**Consent Form Guidelines**

Your application to the Institutional Review Board **requires** a copy of your written, electronic, or oral consent statement or form. If you are asking to use oral consent, you still must attach a copy of your oral consent script (what you will read to the participants.)

**All informed consent, written, oral or electronic must**:

1. Be on S.U. letterhead that includes the departmental address and phone number in either the header or footer unless exempted by the IRB.
2. Be 12pt font or larger.
3. Include the project title at the top.
4. Include a statement that the study involves research.
5. Clearly state that participation is voluntary and that participants "may refuse to take part in the research or withdraw at any time without penalty."
6. Clearly state the purpose of the study in lay language avoiding the use of technical terms and using language appropriate to the targeted participants.
7. Clearly describe the procedure to be used. Do not assume that the general public is familiar with any specialized procedures. Instead, explain what is involved.
8. Explain the expected duration of the participant’s participation.
9. State who will be receiving the information obtained from the study.
10. State the benefits to the participant which might reasonably be expected from participating in the research.
11. State the risks to the participant in participating in the research.
12. Clearly state that confidentiality is protected or if data collection does not allow responses to be connected with a particular participant that anonymity is ensured. However, the consent form for focus groups should explain that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in group situations.
13. List the name, with contact information, of the faculty member and research staff (if applicable), if the participant has questions, concerns, or complaints about the research, (only when appropriate add: or if there are research related injuries).
14. List the phone number (315.443.3013) of the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board if the participant has any questions about his or her rights as a research participant, or if the participant has questions, concerns, or complaints that they wish to address to someone other than the investigator, or if the participant cannot reach the investigator, (only when appropriate add: or if there are research related injuries).
15. A statement that participant is 18 years or older must be included for adult participants.
16. Indicate that each participant will receive a copy of the consent form. Electronic consent should allow for the participant to print a copy of the consent page for their records.
17. Two separate lines, one for the printed name and one for the signature of the participant should be included at the bottom of the consent form. Not applicable for oral or electronic consent. Electronic consent should include a statement that indicates agreement to participate (e.g. *by clicking here I agree to participate,* etc.).
18. Two separate lines, one for the printed name and one for the signature of the investigator should be included at the bottom of the consent form. Not applicable for oral or electronic consent.
19. The pages of the consent form must be numbered if consent form consists of more than a single page.

**When applicable the informed consent must:**

1. If you wish to record subjects, include a request to record explaining the type of recording (e.g. *video recording in the classroom, audio recording single or group interviews*, *etc*.), the purpose for recording, how the recordings will be used (e.g. *presentations, data analysis purposes only, etc.*), andthe disposition of the recordings when the study is complete (*Simply stating how long recordings will be retained and that they will be erased when the study is complete is sufficient.*) *(NOTE: If you will use more than one medium, you must ask separate permission for each medium you plan to use.)*
2. If you plan to offer an incentive (*cash, course credit, small gifts, etc.*), include a description of the incentive including how the incentive will be awarded if the participant withdraws after beginning the study. Compensation should be pro-rated in a way that recognizes time and effort put in prior to withdrawal. If your incentive will involve a drawing/lottery, you must include the odds of winning.
3. Include referrals for counseling services on campus to address any concerns they have about their behavior and/or psychological state.
4. Researchers who plan to ask participants about their or others' illegal activities (underage drinking, drug use, etc.) must clarify this on the consent and include the following sentences: "*The researcher is not immune to legal subpoena about illegal activities. Although it is very unlikely, if law enforcement officials asked to see my data, I would have to give it to them."*
5. Disclose any appropriate alternative procedures, if any might be advantageous to the participant. For example, in the case of students from a subject pool, any alternative methods by which course credit can be obtained.
6. Include the following sentence in the consent form: *"We have not set aside money to pay for related injuries. Signing this form does not waive any legal rights."*
7. Include the IRB approved language regarding Certificates of Confidentiality. Please make the following addition to your informed consent regarding Certificates of Confidentiality: “There have been very few reported court cases on the legality of Certificates of Confidentiality. The certificate’s authority has been upheld by one New York Court of Appeals’ decision.”
8. In situations of abuse or risk of harm, include the following statement if mandated reporting for abuse or harm to others is indicated (underlined words edited as appropriate): *“We will keep your study data as confidential as possible, with the exception of certain information that we must report for legal or ethical reasons, such as child abuse, elder abuse, or intent to hurt yourself or others.”*

**If the research involves more than minimal risk, contact the IRB office for additional information that should be included.**

**Reminders:**

* The Investigator who consented the subject also must sign and date the consent form.
* The Investigator signs **after** the participant, attesting to the consent process.
* **The Investigator's signature cannot pre-date the subject's signature.**
* Signed consent forms must be retained for a period of three years **after** a research study has closed, at which time they may be destroyed.