

Trustees of Dartmouth College
COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

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Classroom Activities and Independent Student Projects

Dartmouth College applies federal regulations based on relevant ethical principles to research involving human subjects. This memo distinguishes a classroom activity involving human subjects that does not require CPHS review from an independent (undergraduate or graduate) student project involving human subjects that does require CPHS review.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES NOT UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE CPHS:

The definition of "research" requiring CPHS review, which entails intent to contribute to generalizable knowledge, does not apply to most classroom assignments. In general, classroom activities represent a learning exercise in research methods.

Nevertheless, classroom assignments should be conducted in accordance with the Dartmouth College honor code and other academic standards. Classroom instructors are responsible for ensuring the ethical conduct of the projects they assign to their students, such as voluntary consent to participation and respect for the privacy of participants.

In making a determination of whether or not a class research project requires IRB review, the instructor is encouraged to contact the CPHS Office for assistance.

General guidance for survey projects: Survey participants should be informed of the following, through a conversation or introductory information in the survey instrument:

- The student's name and affiliation with Dartmouth College;
- The title of the class and the instructor's name;
- The nature of the assignment and the purpose of the survey;
- The voluntary nature of participation; and
- The extent of confidential handling of participant identities and survey responses, as appropriate.

INDEPENDENT STUDENT PROJECTS REQUIRING CPHS REVIEW:

Independent student projects that meet the regulatory definition of human subjects research should be sent to the CPHS for review and approval prior to beginning research activities.

For undergraduate students, the faculty advisor should be listed as the Principal Investigator on the CPHS application, and is ultimately responsible for ensuring the ethical conduct of the project. When designing a project, students should be advised about the ethical conduct of research and the preparation of the IRB application

Instructors and students should:

- Understand the elements of informed consent;
- Develop appropriate consent documents;
- Plan appropriate strategies for recruitment;
- Identify and minimize potential risks to participants or others;
- Assess the risk-benefit ratio for the project;
- Establish and maintain strict guidelines for protecting privacy and confidentiality; and
- Allow sufficient time for CPHS review and completion of the project.

All researchers need to satisfy an education requirement on the protection of human research subjects. The educational requirement must be completed before a project will receive CPHS approval.

For information about applying for review and the available options for completing the education requirement, please refer to the CPHS website at www.dartmouth.edu/~cphs or contact the CPHS office.

Please contact the CPHS office with any questions or concerns at 603-646-6482 or cphs@dartmouth.edu.