

IRB TIPS FOR STUDENTS: HOW TO SPEED UP THE APPROVAL PROCESS

The IRB is committed to reviewing student projects carefully and quickly. Minimal risk student projects generally go to a few reviewers. Higher risk projects will undergo a full board review and will take substantially longer to process.



THINGS THAT WILL SPEED UP THE APPROVAL PROCESS

Submitting two copies of a fully-signed, complete, well-reasoned, and well-articulated IRB application for a minimal risk project; ensuring all attachments are labeled and in sequential order (as appropriate: recruitment material, informed consent document, survey or other experiment material, debriefing statement).

PLANNING YOUR PROJECT: THINGS THAT MAY SLOW DOWN THE APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Use of techniques or methodology that may increase risk if not acknowledged, justified, and managed:
 - a. Deception
 - b. Collection of a large number of identifiers (data that may lead to the identify of participants such as demographic information)
 - c. Data collection methods that may result in a breach of privacy if not handled with care
2. Working with potentially vulnerable or sensitive populations such as employees; veterans; the aged; minors; a single race or cultural group; a small, locally-known population; mentally-diminished adults; illegal immigrants; the homeless. Studies involving prisoners will require a full board review.
3. Research on controversial or highly personal topics such as race relations on campus, personal health, sex, drugs, illegal activity.
4. Off campus research. Projects with students in K-12 schools almost always require a full board review.

FILLING OUT THE IRB APPLICATION: THINGS THAT MAY SLOW DOWN THE APPROVAL PROCESS

1. An incomplete application. The IRB will not review incomplete applications. Common problems include:
 - a. missing signatures
 - b. not all questions on the application are answered or answered correctly
 - c. missing documentation, such as the recruitment material, the consent form, any research instruments (instructions to participants, survey), debriefing statement where appropriate
2. Discrepancies between what is stated in the application and what is stated on the consent form or other documents.
3. Use of jargon or highly technical language; submitting a hand-written application; submitting a messy or complex application; submitting a large number of unlabeled attachments in no particular order.
Note: Your application may be reviewed by someone outside of your field. Applications that take longer to read and understand will take longer to review.
4. Incorrect use of the terms “anonymous” and “confidential.” See the IRB website for details.
Note: rarely can complete anonymity be guaranteed and in most cases confidentiality can be promised only within the limits of the law.
5. Consent forms not targeted to the participant pool; typographical errors on the consent form or other public documents.

QUESTIONS?

- Visit the IRB website at www.jcu.edu/research/irb for more information, including our FAQ list, resources, and sample consent documents.
- Our office is available for consultation on large or complex projects. Stop by during the planning process to avoid last minute pitfalls. Contact IRB Administrator Elizabeth Parsons at x1527 or eparsons@jcu.edu for help with your IRB application.