

**COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF VERMONT**  
**RESEARCH BY OR ABOUT CCV STUDENTS,**  
**FACULTY OR STAFF POLICY**

**August 18, 1994**  
**Revised October 7, 2021**

*See Also:*

*Academic Integrity policy*  
*CCV Course Guidelines for Human*  
*Subjects Research*  
*Guidelines for Submission of Application*  
*for Research Involving Human*  
*Subjects*

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**POLICY**

CCV's academic programs encourage honesty, responsibility, competence, and mutual agreement. The college expects that any research conducted by or about CCV students, faculty or staff will uphold these principles.

**PROCEDURES**

1. Any faculty member assigning a research project should appropriately guide students in the selection of topics, the gathering and reporting of data, and the use of ethical research protocols. Collecting any data from humans that is used to answer an original research question is considered human subjects research. Faculty assigning this type of research must consult CCV Course Guidelines for Human Subjects Research in order to determine whether advance approval is required.
2. Any individual who wishes to use CCV constituents (students, faculty, or staff) as participants is required to submit a written proposal to the Academic Dean outlining the nature and proposed use of the research. Proposals must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the intended research. The Academic Dean will respond in writing to each request.
3. CCV reserves the right to determine its participation in any research activities that involve faculty, staff, or students based on factors including institutional capacity, concerns over scheduling conflicts with priority activities, value and benefit to students and the institution at large, and concern over sample size and maintenance of institutional or individual anonymity.
4. Any human subjects research being proposed in collaboration with another institution must have IRB approval from the researcher's home institution and CCV.

5. Any individual who wishes to use CCV student work (human subjects research or otherwise) in a project external to a specific CCV course is required to get prior approval from the Academic Dean. Individuals must submit a written proposal to the Academic Dean that includes the nature of the project, proposed use of student work, and potential student benefits and/or risks related to the project.
6. Faculty, staff and/or students may not claim that their research represents Community College of Vermont or the Vermont State Colleges System without clear authorization to do so.
7. CCV retains the authority, as part of its institutional research and assessment, to collect and review data about students, faculty, and staff. Approval for such collection and data may be granted by President's Council or the Office of Institutional Research.
8. Anyone with questions concerning this policy should address them to the Academic Dean's office.

## **Community College of Vermont CCV Course Guidelines for Human Subjects Research**

CCV maintains a process for institutional review of all research projects involving human subjects conducted by or about CCV students, faculty, and/or staff in accordance with our [Research By or About CCV Students, Faculty or Staff](#) policy.

CCV students commonly undertake research activities as part of their coursework. However, faculty need to carefully and appropriately supervise students whenever they engage in research that involves human subjects. Any faculty member assigning a research project should guide students in the selection of topics, the gathering and reporting of data, and the use of ethical research protocols. However, because CCV courses represent lower division collegiate work, students are generally not expected to conduct original research with human subjects.

### **Which classroom assignments are not in need of review?**

Collecting any data from humans that is used to answer an original research question is considered human subjects research. However, there are some general categories of research that are considered exempt and would not require faculty or students to submit their research project for review and approval. These include informational career interviews, food preference surveys, and collection or use of public data.

Below are examples of the kinds of topics and methods that are not considered human subjects research in need of dean's office approval:

- Students research census records to determine demographic changes in their community over time.
- Students conduct an informational interview with a professional in a given field to better understand career choices.
- Students collect data on eye color by observing passersby as part of an exercise to demonstrate distributions, means, etc.
- Students interview family and peers about their favorite novels as part of an exercise to demonstrate interviewing technique and the effect of varying technique on data collected.
- Students collect responses from peers in the learning center related to food preferences.

### **Which classroom assignments do need review?**

Research topics and assignments that include the collection of data from living subjects that is meant to be generalizable to inform a research question is human subjects research. Below are examples of research activities that do constitute original research and require explicit advance approval from the academic dean:

- A student wants to interview friends about drug and alcohol use.
- A student wants to anonymously survey teens at the local high school about eating disorders.
- A student wants to interview elderly patients with dementia.
- A student wants to survey other CCV students about past experiences with bullying.
- A student wants to observe interactions between male and female toddlers at a local child care facility.
- A student wants to photograph participants at a political rally for a piece they are writing on the changing demographics of supporters.

