

Institutional Review Board Application Tips

With the Academic Affairs initiative to increase undergraduate research, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) would like to offer advice to help prevent the denial of your proposal. After reviewing proposals over many years, a few items have been frequently seen that cause the IRB to deny your request to conduct research. Remember, the IRB has the primary focus of protecting students.

Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Student's names should be replaced with other identifiers such as numbers and any student information should be kept in a locked cabinet.- Student's images should be protected; therefore, do not videotape faces unless approved by the student in writing.- Emailing student surveys would prevent confidentiality and result in proposal denial.
Compulsion/power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Remember that you have power over your students by grading them or influencing other teachers' opinions in the student's program. Thus, you cannot use your students as test subjects. If you are using test subjects from another teacher's class, those who teach the test students cannot be made aware of their participation or lack thereof. Thus, no extra credit or the like may be offered for participation.
Project disclosures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- At the conclusion of the study, you should state that the data will be kept in a locked cabinet and destroyed after three years (or however many years the data will be maintained). There needs to be proof that no one will have access to anything that could disclose the participants' information.- In the consent form, the student needs to be made aware of how the information will be used and to assure confidentiality.
Data-mining	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- PIER will not be doing the research for you which includes running statistics or providing student information.
Consent form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The consent form needs to include researcher contact information.- The form must clearly state that the student can withdraw from the study at any point with no consequences.- The form must state that the student is 18 years of age or older and you need to take steps to assure that no minors were used in the study.- The form should state the projected time that the student will need to allot for participation.- EVEN SURVEYS NEED CONSENT FORMS AND IRB APPROVAL. Both qualitative and quantitative research studies using students must be IRB approved before any research is conducted. ANYTIME students are used in research, IRB approval is required.- Consent forms should be kept separate from the data so that confidentiality is assured.