Instructions for Research Review

Institutional Review Board | Dordt University, Sioux Center, IA

An Institutional Review Board (IRB) Research Review plan is expected for all Dordt University investigators, including undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and faculty members. Some types of research may be exempt from review (e.g., observation of public behavior, archival data, etc.). Researchers should consult the IRB Chair regarding exemption criteria.

Review Process

1. All researchers must complete appropriate CITI training.
2. Investigators should electronically submit proposals (see details below) to the IRB Chair at least three weeks before the proposed start of data collection or intervention. This allows time for the IRB to review the material and request revisions as necessary.
3. The IRB Chair will determine whether the research meets minimal review criteria (risk to participants is demonstrably low or virtually nonexistent) or full review criteria (participants are minors or belong to a special risk category).
4. For proposals meeting minimal review criteria, the IRB Chair may elect to review and act on the proposal. The Chair will forward all other proposals to the full IRB for review and approval.
5. The IRB Chair will communicate next steps of the review process to investigators within two weeks.
6. Data collection and interventions should not begin until approval has been granted by the IRB.
7. Projects spanning longer than one semester must be closed by the researcher at the end of data analysis.

Please consult the IRB Chair for assistance in preparing a research proposal.

Proposal Contents

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In addition to submitting the electronic proposal, the investigator should submit documents that highlight the following:

New Research

1. Purpose, research question, or hypothesis
    a. An explanation of why your study is important & what you will learn.
2. Procedures
    a. This starts with how you will contact your participants for recruiting and ends with how you will protect the privacy and/or confidentiality of your participants' data.
    b. Please include recruiting & study procedures, study participant time commitment, survey & questionnaires, and data security procedures.
3. Informed consent form(s) for participants
    a. Please refer to the templates and checklist for examples.
4. Any other documents your participants will see
    a. Ex: Recruiting documents, survey/assessment instruments, & debriefing documents.
5. Risk assessment and measures taken to minimize risk
    a. If the study involves deception of participants, provide a rationale for the deception and a plan for debriefing.
    b. Discuss procedures for protecting against or minimizing potential physical, social, or emotional risks.
    c. Discuss procedures to minimize breach of confidentiality/privacy risks.

If applicable, new research must include:

1. If participants are under 18 or otherwise unable to consent for themselves, parent/guardian consent form and participant assent form.
2. If participant recruiting is happening outside of Dordt, approval forms or letters from agencies where recruiting or data collection is occurring.
3. If HIPAA protections apply where data is being collected, evidence of HIPAA training, authorization, and protections.
4. If data collection occurs outside of the United States, relevant local context information, any anticipated cultural sensitivities of conducting your research and how you intend to overcome those barriers.