COMPARISON: CHARACTERISTICS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROJECTS

*Determining whether a project requires IRB review depends on if it constitutes **HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH**. Please contact the GVSU Office of Research Compliance & Integrity (rci@gvsu.edu) with any questions in making a determination.*

	HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH	QUALITY ASSURANCE/ QUALITY IMPROVEMENT	PROGRAM EVALUATION	CLASS/STUDENT PROJECT	ORAL HISTORY
PURPOSE	Develop or contribute to **generalizable knowledge** (e.g. testing hypothesis)	**Improve a practice or process** within a particular institution or ensure it confirms with expected norms	**Improve a specific program**, only to provide information for and about the setting in which it is conducted	**Provide an educational experience** about the research process or methods	Explain a particular past; does not create generalizable explanations about all that has happened in that topic, nor does it predict the future of that topic; **interviews are a conscious intention of creating a permanent record to contribute to an understanding of the past**
MOTIVATION FOR PROJECT	Project occurs in large part as a result of individual professional goals and requirements (e.g. seeking tenure; obtaining grants; completing a thesis or dissertation)	Project occurs regardless of whether individual(s) conducting it may benefit professionally from conducting the project	Project not initiated by the evaluator and occurs regardless of whether individual(s) conducting it may benefit professionally from conducting the project	Project occurs as part of assigned course/class work or requirement of an educational program in order to learn a new technique or pass a course/fulfill an assignment	The purpose is to create a historical record of specific personal events and experiences related to a topic at hand; project may also occur as part of individual professional goals and requirements
DESIGN	Designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge; may involve randomization of individuals to different treatments, regimens, or processes; novel research ideas supported by literature search	Not designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge; generally does not involve randomization to different practices or processes	Not designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge; does not involve randomization of individuals, but may involve comparison of variations in program	Not designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge; design is often an example or template provided by a professor or course book. NOTE: Although being done for educational credit, if the student develops a scientifically valid, systematically designed study to add new information to an existing topic (e.g. master's thesis, dissertation), this may be human subject research.	Interview or series of interviews gives a unique perspective on the topic; story or collection of stories to be a variety of particular perspectives; may involve open-ended questions that are tailored to the experiences of the individual narrator; content of interviews is grounded in reflections on the past as opposed to commentary on purely contemporary events; analysis of the stories and/or conclusions drawn about the stories are not part of the design
MANDATE	Activities not mandated by institution or program	Activity mandated by the institution or clinic as part of its operation	Activity mandated by the program, usually its funder, as part of its operations	Activity mandated by regularly assigned coursework or educational program	Activities not mandated by institution or program
EFFECT ON PROGRAM OR PRACTICE EVALUATED	Findings of the study are not expected to directly or immediately affect institutional or programmatic practice	Findings of the study are expected to directly affect institutional practice and identify corrective action(s) needed	Findings of the evaluation are expected to directly affect the conduct of the program and identify improvements	Findings of project are not expected to directly affect the program; the project will mainly generate raw data, not generalizable knowledge	Collection of stories are not expected to affect the narrator group, as any conclusions, trends, judgments, or general findings about the stories are not part of the project
SUBJECT POPULATION	Usually involves a subset of individuals; universal participation of an entire clinic, program, or department is not expected; generally, statistical justification for sample size is used to ensure endpoints can be met	Information on all or most receiving a particular treatment or undergoing a particular practice or process expected to be included; exclusion of information from some individuals significantly affects conclusions	Information on all or most participants within or affected by receiving a particular treatment of undergoing a particular practice or process expected to be used; exclusion of information from some individuals significantly affects conclusions	Can either include all, most, or a subset of individuals; statistical justification may be used in the context to understand the process of subject selection; however, recruitment often utilizes convenience sampling	Narrators are not anonymous individuals or selected as part of a random sample; narrators are specific individuals selected because of their unique relationship to the topic at hand; it is the practice in oral history for narrators to be identified by name
BENEFITS	Participants may or may not benefit directly – benefit, if any, to individuals is incidental or delayed	Participants expected to benefit directly from the activities	No benefit to participants expected; evaluation concentrates on program improvements or whether the program should continue	Participants may or may not benefit directly; benefit is primarily for the investigator conducting project for his/her own knowledge or fulfillment of educational requirements	Narrators will not benefit directly, as the purpose is not to inform policy, control outcomes, or direct conclusions
DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS	Intent to publish or present generally presumed at the outset of project as part of professional expectations, obligations; dissemination of information usually occurs in research/scientific publications, grant proposals, or other research/scientific forum; results expected to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge by filling a gap in scientific knowledge or supporting, refining, or refuting research from other research studies	Intent to publish or present generally not presumed at the outset of the project; dissemination of information often does not occur beyond the institution evaluated; dissemination of information may occur in quality improvement publications/forums; when published or presented to a wider audience, the intent is to suggest potentially effective models, strategies, assessment tools, or provide benchmark or base rates rather than to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge	Intent to publish or present generally presumed at the outset of the project; dissemination of information to program stakeholders and participants; may be publically posted (e.g. website) to ensure transparency of results; when published or presented to a wider audience, the intent is to suggest potentially effective models, strategies, assessment tools or provide benchmarks or base rates rather than to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge	No intent to present or publish results beyond the classroom, campus, or educational program; any presentations, posters, or publishing (such as on ScholarWorks) is simply to document completed work/raw data for educational or programmatic requirements and/or to obtain experience	Intent to publish or present generally presumed at the outset of project; oral history interviews are historical documents that are often preserved and made accessible to future historians and members of the public; dissemination typically occurs through presentations, historical publications, or oral history archives (including centers and collections), as opposed to research/scientific publications, grant proposals, or other research/scientific forums

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