I. Purpose

The responsible and ethical conduct of research is essential to the integrity of education and scholarship across Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU or University). It is essential to preserving the public trust in science, engineering, and education. The America COMPETES Act, National Science Foundation, National Institute of Health, and U.S. Department of Agriculture require that institutions applying for federal grants in science and engineering research or education provide training and oversight in the responsible conduct of research as relates to student and faculty research.

II. Responsible Conduct of Research

The responsible conduct of research (RCR) is defined by the National Institute of Health as “the practice of scientific investigation with integrity. It involves the awareness and application of established professional norms and ethical principles in the performance of all activities related to scientific research.”

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Research Integrity describes RCR as “good citizenship applied to professional life.” This definition is intended to apply to scholarship and all creative works.

RCR encompasses all aspects of the creative and scientific process, including, but not limited to:

A. Ideation and information/data acquisition
B. Statistical research design and analysis
C. Authorship and dissemination
D. Mentorship
E. Collaboration
F. Financial conflicts of interest
III. Requirement

It is the policy of MTSU that completion and maintenance of RCR training is required of each employee or student to be compensated for effort performed under an externally-funded grant or contract. Additionally, any employee or student wishing to engage in research involving human subject research or research involving vertebrate animals, regardless of the funding source for same research, must complete and maintain RCR training as required by the Institutional Review Board and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

IV. Implementation

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) will provide instructions and support to affected employees and students for compliance with this policy through online self-taught courses, webinars, and/or live training events pursuant to ORSP department procedures.

V. Applicable University Policies

Affected employees and students must be familiar with the following policies and must comply with all requirements specified in these policies.

211 Misconduct in Scholarly Activities and Research
224 Employee Compensation Charged to Sponsored Projects
401 Administration of Sponsored Projects
402 Protection of Human Subjects in Research
403 Animal Care and Use in Research and Teaching
404 Conflict of Interest for Externally Funded Projects

Forms: none.

Revisions: none.

Last Reviewed: _______ 2020.

References: MTSU Policies 211 Misconduct in Scholarly Activities and Research; 224 Employee Compensation Charged to Sponsored Projects; 401 Administration of Sponsored Projects 402 Protection of Human Subjects in Research; 403 Animal Care and Use in Research and Teaching; 404 Conflict of Interest for Externally Funded Projects; 42 USC 1862o-1, Section 7009 America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (COMPETES) Act.