



Human Subjects Research Committee

Website: <http://web2.bgu.ac.il/ethics2>

Email: hsrCommittee@bgu.ac.il

24.6.2013

Dear university faculty and students,

Re: Procedures for obtaining ethics approval for research with human subjects

Over the past year, the IRB committee has been working closely with Prof. Moti Herskowitz, Vice President and Dean of Research, together with Ms. Sharona Rittberg, Director of the Research Authority, to implement a more systematic approach to protecting human subjects, an approach that meets current international standards. We are happy to announce that we have developed a plan that recognizes the importance of expediting the process for ethic's approval on one hand, while protecting the rights and welfare of human subjects on the other hand.

Effective from this date on, all faculty members, university personnel and students conducting research involving human subjects must obtain ethics approval *before* beginning the research. This includes student research projects (e.g., MA theses, Ph.D. dissertations), collection of pilot data, educational research, funded and non-funded research, and all other research endeavors of all types except for BA and MA projects conducted in the context of seminar classes and which meet the requirements for expedited review (see below). Such projects can be approved by the faculty member in charge of the seminar.

In order to expedite the approval process, all research that is eligible for expedited review can be submitted to the respective **Departmental Ethics Committee** for approval. In general, research may be considered for expedited review if it involves no more than minimal risk, does not include intentional deception, does not employ sensitive populations or address sensitive topics, and includes appropriate consent procedures. *Minimal risk* means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater than those encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. *Sensitive populations* include, but are not limited to, children, prisoners, etc. Sensitive topics include, but are not limited to, questions about clinical symptoms, sexuality, etc. Please keep in mind that research does not count as having "minimal risk" simply because it involves minimal physical risk or is non-invasive. There are many kinds of risk including financial risk, employment risk, criminal/civil liability, stigmatization, insurability and embarrassment. It is important to consider all of these when assessing risk. **All research proposal that are not eligible for expedited review must be reviewed by the University Wide Ethics committee.** Also, research proposals to outside funding agencies (e.g., ISF, BSF, etc.) that require institutional approval must also be submitted to the **University Wide Ethics Committee**.

In addition, effective September 1st, 2013, all faculty members and graduate students (both M.A. and Ph.D.) conducting research with human subjects must successfully complete the on-line CITI course for The Protection of Human Research Subjects *before* requesting ethics approval for a given project. Successful completion of the on-line course is valid for three years (that means you only have to complete it once every three years). Please upload your documentation of completion (provided at the end of the course) along with each ethics approval application. The link to the CITI home page is: <http://www.citiprogram.org>. Instructions for generating a username, and the list of required courses/modules, are available in the accompanying Word document.

Thank you,

Gary M. Diamond (outgoing Head of IRB)

Yoella Barby-Meir (incoming Head of IRB)