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Conflict of Interest Policy Updates

After an extensive review of current regulations and guidance, Ball State is beginning to update its Conflict of Interest/Conflict of Commitment policies. Conflict of interest occurs when an individual is able to influence or benefit from the individual’s relationship with others, or having an “unfair advantage” in the university. Ball State’s current policy reflects the importance of minimizing the occurrence of any relationships and disclosing any unavoidable or potential conflicts of interest to appropriate personnel. The Office of Research Integrity and the Graduate School are working to ensure that Ball State’s policies are up to date and relevant as new issues emerge. Stay tuned for future news and updates!
Policy Updates

As we all know, social media is a ubiquitous part of everything… including research! The Institutional Review Board at Ball State has recently begun creating new policies specific to using social media in research. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the new guidelines, resources and policy updates regarding use of social media in research on the Office of Research Integrity website.

In addition to social media, the IRB has updated other hot-button policy issues, such as faculty using students as participants and use of deception in human subjects research. You can contact our office at Orihelp@bsu.edu with any questions related to updated policies.

ChemTracker Update

You may have read in our summer newsletter that Ball State was preparing to launch ChemTracker, a software program designed to track and manage chemical inventories. ChemTracker is now up and running, allowing Ball State researchers, labs, and building managers track chemical hazard information for regulatory and safety purposes.

If you work with ChemTracker in a research, lab, or any other capacity and have questions about ChemTracker, please contact Tom Russell in the Environmental Health and Safety Office at thrussell@bsu.edu or 765-285-2807.

New CITI Modules

Collaborative Institute Training Initiative (CITI) is required for all active researchers, Principal Investigators, and research team members at Ball State. Recently, we have added training modules on Biosafety and Biosecurity for researchers interested in these fields. In addition, researchers will now be required to complete these modules before beginning a research project that requires IBC review. Please contact John Mulcahy in the Office of Research Integrity at 765-285-5106 with questions. Finally, there is a new Wildlife Research course that may be coming soon to our list of available IACUC courses.

Visit the ORI Website for…

Answers to questions about the responsible conduct of research

Educational tools for faculty, staff and students

Help navigating the research process

Contact information for Graduate Assistants

www.bsu.edu/researchintegrity

Office Hours

Our office is open Monday-Friday 8:00 - 5:00 during the academic year.

We are located in Teachers College, Room 409.
Peer Mentor Program

The Office of Research Integrity’s Peer Mentor Program is off to a nice start! For those who haven’t heard, our office has Graduate Assistants available to meet one-on-one with researchers who might have questions about an upcoming proposal. Most often, our Graduate Assistants can look over the proposal and offer suggestions or advice on what the review board might be looking for. For more information or to set up an appointment, email us at orihelp@bsu.edu or drop in during our office hours.

Does My Immersive Learning Class Project Need IRB Approval?
Guest Columnist: Dr. Melinda Messineo

Our 2012-2017 strategic plan has reaffirmed Immersive Learning as the cornerstone of a Ball State education. However, despite the ever increasing number of projects, there is still confusion over the relationship between immersive learning and discovery research. Specifically, discovery research as it relates to human subjects and the Institutional Review Board process. The elements of immersive learning contribute to this confusion. Our projects involve students working together to produce an outcome for a community partner. When the outcome is an art installation or a business plan, it is fairly straightforward that the course does not include human subject research. Where things get murky, however, is when the project involves surveys or interviews for a community partner.

“Does doing a survey for a community partner constitute human subject research?” The answer to that question is…it depends. In order for a project to be considered research the federal definition states that it must be “A systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.” 45 CFR §46.102. Projects that involve interviews conducted for stories for newspapers, websites, magazines, etc. are not considered research under this definition. Similarly, interviews and surveys conducted for class purposes, or the use of public archives for assignments, are not considered research. You will want to make sure that you have appropriate release forms, but IRB review is not required. This does mean however, that if your class plans to present the findings as generalized knowledge at a symposium or public showcase, or publish those findings in some format, you will need IRB approval. The other question you need to answer is whether the research includes human subjects. Again, the federal definition states that a human subject is “A living individual(s) about whom an investigator conducting research obtains: (a) data through intervention or interaction with the individual; or (b) identifiable private information.” 45 CFR §46.102.

The prospect of completing an IRB Human Subject proposal can be a daunting task, especially if you have not done one before, but keep in mind that there are lots of resources to help. I have found that completing the proposal helps me clarify project details and ultimately makes for a smoother semester. Often timing is the biggest challenge. The student driven nature of immersive learning projects means that we often don’t know what form the project will take until after the semester begins. In that case you will want to work closely with ORI before the class begins so you know what elements to anticipate and enable you to respond quickly. The Office of Educational Excellence can also help faculty as they plan their Immersive Learning courses. Ultimately Immersive Learning experiences are transformative not only for students but for faculty as well. You do not need to face the challenge alone.
Hazard Communication

All Ball State employees who handle chemicals are required to complete the New OSHA Hazard Communication Training. This presentation will train employees to recognize and understand new chemical product labels, pictograms, and safety data sheets that will soon be in use. This hour-long PowerPoint presentation is available online at the Environmental Health and Safety Office Chemical Management Website, or at https://ilocker.bsu.edu/users/tlrussell/BSU_SHARED. This training must be completed as soon as possible, in either group or individual settings. Forms are available for supervisors to complete and return to the EHS Office, designating the Hazard Communication Program Coordinator for that department or office. All employees who have completed the training should be documented. For assistance with training, questions, or needing container labels for chemicals, please contact Tom Russell of the Environmental Health and Safety Office at 765-285-2807 or tlrussell@bsu.edu.

Spring 2014 IRB Meeting Dates and Deadlines

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Office of Research Integrity Staff

Christopher Mangelli, Director
John Mulcahy, Associate Director
Jennifer Weaver, Administrator
Sarah Ryle, Administrative Coordinator
Katey Quigley, Graduate Assistant
Natalie Bruick, Graduate Assistant

The Office of Research Integrity ensures that research at Ball State University is in compliance with established university policies and applicable provisions of federal, state, and local laws and regulations.