IRB Review of Student Research and Class Projects

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| **Type of Student Project** | **Is IRB Approval Required?** |
| Student research that is designed to answer a research question and contribute to a field of knowledge, and that involves one or more of the following:   * Interactions with individuals in person, via mail, email, web survey, or telephone * Interventions (manipulations of the subjects or the subjects’ environment) * Access to private identifiable information   **The results of the activity may be shared in class, presented publicly in senior thesis, websites, social media sites, blogs, conference presentations, and journal articles.**  Example: senior thesis, independent research, dissertations | IRB approval is required. |
| Class projects (individual or group) that are designed for pedagogical purposes only. That is, the primary purpose of the activity is skill development. The audience for the results of the activity is the other students and the instructor.  Examples of educational activities include learning how to conduct interviews, both structured and unstructured, learning how to analyze research data, and learning how to conduct ethnography. These activities usually involve a research question, but there is no intent to contribute to a field of knowledge.  **The results of the activity will be shared in class, but may not be presented publicly in senior thesis, websites, social media sites, blogs, conference presentations, and journal articles.** (Some departments encourage students to present their results at intra-departmental presentations, even when the intent is pedagogical. In other words, part of learning how to conduct research is learning how to present it.) | IRB approval is **not** required.    Class projects designed as educational activities do not meet the definition of research with human subjects and, therefore, do not fall under the purview of the IRB.    It is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure that class projects are conducted ethically. For example, if students collect data from other students for the purposes of learning how to do statistical analyses, instructors are responsible for ensuring that the students providing the data cannot be identified, directly or indirectly.    People who agree to take part in student projects need to be told that the projects are being conducted to meet a course requirement and that any data collected will not be made public.  Protected populations (e.g. children) cannot be part of these studies unless there is written permission from legal guardians, and are told that the projects are being conducted to meet a course requirement and that any data collected will not be made public. |
| Class projects (individual or group) that are undertaken as both an educational experience AND as research.  The research component may be individual or group. | IRB review **is** required.  Pilot studies are covered in the federal definition of research with human subjects. |
| A student-led classroom project that the instructor may use in his or her own research. | IRB review **is** required.  If an instructor anticipates that the data gathered by students for either pedagogical or research purposes could be used for their own research, the research needs IRB review. |