HUMAN RESEARCH LAB
Dr. Krentz
Spring, 2008

Tips for filling out your IRB forms

General Style:

- Read the IRB application carefully and follow ALL instructions
- Keep all text written on the application form as is. Type your material directly on the form provided, and put all your answers either in bold, or in a different font from the questions so that it is easy to distinguish your responses from the questions.
- Complete sentences are not necessary (except for in the purpose section). You want to convey the information clearly and succinctly. Bullet the information when appropriate.
- Do not leave anything out! Be complete.
- Check for spelling and grammar errors.
- Use active voice throughout: the IRB wants to know how *you* are going to conduct this study.

Tips for revisions

- Copy and paste the letter Dr. Diddams wrote you with the list of items to be revised.
- Under each point, tell her how you addressed it.
- Highlight revisions or additions to the text of any of the materials.
- Include all materials again, even if they did not need revising.
- Sign the letter respectfully; thank her for her time.

Title: title should be descriptive and not "cute"

> Bad: Who's afraid of the big bad wolf?
> Good: An investigation of chocolate addiction in undergraduate women and its relationship to study habits

Names: Put my name (your faculty sponsor) as one of the co-investigators (and delete the footnote that tells you to do this). List the name and contact information for everyone who will be in contact with participants.

Purpose: Purpose should include at least three cited sources from past research. Talk about the past research first, then in a concluding paragraph, talk about how your study is different from the past studies. In the final sentence of the purpose section, tell Dr. Diddams exactly what the purpose of your research is so that she can match the procedure to the purpose.

Bad: In this study we want to look at chocolate addiction and women and study habits.
Good: The purpose of this study is to see if there is a relationship between presence or severity of chocolate addiction and quality of study habits in undergraduate women.

Sample/population:

a. sample/population: Bullet this section as follows and fill out each section completely:

- Sample size: (e.g. 50) Be sure to mention how you know this will be an adequate sized sample. You should be collecting enough data to reach statistical power to gauge significance of results.
- Demographic requirements: (e.g. Undergraduate women at SPU)
- Location of recruitment: (e.g. undergraduate classrooms)

b. Who recruit subjects and how? PUT IN ACTIVE VOICE (and delete footnote that tells you to do this)

If you recruit from undergraduate classes, include the following bulleted information:

- Who will recruit: List your names!
- How we will recruit: Write: "We will recruit…, " NOT: "Participants will be recruited…"
    1. Gain permission from undergraduate professors to come to their classes via email
        - Provide a copy of the e-mail in your IRB application since it is considered recruitment material.
        - All recruitment material and informed consent forms must have room for the IRB # and study expiration date.
    2. Go to classes and describe the purpose of our study briefly
    3. Ask if there are any questions
    4. Instruct interested students to sign up for a time to participate on the sign up sheet (SEE ATTACHED)

    OR
    4. Handout packets to interested students and instruct them to read the consent form

If you recruit from students on campus, include the following bulleted information:

- Who will recruit: List names!
- How we will recruit:

1. We will approach students at _____
2. We will ask if we can tell them about our study
3. If yes, briefly describe purpose of study
4. Ask if there are questions
5. Instruct interested students to sign up for a time to participate on the sign up sheet SEE ATTACHED

5. Handout packets to interested students and instruct them to read the consent form

c. avoidance of coercion: Include the following bulleted information

- We will not recruit friends or family of the researchers
- We will tell all participants that their participation is voluntary
- There will be no compensation for participating, or the compensation will be appropriately minor (e.g. a mini candy bar) (Choose one)

3. Research procedure

a. Materials and measures: List all materials and measures used in this study and attach them all at the end of the form. Make sure that they are in the exact format that the participants will see them!

1. Sign up sheet (SEE ATTACHED)
    - Be sure to include the dates, times, place the study is being held.
    - Be sure to include the IRB # and expiration date on the sign up sheet so students know that the study has been approved.
    - Do NOT ask for student ID #s. Once the student agrees to participate (or even just shows up and decides not to participate), you will collect his/her student ID# so that they can receive extra credit for participating. Create an excel file with all student names and ID#s who showed up to participate (whether they completed the study or not.) Send this list to Dr. Craft (craftb@spu.edu) and me (so I know you sent it) by the end of the quarter.
    - Asking for names on the sign-up sheet is OK
    - Remind subjects to write down their date and time on a separate piece of paper
    - Include your email address on the sign up sheet in case they have questions
    - Do not make the sign up sheet coercive: Plain font, size, no frills or pictures needed
2. Consent form (SEE ATTACHED)
3. Survey on chocolate addiction (SEE ATTACHED)
4. Survey on study habits (SEE ATTACHED)
5. Coding protocol (SEE ATTACHED) Make a sample excel sheet of how you intend to code the behaviors you observe in the observation project.

b. Research procedure: The procedure needs to match the **purpose** of your study described on the IRB and it must match the **procedure** on the informed consent, unless full disclosure would bias the research. Nevertheless, fully disclose the procedure on the IRB. Make sure you are not doing things that don't make sense or are unnecessary.

