

## 8. GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS AT SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

The Subcommittee on Protection of Human Subjects constitutes the Institutional Review Board for experiments involving human subjects at Swarthmore College.

- a. Human Subjects Research at the College is guided by the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice as outlined in *The Belmont Report* and procedures described in the Code of Federal Regulations 45 CFR, Subtitle A, Part 46, Protection of Human Subjects as most recently amended.
- b. Research is defined in Section 46.102(d) as “a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities which meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program which is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.”
- c. Human subject is defined in Section 46.102(f) as “a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or (2) identifiable private information.”
- d. For non-invasive experiments special attention should be placed on the sections on minimization of risk to the subjects and informed consent procedures. These regulations do not pertain to activities relating to students within the context of an academic course. Activities by students enrolled in a course which involve subjects outside the course may, however, be subject to review if funded by the U.S. Government or if requested by the Dean of Students at Swarthmore College.
- e. Subjects should not normally be placed in emotionally stressful situations. If such stress is deemed essential to the experiment, adequate provision must be made for rapid termination of the experiment at the subject's request. The informed consent form to be signed by all subjects shall explicitly describe how the subject may withdraw from the experiment at any time and for any reason without penalty. In all experiments a mechanism shall be provided by which subjects may anonymously comment on their experience in the experiment if they so desire. (The Dean's office would be an appropriate avenue.)
- f. Subjects' participation must be voluntary; their participation and performance should not be linked to participation in a college course either directly or by implication. (For example, the faculty member performing the research might be a reader on a thesis committee or in some other way cause the student to believe it would be to her or his advantage to participate in the experiment.)

- g. The experimenter should maintain privacy of the subjects' records. In most cases data should be coded and the subjects' names or SS numbers removed from the records and destroyed. Subjects' names or other identifiers should not be published in any report of work performed for either internal or external publication without the express, written permission of the subject. There should be no file of identifying names or numbers that would permit the association of responses or results with subjects which is maintained beyond the duration of the experiment.

If it is necessary to retain the name of the respondent then there must be some other assurance of protection of privacy. The proposal should identify a specific date by which all relevant identifying information will be destroyed and the College informed of this action in writing. Privacy considerations include work in which the subject is only measured or photographed and work in which subjects only respond to a questionnaire (but see questionnaires sent by mail, below).

The College Committee on the Protection of Human Subjects does not grant approval for experiments performed at other institutions, although the Committee will make suggestions after reading a proposal. Responsibility for protection of subjects at other institutions must be borne by the other institution.

As a general matter the Subcommittee on Protection of Human Subjects does not deal with questionnaires sent through the mail as the College is not responsible for the content of the mails. (Anyone has the right to send a student a questionnaire in the mail.) The Committee does, however, deal with cases in which human subjects are interviewed at the College and cases in which funding for the project is provided by the U.S. Government or its agencies. (i.e. approval is required as part of the application process). The Committee also handles cases in which human subjects are surveyed via the Internet.

If individuals outside the College propose to perform experiments or administer questionnaires other than by mail, they must request permission from the Dean's office. The Dean then authorizes the Subcommittee for the Protection of Human Subjects to review the proposed project. The Subcommittee sends the results of its review to the Dean for use in his or her decision to grant permission for the study.

Please refer to the IRB web site for links to the federal regulations and guidelines on proposal submission and determining the appropriate level of review:  
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/Admin/irb/HumanSubjectsResearch.html>. In cases of full review, please allow four to eight weeks for the IRB to conduct its review. For cases of expedited review, the IRB should be able to deliberate within one or two weeks. Note that the IRB is responsible for determining whether a project involving human subjects is exempt from review.

## 9. GRANT PROPOSAL ASSISTANCE

The Corporate, Foundation, and Government Relations Office (CFGR) secures external funding from foundations, corporations, and government sources for institutional projects and works closely with the Provost to help faculty members secure funds for research, sabbatical leave and special collaborative initiatives. The CFGR office also serves as a