

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD POLICY

I. Policy Section

3.0 College Operations

II. Policy Subsection

3.1 Institutional Review Board Policy

III. Policy Statement

Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) has established an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to review both internal and external requests for research studies involving GRCC human subjects (students, faculty, and/or staff). All persons who wish to conduct research involving human subjects at GRCC must submit a completed GRCC IRB Research Proposal application. This IRB application will be reviewed by the GRCC IRB committee, following an established process by which the GRCC IRB operates to determine and assure the following:

- A. The welfare and rights of human subjects are adequately protected and informed consent given, if necessary;
- B. Human subjects are not placed at unreasonable physical, mental, or emotional risk as a result of the research, and risks to subjects are minimized;
- C. The research outcomes are of significance to the interests of the college;
- D. The necessity and importance of the research outweighs the risks to the subjects;
- E. The researcher(s) is/are qualified to conduct research involving human subjects;
- F. Selection of participants is equitable;
- G. The research plan makes adequate provision for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of participants; and
- H. There are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of participants and to maintain the confidentiality of data.

IV. Reason for the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a single, comprehensive standard of protection for human subjects of research conducted by internal and

external researchers (faculty, staff, students) at Grand Rapids Community College. The intent is to assure that investigators do not unduly put at risk or harm humans who are participants in research, and that the participants of such research are aware of their rights as defined in 45 CFR Part 46.

IRB approval must precede commencement of any work involving human subjects. Additionally, any modifications to an IRB approved research project must be approved prior to implementation of those modifications. GRCC's Institutional Review Board follows requirements and processes outlined 45 CFR part 46.

V. Entities Affected by This Policy

The information is intended for use by internal and external researchers/investigators, as well as IRB members, members of other GRCC committees, GRCC administrators, or others who are involved with GRCC research involving human subjects.

VI. Who Should Read This Policy

All GRCC faculty and staff as well as any other persons desiring to conduct research using GRCC faculty, staff, or students as research participants.

VII. Related Documents

- A. GRCC Institutional Research Review Board Research application
- B. GRCC Institutional Research Review Board Research Year-End Final Report
- C. GRCC Institutional Review Board Research Amendment Request Form
- D. 45 CFR Part 46
- E. Grand Rapids Community College Written Public Summary of GRCC's Freedom of Information Act Procedures and Guidelines

VIII. Contacts

Policy Owner: Director of Institutional Research

IX. Definitions:

A. Institutional Review Board: An Institutional Review Board (IRB) is a committee established to review and approve research involving human subjects. The purpose of the IRB is to ensure that all human subject research be conducted in accordance with all federal, institutional, and ethical guidelines.

B. Human Subjects: Human subjects research is:

- systematic investigation
- designed to contribute to general knowledge
- often presented/published outside the College

Human subjects research is not:

- classroom surveys for internal use
- data-gathering for the exclusive purpose of improving service or practice at GRCC

C. [45 CFR Part 46](#)

X. Procedures

A. OPERATING PROCEDURES:

1. GRCC's IRB committee is co-chaired by the Director of Institutional Research and a GRCC faculty member.
2. GRCC's IRB committee is made up of at least five members, including faculty and administrators from GRCC, as well as an external community member (not affiliated with the College). Individuals whose primary concerns are in scientific areas and those whose primary concerns are in non-scientific areas are represented on the committee.
3. Researcher completes and submits GRCC IRB Research Application.
4. Application reviewed by IRB Co-Chairs and other college stakeholders for alignment with college priorities, commitment from college for involvement, and risks and benefits to participants. Determination made if IRB research application will be reviewed by IRB Committee, or declined/disapproved based on initial review.
5. IRB committee reviews IRB research application and requests any needed clarification on the application from the researcher(s).
6. The IRB committee convenes a meeting to discuss the research application and IRB evaluates risks, recruitment, informed consent, data security, privacy and confidentiality provisions.
7. IRB committee approves, approves with conditions, or denies/disapproves the application.
8. Upon IRB approval, research applications which include requests for college data will undergo evaluation against federal, state, and local/college restrictions and policies on release of that data for research purposes. Data Sharing Agreements (DSA) will be implemented for the sharing of approved/permissible college data requested in the IRB research application. Protected data used in research will not be released to FOIA requests (unless required by law) and will be specified in the DSA where applicable.
9. IRB approved applications which include requests for college data are also subject to GRCC's FOIA policy, including assessment of fees.

10. Decision made within 4 weeks of submission, and written determination provided to the Researcher(s).
11. Investigator/researcher reports any changes to research plan using the Research Amendment Request Form. No modifications may be implemented until written IRB approval is received.
12. Researcher submits a Research Year End Final Report to the IRB.
13. Research is approved for one year.

XI. Forms

[GRCC Research Proposal Application](#)

[GRCC Research Amendment Request Form](#)

[GRCC Research Year-End Report Form](#)

XII. Effective Date

May, 2015

XIII. Policy History

Created - May, 2015

Reviewed - May, 2019

Updated - October, 2021

XIV. Next Review/Revision Date

October, 2025