

## Minutes

### IRB Meeting

October 31, 2024 03:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

- Present: Jo Morrison; Eric Laws; Jackie Secoy; Becca Brusseau; Alison King; Scott Grether; Tom PlaHovinsak; Ryan Stouffer; Gregg Harbaugh-Schattenkirk
- Opening Updates
  - Dr. Morrison informed the IRB that Dr. Bob Nash, IRB community member, has submitted his resignation from the IRB. IRB members were asked to reach out to their network of people in Farmville to find someone who is willing to serve as the community representative on the IRB. Community members cannot have a current formal affiliation with the University. Retired faculty members and graduates who live in the community are able to serve as the IRB community representative.
  - It was clarified that the community member does not need to have a scientific or biomedical background. The Longwood IRB is primarily a Social, Behavioral, and Educational Research IRB. Ideally, the community representative will have an interest in these areas.
- Approval of the minutes from the September 26, 2024 meeting
  - Minutes were approved.
- Report on IRB activity: Protocols Approved Since September Meeting
  - Exempt 21
  - NHSR Determination 3
  - Current number of active protocols 22
- Revise Standards and Procedures
  - **Research with Longwood Student Athletes:** The draft S&P was revised to delete material specifically referring to survey research. S&Ps for surveys will be developed in Spring 2025 semester.
  - **Pedagogical Research and FERPA:** Dr. Morrison explained that the original draft of this S&P was created with input from the registrar, Susan Hines, who is the Longwood institutional FERPA official. The federal definitions of educational records and human subjects data overlap so that use of educational records for research purposes by faculty does require the consent of the student. This consent needs to be identifiable for the purposes of FERPA.
  - Consent can be collected in hard copy or electronically via an electronic method that is connected to the student, e.g. a canvas survey or a traceable secure URL.
  - There are methods to strip larger datasets of identifiers via an honest third-party broker, but faculty that are using information from their own classes are always working with identifiable records. Faculty need to be aware that longitudinal pedagogical studies need

to be planned and historic educational records cannot simply be used for research without considering the consent and FERPA implications.

- The IRB discussed the use of extra credit. Extra credit is acceptable for viewing and completing consent material but cannot be linked to providing consent. This is a method that can be used to increase the number of students who read the recruitment and consent material.
- **Recruiting Students for Research:** The IRB discussed the balance between protecting the rights and welfare of student subjects while also respecting the demands of the small setting here at Longwood. Many of us do recruit subjects from our own classes because these students are also meeting the criteria for the population of interest.
- Dr. Secoy described her method of asking a colleague to recruit and collect consent and hold on to the envelope with the consent documents until after final grades are turned in. Her colleague would tell her the number of students who consented but not who consented. This method allowed Dr. Secoy to know whether the study was worth running. In another example, Dr. Secoy and a colleague swapped classes to recruit and collect consent.
- The IRB discussed the importance of avoiding perceptions of coercion during the recruitment of students for independent faculty research. Recruitment should have minimal impact on class time and activities. If the instructor is the PI, they should not be present for recruitment or consenting (this should be handled by a neutral third party). If extra credit is offered for participating in research then an alternative, non-research activity must be offered for the same extra credit.
- Participation in research can be part of a grading structure for a class, but the grade must have a non-research alternative that students can complete to earn points towards their grade if they do not wish to participate in research. The PSYC 101 classes are set up like this and it is a method that works well.
- For research involving educational records, extra credit can be offered for viewing the consent material and checking either yes or no. The extra credit cannot be directly linked to consenting. While the ideal scenario is that the instructor will not view those records until after grades are submitted (and should develop their methodology to best enable this), the IRB recognizes that the small class setting at Longwood may make this difficult.
- The IRB recognizes that while it is ideal for researchers to wait until after final grades are posted to recruit subjects from their classes, certain situations may not allow for this and researchers may justify, in their methodology, why they are recruiting earlier and how they will avoid the perception of coercion.
- The IRB does not intrude on the academic freedom of instructors to develop and deliver course activities, even if these activities are later used for research purposes. In these cases the IRB review is restricted to the procedures and materials for recruiting and obtaining consent.
- The IRB discussed the scenario of instructors being asked to disseminate surveys for course assignments or recruit for research in their classes. For studies that have not been

reviewed by the IRB (Class Projects with Humans Subjects) it is the responsibility of the instructor to review the survey or methods to determine if it is appropriate to disseminate to their class and emphasize the voluntariness of participation.

- The draft S&Ps will be sent out to faculty for review and comment. The IRB will do final revisions then vote on adoption of these S&Ps in the December meeting.
- Meeting adjourned at 5 pm.

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