



Research Administration Certification Series

What is RACS?

The Research Administration Certification Series (RACS) is a program sponsored jointly by Sponsored Programs and Extramural Funds Accounting. It is an 80-hour certificate program for UC Davis research administrators that covers both pre-award and post-award topics. The RACS certificate will be one of the eligibility requirements for positions in the new Research Analyst title series currently in development. These courses will also help research administrators prepare for the Certified Research Administrator (CRA) exam available through the Research Administrators Certification Council. CRA certification will be required for Research Analyst III positions and above. For more information about CRA certification, visit the RACC website at: <http://www.cra-cert.org/index.html>.

The three core post-award courses are now available. These courses are prerequisites for the rest of the post-award series. Once the three prerequisites have been met, the remaining post-award courses may be taken in any order. Additionally, Post Award Administration, Part I is a prerequisite for Post Award Administration, Part II. Information about pre-award courses will come at a later date via this listserv.

Planned RACS post-award courses* include:

Course Name	Description
Principles of Research Administration (core)	An <i>overview</i> of the research environment, roles and responsibilities, and resources for federal, state, and UC/UCD guidance; 3½ hours
Post Award Administration, Part I (core)	An <i>overview</i> of the award lifecycle, start-up tasks for new awards, charging practices, ledger review, cost transfers, and subawards; 3½ hours
Post Award Administration Part II (core)	An <i>overview</i> of effort commitments, cost sharing, changing awards, closeouts, and effort reporting; 3½ hours
A-21 and Costing Policy	An <i>in-depth</i> study that focuses on understanding and applying tests for allowability, allocability, reasonableness and consistency. Additional topics covered include distinguishing direct from indirect costs, requirements for cost transfers, and effort reporting; 3½ hours
Indirect Costs	An <i>in-depth</i> study that covers the practical application of budgeting and re-budgeting with indirect costs. This will be a workshop with lots of hands-on exercises; 2 hours
A-110 – Administrative Requirements	An <i>in-depth</i> study that covers cost sharing, program income, and budget revision. Additional topics include disposition of property, record retention, and contract provisions; 3 hours
Cost Sharing and Effort Commitments	An <i>in-depth</i> study that focuses on when effort and cost sharing commitments exist and how to quantify and properly track them; 3 hours
Financial Closeouts	An <i>in-depth</i> study that covers the steps involved in closing out an extramural award with emphasis on ensuring complete and accurate data in DaFIS to facilitate final financial reporting. Participants will practice using DaFIS reports to complete simple financial reports; 3 hours
Additional courses TBD	

*Courses and content are subject to change.

Bring RACS to your school or college

If your school or college has a group of 20 or more who wish to attend a RACS course, we can bring the class to your location! The three core post-award courses are currently available for scheduling. Please contact Debra Henn (dshenn@ucdavis.edu) for more information.

Obtain a certificate

To receive credit for each course toward the RACS certificate, candidates must attend the class session then pass the online examination for each course on SmartSite. Exams are composed of 30 multiple-choice questions which cover the material presented in each course. To receive credit for an exam, a score of 24 or more correct answers (80%) is needed. There is a limit of two attempts for each course, after which you must re-take the class before attempting the exam again.

Challenge RACS Courses

If you are an experienced research administrator who wishes to challenge or “test out” of the RACS courses, you may choose to take the online examination for each course on SmartSite without attending the class. Each exam is composed of 30 multiple-choice questions which cover the material presented in the course. Course presentation materials are available for review on SmartSite. To successfully challenge a course, a score of 24 or more correct answers (80%) is needed. There is a limit of two attempts for challenging each course, after which you must take the class before attempting the exam again.

Take exams on SmartSite

To take an online exam:

1. Go to SmartSite or click here: <http://smartsite.ucdavis.edu>.
2. Click the Login button in the upper right corner.
3. Log in using your Kerberos ID and password.
4. Click on the RACS link in the header bar. If you don't see this link, send your DaFIS ID to dshenn@ucdavis.edu and request permission to access the site.
5. Click on Resources in the left panel to review the course materials. There is a PDF file for each course containing the presentation materials, plus other resources.
6. When you are ready to take the exam, click on Tests & Quizzes in the left panel.
7. Click on the link for the exam you wish to take.
8. Take the exam. Your score will be automatically calculated and scored with results available in the Gradebook.

Join the RACS listserv

Members of this electronic mailing list will receive important notifications from Extramural Funds Accounting about the program, including notifications when new courses are available through Staff Development and Professional Services. To subscribe or unsubscribe from this mailing list, go to <http://accounting.ucdavis.edu/Forms/Emailform.cfm>. A valid UC Davis login ID is required.