

Guidelines for Student Classroom Projects and Research Involving Human Subjects

The following guidelines are presented to assist faculty and students in determining whether course-related projects require Institutional Review Board (IRB) review and approval. Please note that:

- Failure to obtain IRB approval when required may jeopardize a student's ability to publish or present their results and will place the faculty member and the University in violation of the federal regulations.
- IRB cannot "retroactively" approve human subjects research once the research is underway or completed.
- If the intent is to contribute to generalizable knowledge or, disseminate the results beyond the classroom assignment IRB approval is required.

Key Definitions

Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.

Human subject is a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research (i) obtains information or biospecimens through intervention or interaction with the individual, and uses, studies, or analyzes the information or biospecimens; or (ii) obtains, uses, studies, analyzes, or generates identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens.

Intervention includes both physical procedures by which information or biospecimens are gathered and manipulations of the participant or their environment that are performed for research purposes.

Interaction includes communication or interpersonal contact between and investigator and a participant.

"Generalizable knowledge" can include an investigator:

- Drawing conclusions that will contribute to general knowledge in the field
- Generalize or apply the findings to a population other than, or in addition to, the population from which a sample was drawn
- Specify a larger population to which the findings will be generalized or applied

Additionally, generalizable knowledge occurs when the researcher (whether faculty or student) intends or anticipates sharing the results with an audience outside the University. Potential means of dissemination can include, but is not limited to:

- Articles and books in professional, peer-reviewed scholarly venues, both paper and electronic
- Presentations at conferences or annual meetings of professional associations
- Publication on digital commons, Facebook, blogs, or any other electronic portal or media
- Reports, exhibits, or presentations for public or private institutions (government agencies, not-for-profit institutions, companies, etc.)
- Exhibits or presentations for members of the general public
- Student presentation of research at on-campus conferences, such as the Student Scholar Symposium and the University Honors Conference

The following chart can assist students and faculty understand when classroom projects do, or do not, require IRB review.

Type of Student Project/Practica	Is IRB approval required?
<p>Student research that is designed to answer a research question and contribute to a field of knowledge (by publication or presentation), and involves one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions with individuals in person, via email or mail, web survey, or telephone • Interventions that occur via the manipulation of an individual's environment (including psychological studies) • Access to private identifiable information • Interviews or surveys that include identifiable information (including cases in which a pseudonym or code is used which is linked to the identities of the participants) • Observational studies where an individual(s) identity is known or where there is a presumption of privacy (e.g., on-line chat rooms) • Focus groups • Use of existing data sets that are not publicly available • Collection of physiological data <p>Examples can include honors thesis, masters thesis, dissertation, or an independent research project.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>
<p>Class projects (either individual or group projects) that are designed for pedagogical purposes only; meaning, the primary purpose of the activity is skill building or development. The audience for the results of the activity is the other students in the classroom and the instructor.</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning how to conduct interviews, both structured and unstructured • Learning how to analyze research data • Learning how to conduct ethnography <p>While these activities usually involve a research question, there is no intent to contribute to a field of knowledge.</p> <p>The results of the activity are typically shared with the class and faculty as part of the standard educational process. Only individuals who are directly involved in the class or the program (e.g., assessment/accreditation) can attend these presentations. Study results may not be presented publicly in theses/dissertations, websites, social media sites, blogs, conferences, or journals.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">No</p> <p>IRB approval is not required as class projects designed for educational purposes do not meet the definition of research involving human subjects and therefore do not fall under the purview of the IRB.</p>

Type of Student Project/Practica	Is IRB approval required?
Instructors/faculty are responsible for ensuring the class project is conducted ethically and the privacy and confidentiality of any data provided by individuals for class projects is not identifiable. Individuals who agree to take part in a class project should be told the research is being conducted to meet a course requirement and that any data collected will not be made public.	
Class projects (either by an individual or a group) that is undertaken as both an educational experience AND research.	Yes
A student-led classroom project where the instructor/faculty member intends to utilize the data for his/her own research. This includes data collected for pedagogical or research purposes. When an instructor plans to utilize data collected for purposes of their own research, IRB approval is required.	Yes

When in doubt, contact the Chapman IRB at irb@chapman.edu for additional information and assistance. Students and faculty should submit research for IRB review through [Cayuse IRB](#). For research projects requiring IRB review, instructors serve as the Principal Investigator of the research and must adhere to the requirements found [here](#).

Faculty are advised to instruct students to follow best practices for data collection and storage. Student projects can use resources posted on the Chapman University IRB website (e.g., templates of consenting documents) in order to promote safe and ethical practices in their students' work.

The checklist on the following page may be useful for both faculty and students to document that their classroom project does not require IRB review and approval. The IRB suggests that faculty/instructors and students complete the form and maintain it in their respective records for a period of three years.

Revision history:

Sep. 6, 2023 – clarification on with whom student projects may be shared.

May 2023 - document version date appearing more clearly in the footer

22Aug2022 - original publication date

Classroom Project Checklist

***ALL items** below must be satisfied for classroom projects (including research practica) to proceed without IRB review.*

Course _____

Project Title _____

Student Assurances:

- ✓ I am enrolled in a graduate or undergraduate course at Chapman University conducting a classroom project as a requirement to complete the course.
- ✓ The primary purpose of the project is as a learning experience in the methods and procedures of research.
- ✓ My instructor is fully aware of all aspects of the project.
- ✓ I understand that without IRB approval I am not allowed to present the findings of the project beyond the classroom.
- ✓ I will never share the findings of the research or disseminate the results to any types of social media (e.g., Facebook, blogs, YouTube, email, digital commons). Doing so may have consequences that harm the individual(s) who participated in my class project.

Instructor Assurances:

- ✓ I am supervising the student's work and ensure that it is ethical and safe.
- ✓ I understand that any data collected as part of this student project cannot be used in future research publications or combined with any other research data.

I am a student at Chapman University and I agree to the above:

Student _____ Date: _____
Signature /Printed Name

I am the instructor for this student and I agree to the above.

Instructor _____ Date: _____
Signature /Printed Name