

Undergraduate Research Projects Involving Human Subjects
Guidelines for projects exempt from IRB review

3-30-07

In order to exempt a project from IRB review, a professor must be able to check “yes” for every item on the rubric below. If the professor can do that, he or she should complete, sign, and submit this form, with an abstract from the student describing the research, to the chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). In this case, the professor takes responsibility for the approval of the research project. In the event of any uncertainty about meeting guidelines for exemption, the professor should consult with the IRB.

| Research guidelines for exemption | Yes | No | Not sure |
|---|------------|-----------|-----------------|
| The study guarantees the anonymity of participants during the research process. | | | |
| The study guarantees the anonymity of participants in the reporting of results. | | | |
| The study has no foreseeable risk to participants. | | | |
| The study does not involve children. | | | |
| The study does not involve other special or vulnerable populations. | | | |
| The study does not involve questions concerning sexual behavior, drug or alcohol use, mental or physical health problems or deviant behavior. | | | |
| The study either has no deceptive element, or has a debriefing procedure. | | | |
| The counseling center has a copy of the survey or protocol . | | | |
| The counseling center’s location is on the survey. | | | |

Signature of student _____ Date _____

Signature of professor _____ Date _____

Signature of IRB chair _____ Date _____

Undergraduate Research Projects Involving Human Subjects Guidelines for projects exempt from IRB review

General guidelines for all research projects include the protection of the identity of participants. No names are ever used in reports of findings, and information that might identify particular participants is excluded.

Surveys

The student distributes a survey to other students in the cafeteria or in their mailboxes, or in their classes. **Students can choose to fill out the survey or not, and methods of distribution and collection assure that anonymity is protected.**

Steps for **exemption** from review by the IRB

The professor has reviewed the research protocol to determine that

- it has no foreseeable risk to participants
- it does not involve children
- it does not involve other special or vulnerable populations
- it does not involve questions concerning sexual behavior, drug or alcohol use, mental or physical health problems or deviant behavior.
- it either has no deceptive element, or has a debriefing procedure
- the counseling center has a copy of the survey or protocol.

The student provides sufficient information to document the above assertions, including a copy of any survey instrument. Projects that do not conform to all of these guidelines must be subject to review by the IRB.

Discriminatory tasks

The student researcher conducts experimental trials in which participants compare pairs of items in series, or are timed on recognition of perceptual cues. These are tasks that are usually done in a laboratory setting, sometimes under timed conditions, with well-defined protocols. **Participants' individual results are never identified separately from the aggregate statistics.**

Steps for **exemption** from review by the IRB

The professor has reviewed the research protocol to determine that

- it has no foreseeable risk to participants
- it does not involve children
- it does not involve other special or vulnerable populations
- it does not involve questions concerning sexual behavior, drug or alcohol use, mental or physical health problems or deviant behavior.
- it either has no deceptive element, or has a debriefing procedure.
- the counseling center has a copy of the survey or protocol.

The student provides sufficient information to document the above assertions, including a description of the discriminatory task and the protocol for presenting it. Projects that do not conform to all of these guidelines must be subject to review by the IRB.

Ethnographic observation --

The student researcher rides the bus and observes seating practices of anonymous bus riders. All research is reported without identifying individual participants.

Steps for **exemption** from review by the IRB

The professor has reviewed the research protocol to determine that

- it has no foreseeable risk to participants
- it does not involve children
- it does not involve other special or vulnerable populations
- it does not involve questions concerning sexual behavior, drug or alcohol use, mental or physical health problems or deviant behavior.
- it either has no deceptive element, or has a debriefing procedure.
- the counseling center has a copy of the survey or protocol.

The student provides sufficient information to document the above assertions, including a description of the ethnographic study and the protocol for completing it. Projects that do not conform to all of these guidelines must be subject to review by the IRB.