

## Guidelines for Student Research Activities

The State University of New York at New Paltz supports a wide range of both undergraduate and graduate student research projects using human subjects - from course-related research exercises to master thesis studies.

Generally, student research work involving human subjects falls into one of two categories:

1. RESEARCH PROJECTS either directed or independent, which employ systematic data collection with the intent to contribute to generalizable knowledge.

These projects require prospective review and approval by the IRB prior to recruitment of or interaction with human subjects.

These courses focus on student-initiated or -conducted research which uses human beings and is undertaken with the intent of contributing to generalizable knowledge.

2. RESEARCH EXERCISES, the goal of which is to provide research training

These exercises are not considered to meet the qualifications for “human subject research” as defined in federal law and college policy. These class assignments are not subject to Institutional Review Board (IRB) review.

These courses focus student work in supervised practical applications of theories, research methods and professional research writing styles.

Although the IRB does not review such class projects, we strongly encourage instructors to become fully familiar with each student’s project(s), and to discuss it with the student. The majority of research complaints we have received have taught us that time spent with students discussing matters such as courtesy, and avoidance of unnecessary discomfort or invasion of privacy, will be time well spent. We believe that explicit recognition of the existence of federal regulations and the work of institutional review boards across the United States, and discussion of the goals of IRB’s should be an integral part of introducing students to research methodologies.

Some professors may wish to keep open the possibility that an extraordinary paper submitted in a research exercises course may be submitted to a student competition or presented in a recognized forum. All such proposals must be reviewed and approved by the IRB **prior** to the commencement of human subject involvement as per Federal Law & Regulations and University Policy.

For quick reference to decision criteria, see attached chart.

Approved: Sept. 2003

## **Criteria for Decisions relative to Distinctions between Student Research Projects and Student Research Exercises**

Definitions of Human Subject Research (45CFR46):

**Human Subject:** A living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individuals or (2) identifiable private information.

**Research:** A systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.

### **Research Projects**

Examples that do need IRB approval

Goals for Students:

- Participation in local symposia, either off-campus or for any external audience on campus
- Presentation in regional or national research poster sessions
- Submission of article for competition, e.g., for scholarship competitions
- Submission of research project in full or partial completion of graduate degree requirements
- Intended for contribution to generalizable knowledge \*

Retention of Documents:

- Manuscript retained by college, school or department so that the document is accessible for review by those outside of the class
- Data retained according to IRB authorization

### **Research Exercises**

Examples which do not need IRB approval

Goals for Students:

- Practice with a research technique or professional writing style
- Presentation to classmates and SUNY-NP faculty as part of a class or departmental requirement, e.g., assessments

Retention/Excision of Documents:

- Manuscript or paper may be retained by student and/or faculty member but is not accessible for review by those outside of the class with the exception of accrediting/auditing bodies.
- Data destroyed upon completion of paper and in accordance with relevant University policy

\* Publications is not the only indicator of generalizability, also:

- a) written dissemination
- b) reports that are circulated
- c) presentations