

Williams College Institutional Review Board Application for Review

The IRB reviews proposals for research involving human participants. “Research” refers to “an activity designed to test a hypothesis, permit conclusions to be drawn, and thereby develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.” Class projects whose purpose is pedagogical do not meet the definition of research and are therefore exempt from IRB review.

Please type your responses into this document and email it to the IRB Chair for review. Proposals that employ adult participants and pose no risks to participants above those ordinarily encountered in everyday life are often eligible for expedited review. By submitting a proposal, you are indicating that your proposed research is methodologically sound and that you have minimized any potential risks to participants.

1. Principal investigator(s) including department and contact information.

2. Title of project

3. Research summary. It is not necessary to include an exhaustive literature review. Instead, please summarize the procedures of your study insofar as they pertain to the use of human participants. Indicate how participants will be recruited, whether they will be identified or anonymous, and whether there are any risks to participants (and, if so, how they will be handled). Attach copies of any questionnaires or scripts as well as a copy of a written consent form.

4. Possible issues. Please explain if your project includes any of the following elements: (a) participants who may have a diminished capacity to offer informed consent, such as patients, minors (under 18), elderly (over 65), prisoners or parolees, or individuals who are cognitively impaired; (b) the collection of information of a sensitive or personal nature such as questionnaires about sexual behavior illegal activities such as drug use, (c) archived data of a sensitive or personal nature such as medical records; (d) payment for participation; (e) the use of alcohol, drugs, or medication; (f) the use of deception; (g) the collection of biological specimens; or (h) video or audio recordings of participants. In the case of research with minors, active, written parental consent is required. It is usually expected that you also obtain the written assent of children age 7 and older. In the case of video or audio recordings, please explain how they will be stored so as to preserve participant confidentiality, and if/when they will be destroyed.