It is helpful if you do a trial run of your experiment on your group ahead of time so that you get a realistic idea of how you'll collect data. List this section exactly as follows:

1. Where: Building, room number, campus, etc.
2. When: It is okay to be a bit vague here— (e.g. Spring quarter; June, 2008-September, 2008). The point is that you cannot expect to run participants for longer than a year after you get IRB approval. You can put "pending IRB approval…"
3. How data will be collected: This section is really important! Be very clear how you will collect the data. List the sequence of things you will do in the exact order, including passing out consent forms. State about how long the entire procedure will last.
4. By whom: List names of all researchers who will come in contact with participants.

c. other uses of data: You do not intend to use this data for other activities or research outside the study for this class, unless this study might inform research you'll do in graduate school, for example.

4. Time frame: List the dates you plan on collecting data. Again, this cannot be more than a year, and you cannot start recruiting or running participants until you get IRB approval.

5. Risks

a. Describe risks: You are aiming for minimal risk in your study. There is no such thing as NO risk. Potential risks you should think about could be boredom, feeling uncomfortable answering some questions, concern about performance, etc. Tell Dr. Diddams how likely your participants will be at risk (e.g. very likely to be bored, unlikely to feel embarrassed) and how serious these risks are (e.g. aim for minimal = All risks are no more dangerous than what a participant might experience in his or her daily activities.)

b. Other methods considered: Here you need to explain why you chose this particular method despite the risks you listed above. You need to explain why other methods that might be less risky (e.g. a survey that is less sensitive) would not be as effective in fulfilling the purpose of your study. If you discover that you could use another method just as effectively and it is less risky, you need to change your study!

c. Procedures to minimize risk, including confidentiality: Mention how you attempted to minimize the risks you named above. For example, you might have opted to use the shortened version of a survey because it was just as reliable, but did not take up so much time.

To ensure confidentiality, for the purposes of the studies in this class, you want to ensure that no student can be identified by his or her behaviors or responses. For the observation study, your data will be *anonymous* because you will never get any identifying information from the participants in the first place. For the experimental study, the data should be *de-identified*, meaning that there is no link (or you will destroy the link) between the participants' data and their identifying data. Thus, you will label

questionnaires, etc., with a subject number, and then destroy, or never create, a link between the subject number and the identifying info.

6. Responsible Conduct of Research: This section should not apply to you. You can put N/A in the space provided.

7. Benefits: It is okay if there are NO benefits to the participants or society in general! Do say if you plan to give out candy bars or pens as compensation (this is not necessary!). Giving participants anything greater than a candy bar would be considered coercion. Do not be grandiose about the benefits of your study; if your research is not particularly life changing, that's okay. It is also okay to put a sentence that addresses the gained benefit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. For example, you might put "this study will help us better understand the eating habits of college students in a small liberal arts Christian university," but not, "this study will help prevent the life-threatening and devastating effects of anorexia on college students nation-wide."

8. Confidentiality:

a. For the observation study, all data will be anonymous. For the experimental study, it will be de-identified. Explain how you will de-identify the data (see above.)

b. All data should be stored on a password-protected computer or locked file for the three years SPU requires it to be stored.

c. N/A

9. Consent Documentation

a. Before starting the study, you will need to read over the consent form with each participant, ask if there any questions then let them sign it. You will then give them a copy of the consent form and begin the study. Attach a copy of the consent form and the consent checklist. Only check off the boxes that apply to you!

b. N/A

c. For the observation study, informed consent will not be obtained, but you will make sure that you are only observing public behaviors and that you do not record any identifying information of any of the participants in your observations (e.g. the woman with the short, red mo-hawk and pink nose ring ate ten bananas at Gwinn in one sitting.)

9. Deception: Explain why deception is necessary if you plan to use it. It is advisable to try your best to come up with a study that does NOT use deception, but if it is absolutely necessary, attempt to make that deception as innocuous as possible. Explain why not fully disclosing the purposes of the study is necessary for collecting valid data (e.g. If participants knew that we were recording how much they rubbed their face or tossed their hair during the interview, they might be self-conscious and not act as they naturally would.) Attach the debriefing form.