Northern Oklahoma College

Policy for Institutional Review Board

for Research Proposals

Because Northern Oklahoma College wishes to encourage academic scholarship while providing a safe environment that protects all rights of research participants, an Institutional Review Board (IRB) will be responsible for reviewing all requests for research studies that involve Northern Oklahoma faculty, staff, or students. Research projects must be approved whether conducted by a Northern Oklahoma College employee or an external agent. (Student research, as part of a graded course at Northern, will normally be considered exempt from this policy, if human participants are not involved or if interview techniques for the research represent no risk to the participants.) The IRB will be an institutional committee chaired by the Vice President of Academic Affairs (or his or her designee) and staffed by NOC faculty and administrative staff who currently hold terminal degrees.

As part of the approval process, research investigators are asked to review the application for IRB approval and determine if the proposal qualifies for an exempt, expedited, or full review.

1. If the investigator determines that the proposal qualifies for an “exempt” review (that is, there is no risk to human subjects), an application will be submitted to and reviewed by the IRB Chair. If the Chair agrees that the proposal qualifies as “exempt,” the proposal may be approved with the Chair’s signature. If the Chair cannot verify that the proposal qualifies as exempt, the application may be reviewed by two other members of the IRB Committee and/or may be returned to the investigator for further clarification through a revised application and, if needed, a reclassification as an expedited or full review.
2. If the investigator determines that the proposal qualifies for an “expedited” review (that is, there is minimal risk to human subjects), an application will be submitted to the IRB Chair and will be reviewed by two members of the IRB Committee, at least one of whom should have subject matter background. The application may be approved, denied, or returned to the investigator for further clarification through a revised application and, if needed, a reclassification as a full review.
3. If the investigator determines that the proposal qualifies for a “full” review (that is, there is a possibility of a higher level of risk to the participants), the application will be reviewed by a minimum of four members of the IRB Committee. If they determine that the appropriate precautions have been put in place to manage participant risk, they will approve the research study contingent upon the approval of the President; however, Northern Oklahoma College does not support research projects involving participants under the age of 18 in any category other than “exempt” status, in which there is no risk evident for the participants. If they determine that there are insufficient precautions in place, the application will be denied, and the investigator will have the opportunity to submit one revised version after a 30-day waiting period.

All applications, regardless of classification, must be submitted a minimum of two weeks prior to the date on which the investigator would like to begin the study if approved. While the IRB will review all submissions within two weeks, for expedited and full reviews it is recommended that the application be submitted one month prior to allow for revisions or clarifications.

Approved applications are valid only for the academic year in which the proposal is submitted. Research that extends beyond one academic year will require a reapproval by the IRB.

For more information, please contact

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