
Institutional Review Board (IRB)

IRB Guidelines 1.2
FERPA Research Implications
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How do FERPA requirements impact my research?

The Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) was established in 1974 to protect the rights of students (20 U.S. Code 1232g). The law applies to all schools

as papers, journals, projects, and tests (34 CFR 99.2). In practical terms, this means that you will need to obtain student consent either by securing access to educational records contained in UNG's directory (see IRB Form 7.1) or – if this is not possible – by obtaining consent via established informed consent procedures (see Form 3.1). Irrespective of the consent route, however, student research participants need to be informed about the following three issues so they know what they are consenting to: (1) nature of records that will be disclosed/used, (2) the purpose of the disclosure, and (3) the identification of the part of class or parties to whom the disclosure may be made (34 CFR 99.30).

What if my study is large-scale and consent for release of data not included in student directory information is difficult to obtain?

For large-scale research projects where consent is difficult and/or impossible to obtain, you may want to consider applying for a waiver. While the IRB will consider requests for waivers on a case-by-case basis, all requests should be made during the regular IRB application process. Keep in mind, however, that your ability to use this data will remain contingent upon IRB approval and student consent. Note: If the IRB grants the waiver, a designated school official will strip any personally identifiable information (PII) before the dataset will be shared with you (for a definition of the term “PII” please see

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