



JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY
THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY IN CLEVELAND

MEMORANDUM

TO: JCU Faculty, Staff, and Administration
FROM: Dr. Mary E. Beadle, Chairperson, Institutional Review Board
DATE: November 6, 2002
SUBJECT: Use of Human Subjects in Research Projects

John Carroll University is committed to the ethical use of human subjects in research projects and abides by the principles as stated in the Belmont Report and the federal guidelines established for the protection of human subjects (see www.jcu.edu/research/irb for links to the Belmont Report and the federal guidelines at 45 CFR 46). While affirming the need for academic freedom, JCU will not approve or accept any activities that violate human rights or demean human dignity. Please keep in mind this reminder regarding the collection of data from or about humans in accordance with our Institutional Review Board Policy.

The policy applies to all University personnel (faculty, administrators, staff, and students) who conduct human subject research on campus or off, and to anyone conducting applicable research at John Carroll University. Research projects covered by this policy include, but are not limited to, data from interviews, surveys, questionnaires, tests, or observations, and the use of data previously collected and now residing in private records or public sources. Also included are departmental student surveys, such as exit surveys by seniors, **if the results of the surveys are to be made public**; surveys done for departmental use only, such as those for accreditation purposes, do not need IRB approval. You may find it helpful to review "Does Your Project Need to be Reviewed by the IRB?" (the link is available on the JCU IRB website). If you are unsure whether your project falls under IRB jurisdiction, please feel free to contact me.

According to federal guidelines, the research protocol **must be approved prior to the collection of the data**. Data collected without approval are not to be used in publications, including theses, grant proposals, and conference presentations. The majority of the research projects conducted at JCU falls under one of the federally designated categories for exempt or expedited review and can be quickly processed by the IRB generally with requests for minor revisions. Incomplete, complex, and high-risk protocols require a longer review time.

Over the last few years, several prominent universities have had research operations suspended by federal overseers of human subject research for violation of compliance policies. The research study that initiated the federal investigation at Virginia Commonwealth University involved a mailed survey on family history. Noncompliance can place the university's federal funding in jeopardy; expose the institution to heavy fines; invite litigation; and generate negative publicity.

Thank you for your attention to these issues. As bureaucratic as all this required paperwork is, the university remains committed to the ethical treatment of human research subjects. Questions about the use of humans in research may be addressed to me or to any member of the Institutional Review Board. The policy statement, forms, and other information are available online at the JCU IRB website: www.jcu.edu/research/irb.