

**UW Information School
Office of Research
Alpha DeLap, Ph.D.
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Definition of “Classroom Activity” Research

Information School research projects that may be designated “classroom activity research” must meet all of the following requirements:

The student does not seek to answer a unique research question.

The student does not seek to produce generalizable findings.

The student will destroy any data collected as soon as the project is completed.

The student and instructor limit the presentation of findings to the classroom and/or appropriate UW educational context (i.e. Capstone events).

The primary goal of this type of research is to learn a research skill (i.e. how to interview or create a survey). Classroom activity research projects do not have to be approved by the UW Human Subjects Division.

Human Subjects FAQ for iSchool Researchers

I have heard that most, especially qualitative social scientific and behavioral research, does not have to be reviewed and approved by the Human Subjects Division, is this true?

No. All research must be reviewed and approved by the iSchool Office of Research and the UW Human Subjects Division. Please note that research can be interpretive, non-generalizable, and non-experimental and it can center on qualitative methodologies, including ethnographic procedures. All researchers, whether they be faculty, research affiliates, students or staff, who are working with human subjects and seek to ask unique questions which will be disseminated as *research findings* must submit a human subjects application for review and approval.

I have heard that if your research isn't funded, you don't have to get UW IRB approval.

This is not correct. If you are affiliated with the University of Washington, as a student, faculty or staff member, and you will be publishing your results in some affiliated capacity, you must get IRB approval prior to participant recruitment (before data collection).

How long does it take for an application to be processed, regardless of type (certification of exemption, minimal risk, and full review)?

At this time, it takes a minimum of eight weeks for the Human Subjects Division (HSD) to process minimal risk (aka expedited) and full applications. Unfortunately the application type *does not* effect the approval process time period. Please select the application type that is most appropriate for your research project.

Well-written exemptions usually take two weeks for the HSD to process.

Who should I send my application and modification forms to for the initial review?

Send all human subject applications to Alpha DeLap (adelap@u.washington.edu) via email for initial review. (**Exception: Students should send all application and exemption forms to their faculty sponsor first.**)

What types of human subjects research are considered exempted?

Most common exemption types in Library and Information Science research:

Type 2: Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Type 4: Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, ...if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

What does minimal risk mean?

Minimal risk means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

How does one go about extending a certification of exemption?

The Human Subjects Division does not extend certification of exemptions, once the approval period has expired, the investigator must submit a new exemption to be processed and approved.

How does one go about extending a minimal risk or full human subject application approval period?

The Human Subjects Division will renew an approved application for one year beyond the original approval period as long as the investigator or other members of the project group are not in violation of federal guidelines regarding the use of human subjects in research. Please complete a status report form and submit it to Alpha DeLap at least seven weeks prior to the expiration of the original approval date.

How does one check on the status of a pending application or modification?

Call the HSD directly: 206 543-0098.

What are direct identifiers?

“Direct identifier” should be defined as any of the following information about the participant: name, any geographic subdivisions smaller than a State (including street address, city, county, precinct, zip code except for the first three digits of zip code), telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, social security number, certificate/license numbers, vehicle identifiers and vehicle serial numbers (including license plate numbers), Web Universe Resource Locators (URLs), Internet Protocol (IP) addresses, Biometric identifiers (including finger and **voice** prints) and full face photographic images and comparable images.

In almost every instance, direct identifiers must be de-identified through a rigorous coding process, kept confidential throughout the project period and destroyed at the end of the research study by a specific date.

What are demographic identifiers?

Demographic identifiers are considered permissible identifiers because they have been de-identified under current Federal regulations and do not have to be anonymized. Demographic identifiers include: gender, ethnicity, age (if less than 90), sexual orientation, educational background, religious affiliation, year but not date of birth, the first three digits of a zip code.

What questions do IRB reviewers care about?

- ✓ Have the risks to participants been minimized?
- ✓ Do the benefits to society outweigh the risks to the participants?
- ✓ Does the sampling technique place an undue burden on the participants?
- ✓ Are adequate procedures in place to ensure privacy and confidentiality?
- ✓ Has informed consent been sought and appropriately documented? Or are the proposed consent waivers appropriate?
- ✓ Are safeguards in place to protect vulnerable populations?*

*Federally protected vulnerable populations: pregnant women, prisoners, children and fetuses

What if I want to submit an IBR application but I feel totally overwhelmed?

Email Alpha DeLap, adelap@u.washington.edu. I am here to help!