



Oct 2023 Newsletter

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Congratulations to our new Certificants!

New CPRA Certificants	
Suzanne Alstadt	University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
Lindsey Demeritt	Attain Partners
Farin Kamangar	Morgan State University
Heather Lennon	Emory University
Kelli Martin	Johns Hopkins University
Lisa Nalker	James Madison University
Eugene Okiyama	University of Hawaii at Manoa
Carly Pigg	Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center
Juliet Ray	Johns Hopkins University
Yonina Robinson	Duke University
Gillian Silver	Morgan State University
Geannene Trevillion	Morehouse School of Medicine
Erika Wright	Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Foundation
Recertified Certificants	
Jennifer Wiles	The Children's Mercy Hospital
Wesley Wright	Morehouse School of Medicine

Certification Exam Changes

RACC is excited to announce upcoming changes to the composition, length, and scoring of its two examinations: Certified Research Administrator (CRA®) and Certified Financial Research Administrator (CFRA). RACC is confident these changes will benefit certification candidates by ensuring fairness and consistency across examination cycles.

Exam Composition and Length

Beginning in fall 2023, exams will be comprised of 200 multiple-choice test questions, 175 of which will count toward a candidate's score, and 25 pretest (pilot) questions which will not count toward a candidate's score. The 25 pretest (pilot) questions are randomly distributed through the examination and will not be identifiable as pretest (pilot) questions. Candidates will be given three-and-one-half (3.5) hours to complete the exam.

Exam Scoring

Beginning in fall 2023, RACC will report exam scores using scaled scoring. To ensure fairness and consistency across exam forms, once RACC establishes a passing standard, this standard is upheld for all future forms of the exam. A

statistical process called equating is used to account for any slight variations in difficulty level across forms. Candidate scores are then reported using scaled scoring, which converts the candidate's raw score (i.e., the total number of correct questions) onto a consistent and standardized scale. Scaled scores allow candidate scores to be comparable from one exam form to the next. The scale range for all RACC exams is 200 to 800 with a passing point of 500.

Effective Dates

CRA: November 2023

CFRA: September 2023

CPRA: February 2024

For any questions on these changes, please refer to the [FAQs](#)

Welcome New RACC Board Members



Melissa Emanus, CRA
Export Control & Research
Compliance Officer
The Research Foundation for
SUNY, Downstate Health
Sciences University



Sami Naber, CRA
Program Manager,
Clinical Trial Billing
Office of Research
Administration
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center



Robert Zurita, CRA
Assistant Director/Senior
Applications Business Analyst
Florida International
University



Connie Motoki, CRA
Grants Manager
Washington University, St.
Louis

Leveraging AI for Success in the Certified Research Administrators Exam



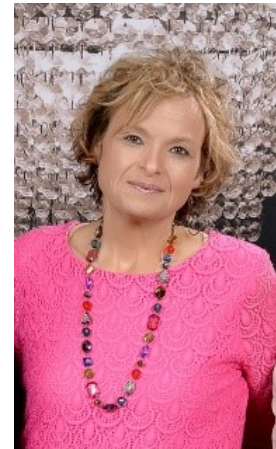
***Rashonda Harris, MBA, CRA
The Pennsylvania State University***

The realm of artificial intelligence (AI) has permeated various aspects of our lives, revolutionized industries and streamlined processes. One area that has witnessed significant advancements is education and test preparation. Aspiring professionals preparing for rigorous examinations, such as the Certified Research Administrators (CRA) exam, can now benefit from AI-powered tools and platforms. In this article, we explore the advantages of AI in studying for the CRA exam and how it can enhance success rates. Full [Article](#)

Michelle Berry Hebb, CPRA RACC Boardmember

November 3, 2023 will mark my 30 year anniversary in the field of research administration. I began my career at the Texas A&M Research Foundation as an accounting specialist. I realized quickly that data entry was not my forte, and moved into the role of a proposal administrator. As they say, “the rest is history.”

In 2011 our office was merged in a move toward a shared services concept at Texas A&M University. I guess you could say that all 30 years have been in the same area, at the same institution. I have seen so much change in the field since starting my career. Not only have rules and regulations changed, but the evolution of typing forms, Xeroxing copies and physically mailing a proposal to electronic portals has created so many efficacies not only the preaward arena, but all research administration areas.



I must admit that I was late in coming around to the certification table, but I am so happy that I did. I received my CPRA in 2017 and feel that it has increased my credibility with faculty members and administration across the institution. I applied for the RACC Board of Directors and was appointed to a position in 2018. Joining the Board has given me an opportunity to serve the research community on initiatives that will enhance development of our field.

