contact hours. This course of study is as follows:

1. CITI online course, Basic Human Subject Protection (includes HIPAA for Research) (4 hours)
2. Essentials of Quality Human Subject Research course (6 hours)
OR
Three separate Essentials constituent courses (6 hours total)
 - a. ARIA Submission/ IRB Review (2 hours)
 - b. Informed Consent (2 hours)
 - c. Research Record Keeping and Regulatory Binders (2 hours)
3. Developing a Research Protocol (2 hours)
A well-written protocol is essential to the development and implementation of a successful study. Participants will receive a general protocol outline and protocol writing tips.
4. Writing Standard Operating Procedures (2 hours)
This course covers the necessity of having well written SOPs for your department and research study. Participants will learn the planning, writing, and approval processes needed in developing SOPs.
5. Adverse Event Reporting (2 hours)
This course provides attendees with a framework for recognizing adverse events, serious adverse events, and UPIRTSOs. Attendees will also learn the guidelines for reporting adverse events, including how to avoid under-and over-reporting.

6. **Advanced Research Ethics (4 hours)**
This course discusses intellectual honesty in proposing, performing, and reporting research. Other topics covered in this course include advanced discussions in data acquisition, management, sharing, and ownership; protecting human subjects; research misconduct; conflict of interest; responsible authorship, and peer review. Attendees will be given a case scenario to review in groups and present recommendations.
7. **Elective Courses (6 contact hours)**

Credit for Non-CRS Courses

Under certain conditions, candidates may receive CRS credit for courses that are not offered through the CRS program. Non-CRS courses cannot account for more than 6 total hours of CRS credit each calendar year, however, and they must meet certain minimal criteria, as determined by the Research Education Manager:

1. The education received must focus on the process of conducting research and on protecting the rights of human subjects involved in that research.
2. The education received must consist of a formal class. A formal class is defined as an educational situation
 - a. with clearly defined learning objectives,
 - b. provided by an organization that requires some official form of registration,
 - c. that results in the distribution (either automatically or by request) of official certificates of course completion.

Examples of non-CRS classes that could count for CRS credit include courses offered at affiliated institutions (such as ACH) and contact hours earned at professional conferences. Interdepartmental meetings do not count for CRS credit.

Session Guidelines

A candidate's signature on the official enrollment sheet for a class will serve as verification of class attendance. Training Tracker will be the primary vehicle for monitoring class attendance. Certificates of completion for any particular class will be available at the request of the attendee.

Proficiency Exam

Upon satisfactory completion of the required course of study, a candidate must pass the CRS Proficiency Exam. This online exam consists of randomly generated questions and covers any and all topics discussed as part of the program requirements.

Candidates may access the exam from the Office of Research Compliance website. A grade of 90% is required to pass the exam, and candidates may take the exam multiple times to earn a passing grade. One contact hour credit is given for completing the exam.

Certification Process

When a candidate receives a passing grade on the CRS Proficiency Exam, an unofficial notification of certification will be sent via email. Official letters of certification will then be mailed to the research specialist and his or her supervisor. The research specialist will then be presented with a formal certificate at the annual CRS Awards Ceremony.

Continuing Education

In order to maintain CRS status, a research specialist must have current CITI certification and must complete a total of 6 continuing education hours each calendar year. Options that meet this requirement include any of the courses and Q and A sessions listed above. The CITI certification renewal counts for 4 continuing education hours.