

### **“Best Practices” in Non-Reviewable, Classroom-Based Research**

The Institutional Review Board at DePaul University does not review research conducted by students solely to fulfill a course requirement, unless the student researcher or the faculty member intends to disseminate or generalize the data (e.g., by publishing, presenting/publishing an abstract or poster, or presenting the research at an academic conference). Nevertheless, DePaul University has a strong interest in ensuring that all research at the university is conducted ethically. For this reason, DePaul’s IRB has ratified the following “best practices” for faculty members who teach research methods courses and for students conducting research in order to fulfill course requirements Human subjects research conducted to complete Masters or Doctoral degree program requirements is not included in this policy, as these activities require IRB review and approval prospectively.

- ◆ Students engaging in non-reviewable classroom human subject research should complete the human subjects research ethics training module required for students by the DePaul Office of Research Protections. The link to the online CITI training course is available on the IRB webpage at: <http://research.depaul.edu/>. In addition, students should carefully review important documents in the area of human subjects protection (i.e. *Belmont Report*; *Declaration of Helsinki*; *World Health Organization Guidelines*)
- ◆ Students are encouraged to develop data-gathering procedures that are consistent with the principles outlined in research ethics and human subject protection guidance and that incorporate methods to protect the confidentiality of the research data.
- ◆ Confidentiality and protection of research subjects should be the guiding principles in students’ research methods. Whenever possible, participants’ anonymity should be guaranteed.
  - Students are cautioned that anonymity and confidentiality have different meanings. Study data may not be appropriately described as “anonymous,” if the researcher collects participant names, other identifiable information, or audio- or video-recordings (see guidance on audio/video recordings). Additionally, study data might not be anonymous if a combination of data elements, such as birth date, occupation, and zip code, could reasonably be used to determine the identity of the participant. Study data may be “anonymous” when the researcher never records anything in the research record that identifies the participant. Study data may be anonymous when the participant themselves is not completely anonymous to the researcher, for example in cases where interviews take place face-to face, the participant is not anonymous, but the data can be recorded anonymously.
  - Conversely, for a study that involves the collection of names or identifiable recordings the researcher could indicate that all data will remain “confidential,” when research procedures ensure that participants’ data will not be shared outside the research team in an identifiable format and protections are in place to prevent an unexpected breach of confidentiality.
- ◆ Students must become familiar with the principles of informed consent and be able to justify their consent processes to supervising faculty. A standard informed consent process includes:
  - Using a consent document or script or information sheet that provides sufficient information for the participant to make an informed decision about whether or not they want to be in the research(see, e.g., “adult consent form” or exempt information sheet templates at: <http://research.depaul.edu/>);
  - Ensuring that the consent document or script, or information sheet, is written at a language level appropriate for the population;

Revised 2/2010

- Having an oral exchange with the participant about the substance of the consent form or information sheet;
- Asking the participant to recount key characteristics of the study (risk, benefits, activities), in order to confirm understanding;
- Collecting a signed & dated form from the participant, if appropriate; and
- Providing the participant or parent/guardian with a copy of the consent form or information sheet for future reference.

These steps apply, regardless of whether the student seeks consent from an adult participant, parental permission from a parent/guardian, or assent from a minor participant.

- ◆ Should there be any possibility or intent to publish, present, or otherwise disseminate research data or findings outside the course, students must file an application for review with the IRB prior to beginning recruitment or data collection. Students should name a faculty sponsor on that application and confer with that person or the DePaul Office of Research Protections about federal regulations, guidance, and local DePaul policies governing human subject research at DePaul University..