

Guidance and Procedure: Research Conducted by UCLA Students

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General Introduction

Research involving human subjects conducted by students at UCLA is subject to the same policies and procedures as research conducted by faculty. The purpose of this guidance is to clarify when student research projects and activities must be reviewed by the IRB/OHRPP.

Student Research Projects

All student-initiated activities that meet the definition of human subjects research¹ must obtain IRB approval or certification of exemption from IRB review prior to initiation. IRB/OHRPP review and final approval should take place during the proposal stage of the dissertation or thesis, *prior to the initiation of any research activities, including contact or recruitment of subjects*. This requirement applies to both funded and non-funded research.

Class Projects

Some projects assigned to students in research methodology classes are designed to teach students skills and provide the opportunity to practice methods such as observation, interview, or survey techniques, data analysis, etc. and may have a research component. Such classroom projects that are exclusively intended for instructional purposes and are not intended to develop or contribute to general knowledge or literature in the field need not undergo review by the IRB/OHRPP. However, both instructors and students should follow federal guidelines and University policy when designing and conducting class projects with human volunteers.

When such projects **are** intended to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge, they are subject to the regulations and are required to undergo IRB/OHRPP review and approval, *prior to the initiation of any research activities, including contact or recruitment of subjects*.

Faculty Sponsor Requirements

¹ For definitions of “research” and “human subjects,” please see [OHRPP Guidance & Procedure : Determining When Research Activities Require UCLA IRB/OHRPP Review](#).

A faculty sponsor is required for all students conducting human subjects research; the sponsor must approve the application prior to submission to the OHRPP/IRB. A faculty sponsor is considered the responsible party for the legal and ethical performance of the project, ensuring that all research procedures comply with federal, State and University policies pertaining to the protection of human subjects.

A faculty sponsor must meet the criteria for “Principal Investigator” as outlined in [UCLA Policy 900: Principal Investigator Eligibility](#). The UCLA OHRPP may grant exceptions to this requirement on a case-by-case basis.

A faculty sponsor must complete electronic Assurances in the webIRB application. In doing so, a faculty sponsor certifies that the student investigator is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with human subjects and has sufficient training and experience to conduct the study in accord with the approved protocol.

In addition, a faculty sponsor must agree to:

- meet with the investigator on a regular basis to monitor the study progress;
- agree to be available, personally, to supervise the investigator in solving problems should they arise during the course of the study;
- assure that the investigator will promptly report significant or untoward adverse effects according to applicable policies; and
- arrange for an alternate faculty sponsor to assume responsibility during periods of absence (e.g., sabbatical leave or vacation), and advise the OHRPP by letter of such arrangements.

CITI Education Requirements

Students and faculty sponsors must complete an online research ethics education program prior to submission to the IRB/OHRPP for review and approval of all human research proposals, including a Claim of Exemption from IRB review. Details about the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training program are available on the [Education & Training page](#) of the OHRPP website.

References

[UCLA Policy 900: Principal Investigator Eligibility](#)

[Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative \(CITI\) training program](#)