

Grand Valley State University Human Research Review Committee Procedure	
Subject: Using GVSU based email addresses for conducting survey based research	
Section: 21	This procedure supersedes those previously drafted
Initially adopted as procedure on January 15, 2008	Approved by: Dean of Graduate Studies and Grants Administration, on
Related Sections:	

Procedure for use of GVSU e-mail addresses for purposes of conducting HRRC approved human subjects research:

GVSU encourages sound research by and about its students, faculty, and staff, but also respects and honors the privacy and valuable time of those constituencies. Electronic mail presents a powerful and easy means of contacting potential participants for human subjects research, but that ease creates a potential for invasive or overwhelming contacts by researchers.

The following statements establish the conditions under which GVSU will provide support for research efforts that involve mass e-mails to students, faculty, or staff.

1. Requests for e-mail contact for the purposes of survey or focus group research should be directed to the Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA). Please send a brief description of the proposed research, including the population(s) that you wish to contact, the subject and nature of the research, and the timing of contact (including any follow-up contacts).

2. OIA will review requests in consultation with the Office of the Dean of Students and/or the Provost's Office (depending whether contact is requested with students, faculty, or both). Requests will be reviewed for compliance with FERPA and university policy. Consideration will also be given to issues of timing, burden on respondents, and overlap with other research projects.

3. The university will not release email addresses or other individually identifiable information directly to students. Instead, student researchers will provide the text for their messages to OIA. OIA will send the message text and the email address list to the university's Information Technology department, who will send the message (with a return address specified by the researcher).

4. E-mail messages must be sent in such a way that individual recipients cannot identify other recipients (e.g. never list all recipients in the "To" or "Cc" fields of an e-mail).

5. Research projects must be approved (or deemed exempt) by the Human Research Review Committee (HRRC). Administrative (i.e., unit level) authorization and approval under this procedure does not constitute or imply HRRC approval. However, OIA will provide a letter expressing its intention to provide support for e-mail contact, which will be useful in support of the HRRC proposal. As such, it's advisable to seek administrative support before submitting a proposal to HRRC.

6. Research on small, clearly-defined groups that have a GVSU employee responsible for that group's oversight does not need to be approved by central administration. For example, a teacher can approve a survey of his/her class, a coach could approve a survey of his/her squad, etc. These projects do still need human subjects clearance from the HRRC clearance.

7. Requests for mass e-mails must allow at least one week between the submission of all required information (including final HRRC approval) and the date the first e-mail message is to be sent.

8. The university encourages the use of random sampling to reduce the burden of requests on individual invitees. Researchers need to present a compelling rationale if they intend to contact entire populations (e.g. all faculty, all undergraduate students, etc.)