

Guidelines for Student Course Assignments

Student course assignments are generally not considered “research” under the federal definition as these course assignments are not “systematic data collection” efforts intended to “develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.” Therefore, student course assignments generally do not require the Research Review Committee review, approval, and monitoring.

However, when student course assignments are in fact systematic data collection efforts intended to “develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge”, they are considered a research study and are subject to Research Review Committee review, approval, and monitoring. Here is a quick algorithm to help you determine if your course assignment needs to be reviewed by the Research Review Committee

<p>1. Are Human Subjects Involved? <i>A human subject</i> is any living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data through intervention or interaction with the individual • individual private information through direct or indirect means 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>2. Is it Research? The definition of <i>research</i> is: A systematic investigation designed to produce or contribute to generalizable knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of what, typically, would be considered <i>research</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data are to be published. • Data are to be presented at a conference or other public meeting • Data are sent to an organization or entity outside of SPC. • Data are collected with the intent of contributing to generalizable knowledge outside SPC • When a thesis, or dissertation, or graduate capstone project is the result. • Examples of what, typically, would not be considered <i>research</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used for internal SPC purposes only • Data collected and used within the classroom environment for instructional purposes • Data collection intended only to improve or inform delivery of an SPC course • A student course assignment with no public presentation outside of the involved SPC classes. • No publication (theses and dissertations count as publication) 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>INTERPRETATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you answered “NO” to EITHER question above, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The project does NOT meet criteria for review</i> by the RRC • Nothing further is required; you may proceed with your project once administratively approved • If you answered “YES” to BOTH questions above <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The project meets criteria for review</i> by the RRC • RRC approval is required before you can proceed with this project • Please complete and submit a formal application 	<p>Meets criteria for RRC Review?</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

One clear example that the activity is a research study is the intent to publish, present to an outside group or otherwise disseminate the results of the research activity beyond SPC. Faculty and/or students intending to publish such course assignments must complete an application and submit it to the Research Review Committee for review and approval prior to beginning the assignment.