**Classroom Research Projects**

Most classroom research projects where the sole purpose at the outset is to be a learning experience and educational activity (for example, to teach research methods) do not meet the federal definition of “research”; therefore, they do not require IRB review or approval.

Classroom research projects involving human participants do not need to be reviewed by the IRB if the following conditions are satisfied:

* The intent of the project is to teach research methods and not a systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.
* The results of the project will not be distributed outside the classroom and/or institutional setting or used for publication, although the results may be presented to instructors or peers for educational purposes or as part of a class assignment.
* The project involves **minimal risk** to participants (i.e., when the risks of harm anticipated in the proposed project are not greater considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests).
* The project does not involve **sensitive topics** or collect informationthat could place a participant at risk if disclosed (e.g., illegal activities).
* The project does not involve people from **vulnerable populations** as participants (e.g., prisoners, minors, individuals lacking capacity to consent, or other at-risk populations).
* The project involves the **voluntary participation** of individuals without any undue influence or pressure being placed on the individuals to take part in the project.

Although the vast majority of classroom projects are “educational” activities and do not require IRB approval, faculty are responsible for assuring that students adhere to ethical principles while conducting their projects. Specifically, faculty overseeing classroom research projects are responsible for monitoring students’ activities and consent procedures and are advised to take [CITI training](https://www.umb.edu/orsp/research_committees/irb/required_training).

If the project does not adhere to these guidelines, contact the UMass Boston IRB ([irb@umb.edu](mailto:irb@umb.edu)) prior to starting the project.