



ATENEIO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS OFFICE

Ethics Guidelines For Faculty-Initiated Class Activities And Requirements That Involve Interactions With and/or Data Collection From Human Participants

Scope of the Guidelines

These guidelines refer to faculty-initiated or faculty-required class activities of undergraduate and graduate students that involve interactions with humans.

These class activities are primarily for instructional/ pedagogical purposes, i.e. required by the instructor to teach or help students apply concepts and/or methods covered in the subject. They are conducted during or outside of class hours by students enrolled in the course and are completed within a single semester. The requirements may include interviews with experts, reflection papers, brief surveys, etc.

These class activities may also involve the application of learned research methods that involve data collection from humans. In such requirements, the research assignments are usually characterized by common elements across all the student projects which are planned or designed by the instructor (i.e. same methods, same sample or community characteristics, recruitment, and informed consent process).

The outputs from these class activities are generally not intended to develop or contribute to a domain of disciplinary knowledge nor lead to scholarly publication. As such, they do not meet the definition of research that falls under the jurisdiction of the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) and therefore do not require UREC application, approval, or oversight.

For undergraduate student-initiated research (e.g. theses), see Ethics Review Guidelines and Procedures for Student-Initiated Research.

Rationale for the Guidelines

The procedures indicated in this document aim to guide the class instructors in ensuring that assignments are ethically sound and students comply with essential ethical standards.

Given that such assignments are not reviewed by the UREC, they are the responsibility of the class instructors, and the faculty should take special care to ensure that they pose no or only minimal risk¹ to students and others. Faculty have a positive obligation to ensure that students

¹ Minimal risk is defined as the probability and magnitude of harm that is normally encountered in daily life.

understand their ethical responsibilities when completing assignments. The ethics guidelines should be considered from an educational standpoint, where the primary aim is for students to learn and practice ethical ways of interacting with others and undertaking research.

Guidelines

The following measures are recommended for class pedagogical activities involving human participants:

1. Students should be oriented and guided by their instructors on key ethical issues when conducting the required activities. Include content in the syllabus on ethical practices with human participants in research (can request the UREO to provide a class session or materials if necessary).
2. Review and discuss with students their plans/proposals for class or group assignments and provide guidance to eliminate or minimize the possible risks to the persons participating in the activity.

The following are recommended features of student activities/assignments involving humans:

- The probability and magnitude of any physical, psychological, social, or legal risks in conducting (for the students) and participating in the study approximate what people typically experience in daily life (i.e. minimal risk).
- Respondents are able to give individual informed and voluntary consent to participate in the activity (if minor, with consent of guardian).
- Adequate steps are in place to maintain respondents' well-being during the interactions, such as safeguarding against excessively or potentially distressing questions/stimuli.
- Personal identifiable information ² is not collected or recorded from respondents (i.e. anonymous). If not anonymous, adequate steps are taken to ensure confidentiality in reporting (e.g. use of pseudonyms or codes) and data is discarded as soon as the requirement is completed.
- Participants' responses (to surveys, interviews, etc) do not pose serious legal or social consequences to them if their identities are inadvertently disclosed.
- Does not involve the students in providing health-related therapeutic interventions they do not have the expertise to conduct.
- If participants include vulnerable persons (i.e. have limited capacity to decide what is in their interest and are at particular risk for exploitation or marginalization, e.g.

² Identifiers include: name, residence, email address, telephone/cellphone number, birthdate, social security numbers, gov-issued ID numbers, financial accounts/records, biometric data, IP / device serial numbers, full face photo and/or video

minors, prisoners, indigenous persons, indigent communities), the following special precautions and considerations should be in place:

- justification for conducting the activity with vulnerable persons (i.e. for what purpose? for whose benefit?)
 - participants' voluntary consent and agency throughout activity
 - participants' well-being throughout activity
 - researchers' reflexivity and appropriate behaviors in the site/context
 - adviser or instructor has the competence to supervise the students in their interactions with the vulnerable group
3. If students in the class are themselves the data sources in the class activity/assignment (e.g. as participants in lab experiments), instructors should minimize undue influence or coercion by:
- informing students that declining to volunteer as a participant (for reasonable justification) will not negatively affect their grade or class standing
 - declining from offering extra/bonus points, higher grades, or other rewards to those who volunteer as participants
 - providing other equivalent activities as alternative means to obtain credit and/or points
4. The required number of participants/respondents in the class activity should be reasonable so as not to compel students to resort to unethical practices to induce participation.
5. Require information on questionnaires that explain the use of the data for coursework and include the name and contact number of the instructor (refer to Informed Consent Template for Class Assignments).
6. Require destruction of collected data at the end of the course or within a short time afterward; if data will be retained, delete all identifiable markers (see footnote 2).
7. Instruct students about the privacy vulnerabilities associated with electronic means of data collection and storage, such as Google applications.

Norms and procedures may be devised by the department to monitor class activities involving human interactions. It is advised that observance of the aforementioned basic guidelines be overseen by the Chair, or Subject Coordinator, or other designated committee/faculty in the department (e.g. Department Research Ethics Committee). The UREO will provide support and advice when requested.