



Council of Graduate Schools

PRESS RELEASE

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CGS Launches Graduate Education Project on Research Ethics in International Collaborations

Washington, DC — The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) announced a new three-year grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to support the integration of research ethics education into graduate international collaborations. The project will focus on the needs of graduate students enrolled in science and engineering programs at U.S. institutions of higher education.

The ability to resolve complex ethical issues that arise in international research is critical not only to the success of U.S.-trained scientists and engineers, but also to the integrity of U.S. research with international partners. Graduate schools are increasingly recognizing the need to prepare students to navigate different policies and cultural expectations related to ethical research practice.

Through pilot projects at U.S. universities and nationally coordinated activities, the CGS project will identify model approaches to assessing the learning of students who participate in collaborations such as joint and dual degree programs and research collaborations and exchanges. Guided by an assessment framework that will be developed by graduate deans and experts on international issues in research integrity, CGS will coordinate the testing and development of learning outcomes at five universities. This project builds upon earlier CGS research that identified gaps in the preparation for graduate students for international collaboration and research.

“Whether students are engaged in research abroad, collaborating with international scholars on joint projects, or studying in programs that have an international dimension, they are likely to face unique ethical questions that most are unprepared to answer,” said CGS President Debra W. Stewart. She continued, “By helping universities to identify what questions matter most and strategies that work best for educating graduate students, CGS will be contributing to an area of graduate education where there is tremendous growth and opportunity.”

The project is funded by NSF’s Ethics Education in Science and Engineering (EASE) program through the NSF Office of International Science and Engineering (OISE). In addition to identifying general research ethics skills and abilities needed for successful international collaboration, the project will examine how best to teach those skills. The collaborative work of CGS and awardees will also result in case studies based on successful program strategies as well as an online repository of graduate learning outcomes for international collaborations.

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The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. Among U.S. institutions, CGS members award 92% of the doctoral degrees and 77% of the master’s degrees. The organization’s mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.*

** Based on data from the 2010 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees*

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