I have served as the board Secretary since November 2018, and I am currently a presenter for the Body of Knowledge Review Sessions. RACC is always looking for volunteers to assist with various opportunities. Research administrators are amazing individuals and by volunteering, you will be able to make valuable connections with professional colleagues all over the world. I would encourage you to watch for volunteer calls and visit the website for posted opportunities so that you can become involved in this great organization.

In my spare time I enjoy traveling with my husband on the big white boats and being an Aunt to 2 nieces and 4 nephews as well as being a cat mom to our three cats, Velcro, Stormy, and the “hot-mess” baby, Hobbes.

Take us with you

If you plan to move to another job and still want to receive the RACC Newsletter, please let us know your new email address. We will ensure that you still receive the same great service and reading material. Thanks!

Contact
Us

Believe it or Not!

I had a faculty member ask me if she could charge her attorney fees to a grant because her prior institution was suing her for.... research misconduct.

J. Viviani
Florida Atlantic University

We had a federal training grant which included funds for undergraduate students to travel to any STEM-related conference for networking/presenting opportunities. The institution was located in the southeastern U.S. in an area where national and international conferences of this nature were often held less than an hour away. As the end of the grant neared, the Project Director informed me that she had located a STEM conference, all the way across the country in....Hawaii! Further questioning revealed she had a lot of leftover money and since there was no specific conference named in the grant she figured she could use the funds to fly them wherever they wanted. Needless to say, this was disallowed on the basis that the cost was not reasonable and there were cheaper options located closer.

We also had a federal training grant to help high school students matriculate to college. Project Director purchased over \$3500 charged for tickets to Universal Studios. The justification provided was that the grant allowed field trips for costs with educational or cultural value, so this was allowable. His rationale is that because he received an “educational discount” on the tickets, the cost **must** therefore be educational! The charge was not allowed on the grant on the basis it was an entertainment cost, not an educational one.

N. Whetstine
SUNY

When I was in Alaska:

A commodities line item for purchasing explosives and a contractual line item for an explosive technician. I received the budget before getting the project description or budget justification to even understand what was going on.

Upon getting clarification from the department (and the actual proposal documents), it turned out to be a mining safety program to demonstrate proper blasting techniques. I approved it, but it was still one of the most curious things I’ve seen! It was allowed by the sponsor, but I didn’t get to see them used, unfortunately. I suggested we sell tickets, but who wants to account for program income? ☺

A. Gray
U. of Oregon

Please share your story!

Use the "Believe it or Not" button and send us your story. This is the one place where research administrators from all over can laugh, cry, and sympathize. We have all been there!

Believe it or Not

Exam Schedules and Body of Knowledge Review Sessions

Exam schedules and Body of Knowledge Review sessions can be found [HERE](#).



To host a review session contact **Michelle Breton**, Review Session Coordinator

**Michelle
Breton**

Ready to Recertify?

Keep track of your contact hours and supporting documentation by using [RACC Website](#).

If you have any questions on our recertification process, please contact Susanne MacDonald.

Find vital information regarding recertification [HERE](#)

**Susanne
MacDonald**

Check out our social media pages for upcoming contact hour opportunities!

**Visit our
website**

Contact Hour Opportunities

[Society of Research Administrators International](#)

[National Council of University of Research Administrators](#)

[Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative \(CITI Program\)](#)

[Research Administration Demonstration Series \(RAD\)](#)



Employment Opportunities

View All Job

[Contact us](#) to post employment opportunities on the RACC website.

Sign me up or let me go

If you have any friends or colleagues that may want to receive our newsletter, send me their email address. I will contact them and get their permission. Hit the "sign me up" button. Send a list of names and emails of those who you believe should hear from us. However, if you are tired from hearing from us, no harm, hit the button and say, "let me go" in the subject line.

Sign Me Up!

Let Me Go!

Are you interested in taking the Certified Financial Research Administrator (CFRA) Exam? Take the practice exam to test your skill.

[CFRA Practice Exam](#)

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS CERTIFICATION COUNCIL?

The Council is a private, independent, nonprofit organization that develops and administers a voluntary program for the certification of individuals who meet the requirements established by the Council.

[About RACC - More](#)

Board of Directors

RA Directory

Contact RACC

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#) to receive RACC updates, free contact hour opportunities, information regarding upcoming RACC Body of Knowledge Sessions, and celebrate milestones!

[Purchase RACC Merchandise](#)



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