

The Conduct of Research with Human Participants by Martin University Students, Faculty, and Staff

Institutional Review Boards are often established by Universities and other entities that conduct research with human participants. Research is defined as a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. A human participant is defined as a living individual about whom an investigator conducting research 1) obtains information through direct or indirect interaction and 2) uses, studies, or analyzes the collected information.

The purpose of the IRB is to protect human participants from undue psychological, emotional, and/or physical harm or suffering from participating in a research study.

As Martin University does not have an established IRB, students, faculty and staff are generally not allowed to conduct research with human participants, unless specialized approval (such as approval by an IRB external to the University) can be obtained. This would include student theses, final projects, or capstone projects that meet the definitions of “research” and “human participants” above. Students, faculty and staff who wish to conduct research with human participants should contact Dr. Brian L. Steuerwald, Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, at bsteu@martin.edu to determine if specialized approval can be obtained.

Please note that research using secondary data analyses (e.g., archived data) that do not contain information about the identity of the person who provided the information is generally exempt from IRB approval. Please contact Dr. Brian L. Steuerwald, Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, at bsteu@martin.edu to determine if data sets meet this criterion.

Also, courses/class projects conducted for educational purposes in which students develop research skills (e.g., survey development, data collection, data analyses) are not classified as research and generally do not need IRB approval. Under this scenario, a class project in which information is collected from human participants so students in the course can learn how to conduct research would generally be permissible. However, to protect human participants from undue psychological, emotional, and/or physical harm, instructors intending to use these types of training projects should contact Dr. Brian L. Steuerwald, Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, at bsteu@martin.edu to discuss the nature and specifics of the proposed activities.