Cornell University
Office of
Research Integrity and Assurance

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News from the Cornell University IRB Office
October 2015

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1. New IRB Open Office Hours

Starting this week, IRB staff will be available every **Tuesday from 10 am to 12 pm** and **Thursday from 2 to 4 pm,** via phone or in-person, to provide one-on-one consultation and assistance. No appointments are necessary. Office hours will be held in the East Hill Office Building (EHOB) – 395 Pine Tree Rd., Suite 320 (accessible via the 82 TCAT bus line).

Here are the contact details:

Tuesdays in-person: EHOB, Room 320-D
Tuesdays via phone: 607-254-5162
Thursdays in-person: EHOB, Room 320-3
Thursdays via phone: 607-255-6182

We urge you to take advantage of these office hours to seek guidance in putting together your IRB applications or responding to reviewer comments. Taking the extra time can ultimately help save time later in the review process.

2. New Tool - Check the Status of Your IRB Application!

We are excited to let you know about a new online tool that will give you the status of IRB protocols on which you are listed as the Primary Investigator, Research Personnel, or Faculty Advisor.

Check it out: Status Report!

This tool is currently in beta version, so please write us if you notice any incorrect information.

3. **New Interactive Decision Trees for Investigators**
   The IRB office has also recently developed two online tools to help investigators determine whether or not—and what kind of—IRB review is needed:
   a. Do I need to submit an application to the IRB Office? (i.e., does your study constitute "human subjects research?")
   b. Which application form should I complete? (i.e., is your project eligible for exemption from IRB committee review?)

4. **Is Your IRB Training Expiring?**
   As most of you know, all personnel named on IRB-approved protocols must complete online human subjects research ethics training, and training must be renewed at a minimum of every 5 years. We implemented the training program delivered by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) in 2010, so we have recently started to see expired training statuses.

   The IRB recently voted to grant a temporary reprieve of the training renewal requirement through September 1, 2016, so that expired training of research personnel will not delay approval of IRB protocols. This means that anyone whose human subjects training expires now through August, 2016 has until September 1, 2016 to take the refresher course without it impacting their IRB approvals.

   That being said, we recommend that researchers take the refresher course sooner rather than later, to keep current on skills and prevent any training-related delays in approving protocols next fall. You can check the status of your CITI training on this website. Starting 90 days prior to your training expiration date, the relevant refresher course (e.g., BioMedical Research) will become available in your Cornell Course List (viewable on the CITI Main Menu page). Once you click on the training title, you will see that you are on Stage 2, and the modules have "Refresher" in their titles. The CITI training website can be accessed using your Cornell NetID and password via our training landing page.

5. **Teaching a Course on Research Methods? Course Activity Approval No Longer Required!**
   Starting in October, 2015 the IRB will no longer require that faculty/instructors submit an application form to the IRB office for class projects that require students to perform research using human participants, so long as the research is not used in any publication or presentation of generalizable results. Please read more on the IRB website.

6. **Protocol Turnaround Times and Tips for Speedier Approvals!**
   As the school year begins and new research projects develop, we wanted to take a moment to remind you what you can generally expect from the IRB office in terms of review and approval times, and suggest some ways you can make the process go more smoothly and quickly.

   Ordinarily, you can expect a minimum turnaround time of:
   - 5-7 business days for Exempt applications
   - 15 business days for Expedited applications
   - 3-5 business days for Amendments
   - 4-6 weeks for applications requiring Full Board review

If an application is incomplete, you can expect that a minimum of 5-7 days will be added to the review process. When our office is understaffed (as it currently is), or we are experiencing particularly heavy protocol submission rates (usually in October and late winter/early spring), reviews can take longer. We appreciate your patience and will do everything we can to keep to these timelines!

To help make the IRB protocol review process go more smoothly and quickly, please:

- Use the Interactive Decision Trees to determine whether your research requires a submission to the IRB office, and, if it does, if it qualifies for exemption from IRB committee review.
- Download the current application forms, which are available on the Forms page of the IRB website. Fill out all the relevant sections of the application form!
- Send us all relevant research materials: PI and faculty advisor signatures/attestations, consent forms, surveys, interview guides, recruitment scripts/flyers, letters of support, etc.
- Use our informed consent, assent, and debriefing templates—also on the Forms page of the IRB website—to guide preparation of your consent materials.
- Take the online training for human subjects research—the CITI Training—before submitting your IRB application, and ensure all research personnel on your project have done so, as well.
- Check out the IRB Policies and Guidance pages to see if there are any special requirements or recommendations for your particular type of research.
- Visit our Frequently Asked Questions page.
- Visit or call us during our newly established office hours (Tuesdays 10 am-12 pm, Thursdays 2-4 pm) to get hands-on assistance. For more details, see Item #1 in this newsletter, above.

7. IRB Office Transitions

We wanted to formally update you on our semi-recent office transitions:

- We welcomed Vanessa McCaffery, Compliance Administrator, to our team at the end of March. She came to us from Cornell's Survey Research Institute. She spends approximately half her time on IRB administration, primarily facilitating approvals of amendment and continuation requests. She can be reached at 254-5162 or irbhp@cornell.edu.
- We bid farewell to Denise Payne, former IRB Administrator, in late August. She is still in the Cornell community, though, so you can send her your well-wishes at dlp35@cornell.edu. We expect her replacement to join us later this month.

If you have any questions or comments regarding these or any other topics relevant to the IRB, please contact the IRB office at irbhp@cornell.edu, or call Myles Gideon (255-6182), Vanessa McCaffery (254-5162), or Guilaine Senecal (255-8994) for assistance.