Research Involving Alachua County School System Students, Faculty or Facilities

Modified: January 2020

Background:

Any research involving students, faculty or facilities of the Alachua County School (ACS) system provide a special category of potential research subjects. The UF IRB requires any UF faculty, staff or students to follow the ACS policy on conducting research.

Q: Does the UF IRB have to approve the study prior to submitting it to the ACS for their approval?

Yes. Typically, the ACS wants to know that the UF IRB has approved the study. To that end, once the submission to the UF IRB has been approved, and the only pending issue is the approval of the ACS, then the UF IRB will designate the protocol as “Approved with Contingencies”, and the contingency is the approval of the ACS. The PI will receive an email letter from the IRB indicating this, which can be submitted to the ACS with their proposal.

Q: What additional approvals are needed prior to submitting a protocol to a UF IRB that involves ACS students, faculty or facilities?

Proposals for research in the District must be approved through the office of the Director of Research, Planning and Evaluation, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida 32601 and by the school Principal. Mr. Jeffery Charbonnet charbojl@gm.sbac.edu is the contact person.

For more information on the District’s application process, go to: https://www.sbac.edu/Page/2544.

Q: What information does the ACS require be submitted to them?

Proposals for research in the District must be approved through the office of the Director of Research, Planning and Evaluation, 620 East University Avenue, Gainesville, Florida 32601 and by the school principal.

The following are the criteria for approval:

- Objectives must be clearly stated.
- The research designed should be of sufficient scope and depth to produce valid and reliable results.
- The potential benefits should be sufficient to justify the time and effort of students and staff members. Proposed research or other projects must be expected to contribute to the general welfare of students, teachers, or school administrators.
- The privacy of all persons and the confidentiality of records must be maintained at all times. (For more information regarding confidentiality see Policy 8350, Confidentiality. For more information regarding...
student records confidentiality see Policy 8330, Student Records.
If use of data derived from school reports, interviews, or questionnaires has potential for invasion of
privacy of students, their families, or staff members, such data may not be used without advance
written authorization given by the staff member, student, or his/her parent or guardian, as
appropriate. (See Policy 2416, Student Privacy and Parental Access to Information for more
information on surveys, analysis, and evaluations.)
In general, instructional activities must not be interrupted unless there is clear significance for the
educational program of the schools.
Projects involving student researchers must have prior written approval by a faculty member of the
institution in which that student is enrolled who has direct responsibility for the student's research.
Proposals submitted by researchers with university affiliation must show written approval for the
research from the university's committee for the protection of human research subjects.
The Superintendent reserves the right to require parental consent before authorizing research
involving students.

Proposals which meet the initial screening standards will be forwarded to selected school principals for consideration. The principal will review each written proposal, discuss it with other staff members, and notify the Superintendent's designee of acceptance or rejection of the proposal.

Principals are responsible for assuring that both the privacy of all persons and the confidentiality of all personally identifiable student records are maintained. The principal is also responsible for assuring that written parental informed consent, when required, is obtained by the researcher prior to involving students as research subjects.

On completion of the project, the principal investigator will forward one (1) copy of the results of the study to the Superintendent or designee.

Q: Once ACS approval is obtained, what needs to be included in the UF IRB submission?

At the end of the myIRB submission, on the “Miscellaneous” smart form page, please upload a copy of the ACS approval letter. The IRB will then complete the approval now that the contingency has been met.