

XVIII. POLICY ON STUDIES INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS  
(Effective September 24, 2007)

All research conducted by Whitman College faculty or students involving human participants, regardless of its funding source, must be submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review. Details of federal guidelines for this review process can be found at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.htm>

**Definitions of Research**

Based on U.S. Government regulations that govern this review process, called “The Common Rule” because the same set of regulations applies to 18 different federal agencies, “RESEARCH” is defined as: “[A] systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalize-able 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.

According to “The Common Rule,” a “HUMAN SUBJECT” is defined 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.”

IRB approval must be obtained prior to any data collection for research involving human participants, if the research is sponsored by the College (this includes activities undertaken as part of the instructional process); is conducted by or under the direction of any faculty, staff, or student of the College in connection with institutional responsibilities or using any property or facility of the College; or involves the use of the College’s non-public information to identify or contact prospective students.

If the results of the work are meant to be published or disseminated to an unrestricted audience, or even if this is viewed as a possibility, then the work counts as research.

The following activities are NOT considered research:

Surveys and interviews for the purposes of:

1. Journalism (as protected by the freedom of the press and subject to journalistic ethics), such as polls done for the College newspaper.