

Human Subjects Research and the Institutional Review Board

1. Faculty Research and Scholarship

Federal regulations require that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) provide prior approval of all **research** with **human subjects** conducted by faculty, staff or students, whether the research is funded or un-funded, and whether it is conducted on-campus or off-campus.

Research with human subjects is commonly conducted in psychology, sociology/anthropology, education, and the biological sciences, but it may also include other disciplines such as history, as recognized by the American Historical Association. If you have any question about the applicability of human subjects regulations to a research project that you are contemplating, please discuss the research in advance with your departmental representative to the IRB, or, if your department does not have a representative, with the Chair of the IRB.

Institutional policies, procedures, forms and resource material dealing with human subjects research are available to the faculty in two ways:

(1) in the Public Folder of the Institutional Research Office:

On a PC: My Computer/departments on 'netspace' (R:)/inst_research/public/Human Subjects Research

(2) on the Web site of the Institutional Research Office

www.bucknell.edu/About_Bucknell/Offices_Resources/Institutional_Review_Board.html

2. Classroom Exercises with Human Subjects

Although **non-research activities** such as classroom exercises with human subjects are not covered by the federal mandate, institutional policy requires the same standards of protection that one would observe in actual research projects. There are two reasons for extending human subjects policies into the classroom: (1) the University's position should be ethically consistent across all kinds of institutional activity with human subjects; and (2) in training future generations of researchers, it is the University's obligation to begin as early as possible in their academic careers to instill the principles of responsible research design.

The role of the IRB with regard to classroom exercises that involve human subjects is advisory and consultative. It is the responsibility of each individual faculty member in disciplines that use human subjects to design classroom exercises that are consistent with best practice in human subjects research, and to provide consistent oversight of student projects with human subjects. The Institutional Review Board can serve as a resource for

those interested in learning more about methods that ensure the protection of human subjects of research.

The IRB has prepared “A Guide to Best Practice in Classroom Exercises Involving Human Subjects,” which is available on the Web site of the Institutional Research Office. www.bucknell.edu/About_Bucknell/Offices_Resources/Institutional_Research/Institutional_Review_Board.html

For additional information, contact the IRB Chair.

2/4/05