**Research Projects Involving Human or Animal Subjects**

Projects involving human or animal subjects (including questionnaires and surveys) may be subject to prior approval by the Human Research Review Committee (HRRC; http://www.gvsu.edu/hrrc/) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC; http://www.gvsu.edu/iacuc/). Each committee uses a different online application process for reviewing the proposed research. You should allow several weeks for project review and approval, so planning must begin 2-3 months prior to anticipated data collection.

You and your faculty advisor can make an initial informal determination whether your project does or does not require formal review/approval by referring to the following definition of research (found here: <http://www.gvsu.edu/cms4/asset/F51281F0-00AF-E25A-5BF632E8D4A243C7/determination_of_human_subjects_research_complete_form2(2).pdf>:

**“Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.”**

Activities that meet this definition constitute research for the purposed of the HRRC policy, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program which is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.

Note: Human subject means a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains:

1) Data through interventions or interaction with the individual, or

2) Identifiable private information.

Taken together, the principal investigator’s intent must be to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge AND the research must involve intervention/interaction with or collection of identifiable information about a living person.

Studies that involve covered research may have different levels of review, depending on the nature of the study, risks involved, and the target population. Expedited and full board studies require approval, but the HRRC does not “approve” exempt studies; HRRC makes a determination that a study is exempt. See the HRRC website (provided above) for a more detailed discussion of the levels of review and related materials. If your project operationally satisfies any level of review, University policy requires that you receive formal review before you can begin any aspect of the research.

Your project needs two separate approvals before it can be submitted for formal board reviews. One approval is from your research advisor for the project (who may be different from your academic advisor). The other is the Authorizing Official for the Honors College, Professor Gordy Alderink. You must share access to the project with both your research advisor and with Dr. Alderink so they can review all the documents and approve the project. His email is [aldering@gvsu.edu](mailto:aldering@gvsu.edu) and phone is 331-2674. Feel free to contact him with any questions you might have about the research protocol preparation process. In most cases, the application form for the HRRC and IACUC review committees can also serve as the senior project proposal to the Honors College.

**Please note: if you are a Nursing major**, your Authorizing Official is Dr. Sandra Spoelma, Associate Dean for Research and Scholarship in the Kirkhof College of Nursing. You must make sure that you and your advisor work with her, not Prof. Alderink. Ms. Spoelstra’s office is 352 CHS, and her e-mail is spoelsts@gvsu.edu and phone number is (616) 331-5905.