



Tips for Writing a Successful IRB Application

1. No faculty member or student may conduct research at Union University involving human beings as subjects without IRB approval. When in doubt as to whether an activity qualifies as research that requires IRB review, contact the IRB office.
2. No research activity may be conducted, however preliminary, without IRB approval. For example, sending out letters to potential human subjects or authoritative entities prior to IRB approval is a violation of this rule.
3. The primary investigator of the research is ultimately responsible for protecting the rights of all persons who volunteer as human subjects in their research. Student researchers at any level (undergraduate and graduate) are accountable to their faculty advisors and the IRB Committee for all matters involving their research.
4. Faculty advisors are responsible for their assigned student's research activities and are accountable to the IRB Committee for having full knowledge and approval of the student's research plan, methods, and procedures in written and enacted forms. The faculty advisor's signature on IRB Protocol submissions attests to the reasonable assumption that they have read and approved the document and stand by the research project described therein.
5. Do you have the most current IRB Protocol forms? Have you answered each question carefully? (<http://www.uu.edu/programs/irb/>)
6. Did your faculty advisor read and sign your protocol?
7. Did you discover gaps in the way you documented your proposed research methods in your protocol and resolve them before submitting to IRB?
8. Have you carefully considered how you can minimize any harm or potential harm to the people you propose to involve in your research? Is your thinking reflected in the protocol?
9. Do you have the author's permission to use any research instruments that you have chosen as measures?
10. Do you have a plan to obtain permission from all institutional or departmental entities that have oversight and authority at the site you propose to conduct your research?
11. Have you followed the template guide for your Informed Consent?

12. Is your Informed Consent written in simple language (6th grade level for adults)?
13. Have you submitted your protocol at least one month before you plan to begin your research activities? How quickly you get IRB approval depends on you.
- a. You have developed a scientifically sound research design.
 - b. The research design is completely and succinctly described under the proper headings in the protocol form. The IRB Committee must be able to understand from your protocol description the *who, what, when, and how* of your research methods and procedures.
 - c. You have described in the protocol an understanding and need for the protection of volunteers whom you propose to recruit for your study. You need to state how you plan to minimize risk – even if quite minimal risk such as potential embarrassment or potential emotional distress due to the type of questions asked on the survey.
 - d. All Informed Consents or Child Assents are properly developed, following the template offered on the Union University website.
 - e. You must submit a final report of your research when all research activities are completed in order for the IRB office to officially close your protocol file.
 - f. You are responsible for informing the IRB Committee of any event that occurs as a result of your research that may be considered an Adverse Event. An example of an adverse event could be that one of your volunteer human research subjects was disciplined or terminated by an employer because he or she did or did not decide to participate in your research and this was viewed as unsatisfactory employee behavior. This situation would represent a serious breach of human subject research ethics. You would be required to report this event in writing to the IRB Committee, following the guidelines set forth on the Union University IRB web-site.
 - g. If your research includes collecting Informed Consents or Child Assents, you must preserve those Informed Consents in a protected space for 3 years following the termination of your research. At the end of the three years, you should destroy (shred) the Informed Consents.