

Research Conducted with Students as Subjects

A. INTRODUCTION:

The relationship of teacher and student is one that automatically questions the voluntary nature of a student's participation. Instructors who are researchers must be sensitive to potential coercion and must design protocols in consideration of this fact.

B. POLICY:

1. Recruitment of Subjects

A. Extra Credit/Credit

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) does permit giving extra credit/credit to students who participate in research only when alternative means of obtaining credit are available to students who do not wish to volunteer for research. The extra credit/credit must be calculated and announced to the class, preferably within the syllabus, in advance. Additionally, the non-research extra credit activities must be comparable in time/commitment as the research activities. The Board will likely consider non-research activities that are not comparable to the proposed research activities as coercive. In order to maintain the voluntary nature of participation in research, students should also be able to elect to leave the research activity at any time and complete one of the other non-research extra credit activities to be able to still earn the credit.

B. Consent Procedure

Informed consent is a process and not simply a form signed by a prospective subject. A tenet of informed consent is that subjects are able to consider participation in research with sufficient time and circumstances as to not be coerced. In consideration of this, protocols should be designed so that subject recruitment is not conducted by the instructor/researcher. Instead, a colleague should be called upon to explain the study and solicit students, and then allow for adequate time for the students to decide if they would like to participate in the research.

C. Research Protocol

Investigators are reminded that the research protocol reviewed and approved by the IRB must accurately reflect the recruitment procedures for all subjects that will be involved in the study. For protocols with students, this must include a detailed account of how recruitment of students will occur, and any incentives that will be used. Procedures, including subject recruitment, that are conducted not in keeping with the approved protocol are considered to be non-compliant and upon review may result in suspension/termination of the study.

2. Research Activities

Research with students as subjects may entail a variety of activities. In the situation where the research proposes to use the students' own academic data the informed consent process must provide this information, and the informed consent form should describe in detail what academic data the researcher plans to collect. Information that faculty normally have access to as an instructor may not be accessed or used for research purposes without prior authorization from the student.