Grand Valley State University Institutional Review Board (IRB)	
Title: *Conducting IRB Meetings*	
Section: 020.	This policy and procedure supersedes those previously drafted
Approved by HRRC: 11/08/2011 Revised: 09/10/2013 Reviewed: 10/28/2014 Revised by HRRPPC: 04/25/2017 Revised by HRRPPC: 11/28/2017 Revised by IRBPPC: 03/29/2022 Revised by IRBPPC: 11/04/2024 Revised by IRBPPC: 10/09/2026	Approved by RIO/HRPA: 11/21/2011 Revision approved: 09/10/2013 Revision approved by AIO/RIO: 04/25/2017 Revision approved by AIO/RIO: 04/16/2018 Revision approved by AIO/RIO: 03/13/2020 Revision approved by AIO/RIO: 04/12/2022 Revision approved by IO: 12/13/2024
Effective Date: 10/09/2026	
Related documents: 010: *IRB Composition and Member Responsibilities* 030: *Operational Support of the IRB* *140: IRB Member Conflict of Interest*	

Policy

1. All regular members of the IRB who are in attendance (either physically or via electronic means) at a convened board meeting and who are not recused are entitled to one vote on each and all motions presented to the committee for vote.

2. At least one nonscientist member must be in attendance (either physically or via electronic means) at any full board meeting when reviewing research protocols that require full board review.

3. An alternate member of the committee may vote on motions affecting protocol approvals only in place of any regular member who is absent or recused. All alternate members in attendance (either physically or via electronic means) may vote along with regular members on all other motions presented to the committee for vote, provided that they do not have any conflicts of interest that would prevent them from voting. (See *IRB Policy 140: IRB Member Conflict of Interest*.)

4. The IRB Chairperson is a regular member of the committee with full voting privileges.

5. Prior to initiating any protocol review at a meeting of the full board, the Chairperson shall establish, and the meeting minutes shall reflect, that a quorum is present and the voting members, alternates, and consultants collectively constitute sufficient and appropriate expertise to review the full range of protocols under review at that meeting. A quorum must be present throughout the entire review of the protocol.

6. Disapproval of a proposed protocol requires a majority of the voting members of the full board at a convened meeting at which a quorum has been established.

7. All subject matter of board meetings that is related to protocols, including discussion involving researchers or participants, or is otherwise of a sensitive nature, shall be treated as confidential information.

Procedures

1. Quorum

    a. A quorum is established when both of the following conditions are met:
        i. A simple majority of members, including the Chairperson or a Vice-Chairperson, or the Chairperson's designee acting as Chairperson, are in attendance (either physically or via electronic means) and able to vote (e.g. not disqualified from voting due to conflict of interest)
        ii. At least one nonscientist (see *IRB Policy 010: IRB Composition and Member Responsibilities*) must be in attendance.

    b. A majority of the quorum must vote in favor of a motion for the motion to be approved. No votes may be cast or counted unless a quorum is present. If at any time a quorum is temporarily lost, the review of the protocol must stop, and no votes on motions requiring a quorum may be made until a quorum is restored.

    c. Quorum is required for the IRB to take any approval-related actions on protocol submissions that require full board review.

    d. If a protocol affects prisoners involved in research, the IRB prisoner representative must be present at the meeting.

2. Abstentions

    An abstention is a refusal to vote either for or against a motion and does not affect the total members required to establish a quorum. Only members who are eligible to vote on the motion may abstain from voting.

3. Recusals

    Any Board member with a conflict of interest must recuse themselves from the discussion and voting on any motion pertaining to the conflict. Recused members must leave the meeting during the discussion and voting, except to provide information requested by the IRB. Such recusals will be noted in the minutes. A recusal constitutes an absence, and absent members may not be counted toward establishing or maintaining a quorum.

4. Alternate Members

    In the event a regular member is absent and an alternate member is eligible to vote, the eligible alternate member shall be notified by the IRB Chairperson of their voting privileges when the alternate member arrives to the meeting. If more alternates are in attendance than regular members are absent, and there is no reasonable basis for supporting one alternate over another based upon experience or professional expertise, the selection of the alternate member(s) granted voting privileges shall be made by the Chairperson using a random lottery.

5. Virtual Attendance via Electronic Means

a. If a Board member is unable to be physically present at a convened meeting, attendance may be established by electronic means. Members participating by electronic connection count toward a quorum and may participate as voting members. For purposes of establishing and recording voting privileges, any board member who attends the meeting by electronic connection shall be considered in attendance as long as the connection stays open throughout the meeting. Temporary disconnections that are quickly re-established shall not affect the member's attendance status.

b. The electronic equipment utilized must adequately allow the member to hear the discussions and be heard by all others in attendance, and may utilize speaker-phone, teleconferencing, internet-based virtual meeting software, or another means that meet the requirements stated in this section and are secure. Methods of virtual attendance relying on electronic connections should allow the member(s) to participate in real-time. A member in virtual attendance who is recused from participating in discussion and voting on a matter presented to the board must electronically disconnect or be placed in a virtual waiting room during that portion of the meeting.

c. For matters requiring a vote, a member in virtual attendance must have received documents made available to all other Board members and had sufficient time to review such materials. Members may not simply phone in votes or otherwise participate *only* in the voting for approval of research protocol, but must also be present for the majority of the related discussion.

6. IRB Meeting Minutes

a. Minutes are taken by the ORCI or an IRB member and contain, at a minimum, the following information:
    i. Meeting attendance, including which members participated via remote conferencing and their connection, disconnection, and reconnection times during the meeting, if applicable
    ii. Actions taken by the IRB
    iii. The votes on these actions including the number of members voting for, against, and abstaining
    iv. The basis for requiring changes in or disapproving research
    v. A written summary of the discussion of controverted issues and their resolution.

b. Minutes are reviewed for approval by the IRB at the next IRB meeting.

c. Documentation of the minutes shall be retained as stated in *IRB Policy 030: Operational Support of the IRB*.