IRB-HSBS Tips for Faculty Advisors

What is the faculty advisor's role in student-conducted research?

The faculty advisor is an active mentor to the student researcher and shares the responsibility for the ethical conduct of the research with the student. The advisor is expected to discuss the general principles of research ethics prior to the initiation of any project involving human subjects, help students determine whether their project requires Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, and guide students through the IRB application process. The advisor must support the student in the conduct of the research project after IRB approval is attained.

Does my student's project require IRB oversight?

Not all student research activities that involve people, their data, or specimens require IRB oversight. See the Human Research Protection Program Operations Manual, Part 4 for specific categories. Examples include:

- *Class Activities* – Activities that are designed for educational purposes to teach research methods or demonstrate course concepts that are not intended to create new knowledge do not require IRB review.
- *Student Internships and Research Practica* – Student activities associated with internships or practica may or may not require IRB oversight depending on the design of the activity and whether the student is engaged in the conduct of research.

What are the faculty advisor's responsibilities for student-conducted human subjects research?

1. *Complete the PEERRS human subjects research training module* - All UM researchers (including faculty advisors) must complete this training. Advisors are expected to be familiar with the ethical and regulatory requirements for the conduct of human subjects research and to discuss research ethics with students, including the professional ethics of the discipline.
2. *Assist students in designing and planning the research project* – Student research projects must be appropriate to their level of training and experience. IRB policy requires undergraduate investigators to design projects that pose no more than minimal risk to human subjects. Students must allocate time for IRB review and approval in their process, especially for projects conducted in international settings, involving non-UM collaborators, or involving federal sponsorship. Be sure that the student understands IRB approval must be in place before they can begin their work.
3. *Oversee preparation of the IRB application via eResearch* – A clear, complete, consistent application will move more quickly through the IRB review process. Be sure the application includes informed consent documents, recruitment materials, and surveys or other data collection instruments.
4. *Accepting roles and submitting the IRB application via eResearch-* Advisors are required to acknowledge their responsibility for the student application before it can be submitted to the IRB for review by clicking the "Accept Role" button in *eResearch.* The IRB copies advisors on communications with the student and may communicate directly with the faculty advisor if the application reflects a need for faculty involvement.
5. *Support students conducting research in field settings, particularly international research –* Advisors must be sure that students are aware of local customs and regulations, for the safety of their subjects and the students themselves. Provide assistance with establishing local contacts or sponsorship. Establish a communication plan with students. Develop effective plans for data security.
6. *Monitor student research –* Check in with students to ensure that research is being conducted as approved, that no problems have been encountered, and that all study modifications are submitted for IRB approval. Be sure that any adverse events or other research-related problems are reported to the IRB as soon as possible.

Key Resources

- *Institutional Review Board – Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences* University of Michigan; 2800 Plymouth Rd. Building 520, Room 1169; Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2800 Phone: 734-936-0933, Email: irbhsbs@umich.edu

The IRB website includes contact information for IRB staff and the IRB chair; guidance materials, including informed consent templates; a schedule of formal training sessions as well as departmental "IRB-on-the-Road" hours; and the schedule of PI submission due dates and meetings of the full IRB.

- *eResearch Regulatory Management System (RM),* http://eresearch.umich.edu.
- *Program for Education and Evaluation in Responsible Research (PEERRS),* http://my.research.umich.edu/peerrs/.

The human subjects research module in the PEERRS curriculum is required for IRB approval of research.

- *Guide for Student Researchers,* (please see IRB homepage).