

## Navigating the ASU IRB Process Using Blackboard

### Overview

This document is a step-by-step training guide for researchers who are seeking IRB approval for their research proposals. The target audience for this guide is the researcher who has little experience with the Blackboard platform. Faculty who have extensive experience with Blackboard may find the guide somewhat elementary, but the IRB strongly recommends that all faculty read through this document at least once before engaging the system.

Essentially, the IRB portal functions as if all faculty are enrolled in an IRB “course.” Blackboard courses include a process by which students can submit assignments in the form of attached documents, and the instructor can grade those assignments and provide feedback to students privately. The IRB “course” utilizes this assignment process for project submissions. All faculty have been enrolled in the IRB Blackboard site by default as students, with the exception of the IRB board members and IT administrators, who have instructor privileges. This means that individual faculty can see their own proposals but not those of other faculty, while the Board can see all submissions at will.

### Submission Process

- 1) After logging into Blackboard and entering the “ASU IRB” organization site, you should see a menu of options on the left side of the screen, as well as some informational windows in the center. Many of these central windows will be used by the Board Chair to communicate general information with faculty at large, so you need not concern yourself with them other than just to read them when important messages are posted. On the left, however, you should see the following choices: **Submissions, Discussions, Tools, Help**. To proceed, click on the **Submissions** menu option.
- 2) In the **Submissions** area, you will see a folder labeled **IRB Forms**, and an assignment link labeled **Submission Area**. Click on the link for **IRB Forms**.
- 3) In this folder, you will find blank copies of two documents. First, you will find the *Proposal Form*, a PDF form which researchers must use as the template for the description of their study. No other formats are acceptable. While it is possible for you to download the blank form and save a local copy for later studies, the latest version of the form (which is occasionally edited by the IRB committee) will always be found here. Second, you will find the *Consent Form*, a Word document that outlines the proper format for the informed consent that must accompany your proposal. The available form is intended for use in studies where participants are able to physically read and sign the document. If you are conducting a study in which participants will be working at distance (i.e., online surveys, etc.), read the addendum to this training guide titled “Online Study Consent Requirements.” Again, you may keep a copy of the consent form on your local machine, but the latest version will always be located here. There may be no deviations from the formatting shown in the consent document. Department-specific consent forms are not acceptable.

- 4) Navigate to the main **Submissions** window again and click on the **Submission Area** link. You will come to a screen with several areas of interest. First, you will see a section titled “Assignment Information.” This data is generated automatically by Blackboard and has no meaning for the IRB process – for instance, your proposal will not be graded with a score of 0 to 1. The next section is titled “Assignment Materials.” Midway below the header, you should see an option to attach files and a button that allows you to browse for local files. Press that button, and navigate through your own machine for the appropriate documents. You must submit the documents one at a time, and you must follow the rules shown on this screen’s instructions regarding naming your files. **DO NOT paste your text in the text box labeled Submission!** You may write comments in the Comments box if you wish to send an additional message to the IRB committee, but it is not required. After you have attached your documents, press “Submit” at the lower right corner of the screen to complete the submission.
- 5) To track the progress of your submission, simply imagine that you are a student wondering if her paper has been graded. To do this, click on the **Tools** option in the left menu, and then click on the **My Grades** link that appears. After doing so, you should see the submission(s) that you have sent to IRB, along with feedback (if any) from the committee on the proposal(s).
- 6) Once approval has been granted or denied, you will be contacted using the Blackboard system. **You must have your Blackboard options set to receive emails, or you will miss these communications.** Contact the E-Learning department for help with this if necessary.