SoTL Research and the IRB Process

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Workshop goal and outcomes

- *This workshop is designed to provide education and training so participants can write an IRB protocol for a SoTL study.*

- Participants will be able to:
  - Share basic information about the IRB process at ISU
  - Explain when an IRB is needed for SoTL research
  - Discuss ethical issues in conducting SoTL research
  - Complete necessary IRB protocol for a SoTL study
  - Find useful resources about IRB for SoTL research

Why do we need an IRB?

- To protect human subjects who participate in research.
- To meet federal regulations which protect human subjects in research and apply to all institutions receiving federal funding.
- To uphold “best practices” in research.

How do you define “human subject”? (or How do I know I need IRB approval?)

- Any living individual about whom a researcher conducts research and obtains
  - Data through intervention or interaction with the individual
  - Or identifiable private information or records

What is the IRB Executive Committee?

- Presidentially appointed and charged with autonomously carrying out federal regulations as they relate to the protection of human subjects.
- Typically has between 12-15 members which are all faculty/researchers including a faculty Chair. Regulations mandate that a community member also be assigned to the board.

What is the role of the IRB Department Representative?

- Department Reps are the frontline, discipline specific reviewers for each department
- Primary responsibility is to catch basic problems with the protocol to save the PI time and to determine and recommend the level at which it should be reviewed.

What is a research protocol?

- A written description of a planned research activity in sufficient detail to allow for the review of the proposed research activities by the IRB
- Format and the information needed is detailed on the IRB protocol form.

What is the review process?

- It is the process by which the members of the IRB weigh the risks of the research activities against the possible benefits.
- There are three levels of IRB review
  - Exempt
  - Expedited
  - Full

What populations are protected?

- Cognitively impaired
- Minors
- Elderly
- Pregnant Women
- Prisoners
- Economically Disadvantaged
- Chronically/Terminally Ill

What are the general ethical issues with using human subjects?

- Informed consent
- Right to privacy
- Protection from harm

What are some ethical practice issues related to SoTL specifically?

- Data collection from own students
- Obtaining consent
- Required assignments for course used for research purposes
- Using data collected during the semester
- Confidentiality issues
- Others?

What are key ethical themes in studying teaching and students' learning?

- Power
- Coercion
- Fairness
- Privacy

The Protocol Form

http://rsp.illinoisstate.edu/forms/human_irb.shtml

Human subject resources for SoTL studies

- http://sotl.illinoisstate.edu/resources/research/

Questions?

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