COURSE SYLLABUS

Negotiating Award Terms and Special Conditions Course (Self-Paced)

This course teaches participants how to evaluate, negotiate, draft, and defend award conditions as risk-based management tools. Participants learn how to translate risk assessments into clear, enforceable award terms that protect federal interests and withstand audit and oversight review.

Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://www.graduateschool.edu/courses/negotiating-award-terms-and-special-conditions-course-self-paced



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Course Outline

Module 1: Purpose and Legal Authority for Award Terms

- Role of award terms in the federal grants lifecycle and how they establish enforceable obligations for recipients.
- Distinction between standard terms, agency-specific terms, and risk-based special conditions.
- Statutory and regulatory authority including the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act and Uniform Guidance provisions.

Module 2: Risk as the Driver of Special Conditions

- Translating pre-award risk assessments into proportionate award conditions.
- Understanding financial, programmatic, compliance, and capacity risks.
- Aligning conditions with monitoring strategies and avoiding over-conditioning.

Module 3: Designing Effective and Enforceable Special Conditions

- Core elements of a defensible special condition including purpose, justification, requirements, and exit criteria.
- Common drafting failures cited in audits and oversight reviews.
- Differences between deliverable-based conditions and control-based conditions.

Module 4: Negotiation Dynamics and Recipient Engagement

- Understanding recipient perspectives and managing negotiation discussions.
- Distinguishing negotiable implementation details from non-negotiable regulatory requirements.
- Documenting negotiation decisions to support equity and defensibility.

Module 5: Special Conditions Across Award Types

- Applying special conditions based on recipient experience and risk profile.
- Differences in conditioning decisions across grants, cooperative agreements, formula programs, and discretionary programs.
- Conditions commonly applied to procurement, reporting, indirect costs, and cash management.

Module 6: Documentation and Defensibility

- Documentation practices that support audit and Inspector General review.
- Linking special conditions to documented risk assessment results.
- Maintaining consistency across awards and avoiding hindsight bias.

Module 7: Managing, Monitoring, and Removing Special Conditions

- Monitoring compliance with special conditions and verifying implementation.
- Defining success criteria and exit conditions for removing controls.
- Escalation pathways when conditions are not met.

Module 8: Capstone Simulation – Structuring Defensible Award Conditions

- Applying risk assessment, negotiation judgment, and drafting skills in a realistic award scenario.
- Developing defensible special conditions tied to documented risk.
- Preparing award file documentation suitable for audit and oversight review.