



Student FAQ

Why do I have to submit my project to the Institutional Review Board (IRB)?

Responding to unethical use of human subjects in medical and other experiments in the early 20th century, codes and regulations regarding research using human subjects were created. In order to ensure the safety of participants in any study, data collection, or research done involving living human beings by ABAC faculty or students, the IRB is tasked with reviewing the how, why, when and where of student and faculty projects, to ensure these regulations are followed.

What kinds of projects need to be reviewed?

Projects that involve living human subjects, that are meant to contribute to the scientific body of work, and/or that will be presented or published anywhere outside the ABAC campus. Most classroom projects will not need to be reviewed. However, check with your faculty advisor or class instructor for guidance.

How do I determine if my project is exempt from IRB Review?

You can review the DO I Need IRB Review? chart on the website to help decide if your project qualifies for IRB review. It is always better to err on the side of caution and ask for a review if you are having trouble determining. If you still have questions, [contact](#) Mr. Scott Pierce, Director of Sponsored Programs and IRB Chair, at 229-391-4983 or scott.pierce@abac.edu.

What is informed consent?

Informed consent means that those participating in your survey, study or other research know what information or items will be collected, how it will be collected, how their information will be protected/secured, and how collected data will be used in the course of your project. Participants can indicate their permission for you to collect and use this data either by signing a form or checking a box in an online survey. Sample informed consent documents can be found in the Application & Forms section of the IRB web page.

The IRB reviewed my project and noted some things needed to be changed. Do I have to make these changes?

Yes. The IRB oversees research projects to ensure that ABAC meets all federal criteria when conducting research involving human subjects, and may make suggestions to ensure proposals do not violate ethical, federal, and other relevant standards before approving. Conducting research without approval of the IRB could mean serious consequences for the student, faculty advisor, and ABAC, up to and including revocation of federal funding (student loans, for example) to ABAC.