University of North Dakota Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Helpful Hints for Graduate Students and Faculty Advisors

1. **Start early!**
   Applications submitted on the Human Subjects Review Form can take at least 2-3 weeks from the date of submission to approval, assuming no revisions are needed. During particularly busy times of the semester (the beginning and end of semesters are always busy times for IRB submissions) or during campus breaks, it may take longer for an approval to come through, so plan ahead and be sure to get your paperwork in as soon as possible.

   *Master’s Students:* It’s best to submit your proposal to the IRB office at least the semester before you intend to graduate in order to give yourself enough time to write the IRB application, receive IRB approval, conduct your research, analyze results, and write your thesis/independent study. For example, if you’re planning to graduate in May 2017, the IRB application should be submitted during the Fall 2016 semester.

   *Doctoral Students:* Your proposal should be submitted to the IRB office as soon as possible after your dissertation committee has approved your research topic proposal. You will need to give yourself enough time to write the IRB application, receive IRB approval, conduct your research, analyze results, write your dissertation, and defend your dissertation. We recommend that the IRB application be submitted at least two semesters before your planned graduation. For example, if you’re planning to graduate in May 2017, the IRB proposal should be submitted no later than the Spring 2016 semester.

2. **Make sure you’ve completed the human subjects research education course.**
   Go to the ‘Required Education’ section of the IRB website for printable instructions to register for the online course. The registration process for the online course can be a little confusing, and these instructions provide step-by-step guidance on registering for the course. If you complete the wrong course, you’ll have to start over and take the correct course. Getting it right the first time will help you avoid doing extra and unnecessary work.

3. **Use the IRB website as your only source for application forms.**
   The most current forms are available on the ‘IRB Forms’ section of the IRB website. Always retrieve forms from the IRB website. Proposals turned in on an outdated form will not be processed and will have to be redone, so save yourself extra work by using the correct form the first time.

4. **Avoid the most common IRB application mistakes.**
   - Type your IRB application - hand written IRB forms are not accepted.
   - Answer all the questions on the form and provide complete and detailed information.
   - All students must complete the student advisor section on the front of the IRB application – no exceptions. You must have an advisor listed for your research proposal. Your advisor also needs to sign your IRB application.
   - If you’ll be conducting research with students or staff at K-12 schools (even if it’s in your own classroom/school), you will need to obtain permission from the district or principal.
     - Some districts (Grand Forks, Fargo, & Bismarck, for example) require permission at the district level.
     - Other districts (East Grand Forks is an example) require permission from the principal of the school where the research will be conducted.
   - Permission from the district/school should be submitted on letterhead along with your IRB application.
   - If you’re working with an outside entity that has its own IRB (for example, Altru, ND Department of Human Services, another University), approval from that IRB may be required in addition to UND IRB approval. Contact an outside IRB as soon as possible – there is no need to wait for UND’s IRB approval to make an initial inquiry about another institution’s research requirements.
   - If you’re going to be making any recordings during the research – audio, video, digital, or image – you must fill out the Human Subjects Review Form.
   - If you’ll be surveying or interviewing children under age 18, you must fill out the Human Subjects Review Form.
   - On the Human Subjects Review Form, answer the narrative questions directly on the form – don’t submit your responses as an attachment. The form is designed so that responses may be typed directly onto the form.
5. **The IRB application must include anything being used to gather data from participants, such as:**
   - Surveys
   - Questionnaires
   - Assessments
   - Assignments
   - Interview questions
   - Focus group questions
   - Anything else that the researcher will use to obtain information from participants

6. **The IRB application must include all recruitment materials, such as:**
   - Advertisements
   - Flyers
   - Email invitations
   - Letter invitations
   - Anything else that the researcher will use to recruit participants for the research

7. **Don’t begin your research until you receive approval from the IRB office.**
   Dropping off your application with the IRB is only the first step. You’ll hear from the IRB if any revisions to your application are necessary and when you’ve received approval to start your research.

8. **Contact the IRB office! Contact us if:**
   - You’re not sure if you even need IRB approval.
   - You know you need IRB approval, but you don’t know where to begin.
   - You’re not sure which human subjects education course you should take.
   - You think you may have already taken a human subjects education course and want to check.
   - You’re not sure which IRB application form to use.
   - You’re not sure if you need letters of support/permission from any outside agencies or organizations.
   - You’re receiving conflicting advice on IRB policies and procedures and aren’t sure what to do.
   - You want to talk about anything else IRB-related.

   *We strive to make sure every researcher has a good experience with the IRB. We want your application to be successful from the start and are here to help you anytime during the process!*

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**Contact Information:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>IRB Office Location</th>
<th>Twamley Hall, Room 106</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Fax Number</td>
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<tr>
<th>IRB Mailing Address</th>
<th>Institutional Review Board</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Research Development &amp; Compliance</td>
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<td>264 Centennial Drive Stop 7134</td>
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<td>Grand Forks, ND 58202-7134</td>
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**IRB Administrative Secretary:**

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**IRB Coordinator:**

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*February 4, 2016*