**What is the process for approval?**

CCV maintains a process for institutional review of all research projects involving human subjects conducted by or about CCV students, faculty, and/or staff in accordance with our [Research By or About CCV Students, Faculty or Staff](#) policy. Any student or faculty wishing to conduct research in need of approval will need to submit the Application for Research Involving Human Subjects. More information and guidance can be found in the Guidelines for Submission of Application for Research Involving Human Subjects.

**What to do if you are unsure?**

In essence, students should understand that any research involving human subjects must address three important principles:

- **Respect** – includes voluntary and informed consent of all participants
- **Beneficence** – entails an obligation to protect persons from harm by minimizing risks and maximizing benefits
- **Justice** – requires that the selection of subjects be fair and equitable and that particular care be taken when working with populations whose status puts them in a vulnerable position

Whenever a student and/or faculty is not sure that approval is required, they should contact the Academic Dean's office for clarification at [AcademicDean@ccv.edu](mailto:AcademicDean@ccv.edu).

## Community College of Vermont Guidelines for Submission of Application for Research Involving Human Subjects

The Community College of Vermont (CCV) does not maintain a federally recognized Institutional Review Board (IRB) and cannot give approval for research projects requiring formal review for federal grant funding purposes. CCV does maintain a process for institutional review of all research projects involving human subjects conducted by or about CCV students, faculty, and/or staff in accordance with our [Research By or About CCV Students, Faculty or Staff](#) policy. CCV's research review process is primarily for the purpose of ensuring the protection of human research subjects, however additional considerations include the institutional investment of time and resources that might be required as part of proposed research.

Researchers are expected to be familiar with [federal regulations](#) and follow ethical guidelines in their respective disciplines and as outlined in the [Belmont Report](#). In addition, researchers will be required to submit a copy of their completion certificate for the [NIH Protecting Human Research Participants](#) tutorials.

The *Application for Research Involving Human Subjects* will require researchers to submit a project description which should include the following elements using these headings:

- Project Outline and Purpose
- Methodology, including selection process for participants
- Benefits and Risks
- Voluntary Participation and Informed Consent
- Confidentiality of Data
- Plans for Publication or Presentation

In addition, researchers should plan to collect and submit the following documents with their applications:

- Informed Consent Form to be used
- Completion Certificate for PHRP tutorials
- External IRB approval letter
- Letter of support from supervising faculty when appropriate

Please be aware that if your project includes the collection of personal information, you may be subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and/or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines as well. Failure to comply may result in the revocation of your right and ability to conduct research at CCV and/or with CCV students, faculty and/or staff, as well as make you liable for local, state and/or federal civil and criminal penalties.

Applications are available on Teach@CCV or through the Academic Dean's Office.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

*What if I believe my research is considered 'exempt' by the federal government?*

The NIH maintains an [online interactive tool](#) that can assist researchers in determining if their project meets criteria for an exemption. While this tool can be an instructive starting point, all human subjects researchers must contact the Academic Dean's office at CCV for a determination regarding the need for CCV institutional review.

*I have a survey link that I want to post for CCV students, do I need to go through the review process?*

Yes, all activities that involve the collection of data from CCV students specifically must go through this process. With approval from the Academic Dean's office, announcements for general surveys that do not seek to collect data from the CCV community specifically may be posted on community bulletin boards in academic centers without full review.

*I am a CCV faculty member, does my classroom assignment need review?*

While research assignments conducted by students in a classroom setting usually does not fall under the federal definition of research as the systematic production of generalizable knowledge, the college reviews all research assignments involving human subjects to ensure that appropriate human subjects protections are in place. Please see the *CCV Course Guidelines for Human Subjects Research* for more information.

*I am a CCV faculty member, do I need CCV review to survey my students?*

In the interest of improving curriculum or student experience, faculty may survey their students regarding curriculum and other aspects of course experience without the need for human subjects review. However, if faculty intend to formally survey students as part of professional research with the intention of publication or presentation of data, then human subjects review is necessary.