Decision Tree #1

Does Your Project Require IRB Approval?

Will you, a member of your research team or a collaborator observe, interact with, or intervene with living individuals to gather information that will be used for research? Examples:

- Surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, interviews
- Games, experiments, or tasks in physical or in electronic environments
- Physical or biomedical procedures – imaging, scanning, blood collections, anthropomorphic measurement procedures, exercise
- Diet or nutrition studies, taste tests
- Studies examining effectiveness of educational strategies, teaching methods, curricula
- Use of instruments, sensors, electronic devices, apps, software, or recording mechanisms (e.g., video, screen capture, key logging, etc.) to collect data or monitor or influence behavior
- Passive observation of private behavior (in physical or online environments, including social media)
- Studies examining individuals’ responses to manipulation of their physical or online environment
- Any other activity that involves observation of, or interaction with, individuals to gather information for research (in physical or online environments, including social media)

YES

Is the information being collected ‘about’ individuals?

YES

The project gathers information about people (their behaviors, attitudes, opinions, personal characteristics, demographics, decisions, reactions to stimuli, biological specimens, physical or physiological responses, etc.).

Is this a class assignment or project?

YES

Is this a quality assurance/quality improvement/organizational effectiveness study? (i.e.: to assess, improve, or develop programs or services for an organization?)

YES

Published materials will be limited to only documenting or reporting on specific events, situations, policies, institutions or systems without the intent to generalize the outcomes for other organizations, programs, or services.

Not human subjects research, IRB review/approval is NOT REQUIRED.

NO

Research involves secondary use of data/specimens

Refer to IRB Decision Tree #2 on Secondary Use of Data

NO

Data will involve only factual information (not opinions, attitudes, beliefs, etc.) on products, methods, policies, procedures, organizations (e.g., interviewing school staff about school policies or factual information)

Is the sole intent of the project to meet course requirements, and results will not be used for something other than the course assignment?

YES

Will information be used by the researchers to draw broad conclusions about a population, culture, or norms and practices even if no research hypothesis is being tested or validated?

NO

Outcomes will remain specific to the organization, programs, or services, although other organizations may use the results for their own programs.

Not human subjects research, IRB review/approval is NOT REQUIRED.

YES

The project is research with human subjects, and IRB APPROVAL or DETERMINATION OF EXEMPTION IS REQUIRED before the study may begin. An IRB application may be completed in IRBManager. Questions? Contact IRB@iastate.edu.