

Grand Valley State University Institutional Review Board (IRB)	
Title: <i>IRB Board Composition</i>	
Section: 010.	This policy and procedure supersedes those previously drafted
Approved by HRRC: 11/08/2011 Revised 10/28/2014 Reviewed: 10/28/2014 Reviewed: 3/23/2017 Revised by IRBPPC: 4/23/2019	Approved by RIO/HRPA: 11/21/2011 Revisions approved:10/28/2014 Revisions approved by AIO/RIO: 3/24/2017 Revisions approved by AIO/RIO: 4/26/2019
Effective Date: 4/29/2019	
Related Documents: <i>020: Conducting IRB board meetings: voting</i> <i>030: ORCI document retention and maintenance</i> <i>OP-1: Institutional charge to the IRB</i>	

## **Policy**

The IRB shall be composed of at least five (5) members with diverse professional and educational backgrounds, including at least one scientist, one nonscientist, and one unaffiliated member. Unaffiliated members and/or nonscientist members are essential to the composition of the IRB, as they represent the perspective of research participants. In addition, the IRB must have members with sufficient knowledge of the specific scientific discipline(s) relevant to the research that it reviews.

## **Procedures**

1. Determining Whether Prospective IRB Members Are “Unaffiliated”
  - a. Unaffiliated members of the IRB may not be current university employees, students or vendors.
  - b. An individual with no affiliation to the university other than as a member of the IRB or other volunteer university committee, or whose only association with GVSU is that of health care patient or research participant, may be considered *unaffiliated*.
  - c. Paying an unaffiliated member reasonable market value for the costs associated with participation as a member of the IRB (e.g. transportation and parking costs, IRB required training, etc.) shall not affect the member’s status as unaffiliated.
  - d. A former university employee or student who has not been employed by or enrolled as a student at the university for at least one year may be considered unaffiliated.
  - e. If *all* of the following four questions can be answered “No” by a particular individual, that person is considered to be *unaffiliated* with GVSU for the purposes of IRB member status:

- i. Are you, your spouse, or any of your dependents an employee, paid entity, or agent of any GVSU institution? Residing in the same household as a person affiliated with GVSU does not in and of itself constitute being a dependent.
- ii. Have you been employed by or under paid contract to a GVSU institution within the past year?
- iii. Do you receive any funding or perquisites under the control of GVSU, except as compensation for IRB, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) or other GVSU committee related work or other GVSU volunteer-related expenses?
- iv. Have you, your spouse or any of your dependents been enrolled as a student at GVSU within the past year?

2. Scientist vs. Nonscientist (Based upon general guidance from Office of Human Research Protections, OHRP)

- a. Members whose training, background, and occupation would incline them to view scientific activities from the standpoint of someone within a behavioral or biomedical research discipline should be considered a scientist, while members whose training, background, and occupation would incline them to view research activities from a standpoint outside of any biomedical or behavioral scientific discipline should be considered a nonscientist.
- b. For the purposes of determining IRB member status, a scientist is a person who routinely utilizes the scientific method in the conduct of his or her discipline related scholarship. Fields in which persons designated as scientists commonly practice may include, but are not limited to: *medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, physical therapy, nutrition, anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, sociology, physics, biology, chemistry, math, statistics, and earth sciences.*
- c. For the purposes of determining IRB member status, a nonscientist is a person who does not routinely utilize the scientific method in the conduct of his or her discipline-related scholarship. Fields in which persons designated as nonscientists commonly practice may include, but are not limited to: *art, classics, drama, English, music, philosophy, and religion.*
- d. Not everyone from a scientific field is automatically considered to be a scientist, nor is everyone from a typically non-scientific field automatically considered to be a non-scientist. Classification for purposes of appointment to the IRB depends primarily on the degree to which the individual has familiarity with and experience utilizing the scientific method. The final determination shall be made by the Research Integrity Officer in consultation with the IRB Chair, Office of Research Compliance and Integrity (ORCI) staff, and/or the prospective board member's Authorizing Official.

### 3. Board Member Training

- a. Prior to functioning as a voting member, all new IRB members must complete the following requirements:
  - i. Review and agree to the Conflict of Interest Declaration
  - ii. Review and agree to the IRB Membership position description and responsibilities
  - iii. Review IRB policies and procedures
  - iv. Orientation session with ORCI staff. This orientation will provide an overview of the IRB, a discussion of committee member requirements, and training in the use of ORCI's electronic management system.
  - v. Orientation session with the IRB Chair, or designee. This orientation will provide an overview of the protocol review process.
  - vi. Human subjects research and responsible conduct of research courses.
- b. IRB members are required to complete human subjects research and responsible conduct of research refresher courses every three years.
- c. IRB members will receive, on an on-going basis, continuing education related to human subject protection issues and requirements. This may include, but is not limited to, the following:
  - i. Educational presentations/discussions held throughout the year on topics related to the protection of human subjects training. These may occur during regular IRB meetings or as separate events.
  - ii. External training opportunities, such as attendance at a local or national professional conference.
  - iii. Instruction and feedback from the IRB Chair, IRB Vice Chair, and/or ORCI staff. These individuals are routinely available to address any questions or concerns from IRB members.