

Policy Number: 4

Title: Research Conducted by UCLA Students

Date of Last Revision: July 5, 2007

I. General Introduction

Research involving human subjects conducted by undergraduate and graduate students at UCLA is subject to the same policies and procedures as research conducted by faculty. The purpose of this policy is to clarify when student research projects and activities must be reviewed by the IRB/OPRS. UCLA requires all key personnel, including students, to complete certification prior to submission to the IRB/OPRS for review and approval of all human research proposals, including a Claim of Exemption from IRB review.

II. Student Research Projects

IRB/OPRS has the sole authority to determine whether an activity conducted by students meets the definition of “human subjects research.” For more information about what constitutes human subjects research, and IRB/OPRS determinations thereof, see [OPRS/IRB Policy 2: Activities Subject to UCLA IRB/OPRS Jurisdiction](#) and [OPRS/IRB Policy 3: Human Subjects Research Determinations](#).

All student-initiated activities that meet the definition of human subjects research must obtain IRB approval or certification of exemption from IRB review prior to initiation. IRB/OPRS review and final approval should take place during the proposal stage of the dissertation or thesis, *prior to the initiation of any research activities, including contact or recruitment of subjects*. This requirement applies to both funded and non-funded research.

Student-initiated research activities that require IRB review and approval include:

- Graduate or undergraduate theses and doctoral dissertations that involve *human subjects*; and
- All projects that include research that involves *human subjects*.¹

All students applying for IRB approval or certification of exemption from IRB review must have a UCLA faculty sponsor who will oversee the conduct of the research. The faculty sponsor is considered the responsible party for the legal and ethical performance of the project, ensuring

¹ For definitions of “research” and “human subjects,” please see [OPRS/IRB Policy 3: Human Subjects Research Determinations](#).

that all research procedures comply with federal, State and University policies pertaining to the protection of human subjects.

The faculty sponsor must co-sign the IRB/OPRS application form. In doing so, the faculty sponsor certifies that the student investigator is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with human subjects and has sufficient training and experience to conduct the study in accord with the approved protocol.

In addition, the faculty sponsor must agree to: (1) meet with the investigator on a regular basis to monitor the study progress; (2) agree to be available, personally, to supervise the investigator in solving problems should they arise during the course of the study; (3) assure that the investigator will promptly report significant or untoward adverse effects according to applicable policies; and (4) arrange for an alternate faculty sponsor to assume responsibility during periods of absence (e.g., sabbatical leave or vacation), and advise the OPRS by letter of such arrangements.

III. Classroom Research

Some projects assigned to students in graduate and undergraduate research methodology classes are designed to teach students skills and provide the opportunity to practice methods such as observation, interview, or survey techniques, data analysis, etc. and may have a research component. Such classroom projects that are exclusively intended for instructional purposes and are not intended to develop or contribute to general knowledge or literature in the field need not undergo review by the IRB/OPRS. However, instructors and students are encouraged to follow federal guidelines and University policy when designing and conducting class projects with human volunteers.

When such projects are intended to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge, they are subject to the regulations and are required to undergo IRB/OPRS review and approval, *prior to the initiation of any research activities, including contact or recruitment of subjects.*