

## Guidance: Class Assignments & IRB Review

These guidelines are intended to address whether class assignments meet the definition of research with human subjects and require review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Some student class research projects involve questionnaires, interviews, or other interactions with individuals, such as those used in research methods courses. In cases, faculty should consider if student research projects should be reviewed by the IRB to ensure the protection of human subjects. For questions or additional guidance, email [irb@southalabama.edu](mailto:irb@southalabama.edu).

Student class assignments, as a general rule, are not systematic data collection efforts intended to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge and, thus, do not meet the [federal regulatory definition of research](#) (45 CFR 46.102 (l)).

[45 CFR 46.102(d)]

- x Generalizable knowledge is information which has the potential to be expanded from the isolated circumstances in which it is acquired to any broader context.
- x Dissemination includes but is not limited to presentation at scientific meetings, submission for publication in a scientific journal, and internet postings. Dissemination of the findings also includes presentations at university, state, national, or international settings.
- x Human Subjects defined as a living individual about whom an investigator (professional or student) conducting research 1) obtains information or biospecimens through intervention or interaction with the individual and uses, studies, or analyzes the information or biospecimens; or 2) obtains, uses, studies, analyzes, or generates identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens. [45 CFR 46.102(l)(1)]
- x Student Class Assignment: For the purposes of this guidance, the following apply:
  - o Conducted during or outside of class with students enrolled in an official course (for credit or not for credit)
  - o Conducted in fulfillment of class assignments involving interactions with individuals other than the members of the class
  - o Typically initiated and completed within a single term
  - o Designed to teach research methods through student interaction with individuals or data about individuals, or designed to help students understand concepts covered by the course
  - o Generally not intended to create new knowledge or to lead to scholarly publication

## Research vs Course Assignment

Student projects conducted within an academic course may be categorized as either a course

