Conducting Research at Cazenovia College

Research is an incredibly valuable way to gain understanding of the world. But before you can conduct any research study through Cazenovia College your study must be reviewed by the Internal Review Board (IRB). The purpose of the IRB is to determine whether your study is ethical to conduct and that all participants will be treated fairly. The guidelines that the IRB uses to evaluate your study are:

Is participation voluntary?
Participation in any research study must be completely voluntary. This means that participants cannot feel coerced in any way to participate. If students will be your participants and you wish to offer them extra credit for participation, there must be an equivalent alternative to earn the extra credit. Otherwise, students will feel pressured to participate. Participation must be voluntary no matter what kind of questions you plan to ask. Participants must be allowed to stop participating at any time.

Do participants know what the study is about BEFORE they decide to participate?
In order for participation to be truly voluntary, the participants must know what they are volunteering for before they agree to participate. You need to let participants know, generally, what the nature of the questions you will be asking them are, or what you plan to do to them during the study. This is the purpose of the consent form.

Will the information you collect be anonymous or confidential?
Participants need to be assured that the information they provide will be kept confidential. This means that information you gather cannot be shared with people other than those directly involved in the study. If possible, it is ideal to make your study anonymous. This means that there is no way for your participants to be identified. This includes asking for names, addresses, identification numbers, or any information that would make people feel as if they can be identified through their responses. Additionally, if you conduct face-to-face interviews, send out questionnaires over email, or have any other direct interaction with your participants, your study is not anonymous.

Are you going to deceive your participants in any way?
Deception is allowed in research, but with limitations. You cannot deceive people about anything that might change their willingness to participate in the study. If you do need to use deception, participants must be told after the study if they were deceived in any way.

Anyone who wishes to conduct research at Cazenovia College must submit a proposal to the IRB. You may not begin collecting data from participants until you have received a written approval letter from the IRB. You should expect this approval to take about a week so make sure to plan the timeline for your research accordingly.

WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE ONLINE SUBMISSION OF FORMS
It speeds up the approval process!

To submit online:
1. Save document as your full name.
2. Type necessary information directly into document.
3. Email entire document to IRB chair.
How Do I Submit a Proposal to the IRB?

Step 1: What type of study are you submitting?
Depending of the level of risk your study presents to participants, you will need to follow different procedures. Use the guidelines below to identify what type of study you are conducting.

**Exempt:** There are the most common types of studies conducted at Cazenovia College. As long as your study meets all of the following criteria it is exempt and you should follow the directions for submitting an exempt proposal.
- **your study does not involve any risk to your participants** – remember that risk includes any potential for participants having a negative response to your study, this includes any negative response (e.g., feeling upset or uncomfortable)
- **your participants will be anonymous**
- **you are not using any deception**
- **you are not studying a vulnerable population** (e.g., anyone under the age of 18)

**Expedited Review:** If you think that your study could possibly have any negative effect on your participants, (e.g., you are asking them sensitive questions about things like sexual activities or drug use) you will need to submit a minimal risk proposal. The criteria for a minimal risk proposal are:
- **your study involves no risk or minimal risk to your participants**
- **your study is anonymous or confidential**
- **you are not using deception**
- **you are not using a vulnerable population** (e.g., anyone under the age of 18)

**Full Review (Risk or Deception):** If you plan to deceive your participants in any way or your study poses significant physical or psychological risk you must submit a full review proposal. If your study meets any of the following criteria you must submit a proposal for full review:
- **your study involves risk to your participants**
- **your study involves deception**
- **you are using a vulnerable population** (e.g., children, elderly, handicapped)

Step 2: Complete the appropriate proposal.
Each proposal type listed above can be found on the IRB website. Download the appropriate proposal packet, complete it, and submit it for approval.