

Guidance Document on the Inclusion of Students and Employees in Research

When NYU SoM students and/or employees are being recruited as potential subjects, researchers must ensure that there are additional safeguards for these subjects. The voluntary nature of their participation must be principal and without undue influence. An institutional setting may pose the possibility of coercion for potential subjects, if they perceive that continued employment or other benefits are dependent upon their participation in the research. For example, students may be concerned that refusal to participate may affect their grades.

Researchers must emphasize to these subject populations that neither their academic status or grades, or their employment, will be affected by their decision to participate or not. Researchers must also ensure that record of participation can not be linked to any type of academic or employee record. Certificates of Confidentiality should be sought when researching sensitive topics such as Mental Health, drug/alcohol abuse, sexual behavior, or others that fall in this category.

The Principal Investigator should ensure that the research design addresses such institutional pressures and preserves the right for subject to refuse participation. For example, with regard to students, the IRB may require faculty-investigators to advertise for subjects generally rather than to recruit individual students or students enrolled in particular courses.

To minimize coercion, Investigators should avoid, whenever possible, the use of their students and employees in procedures which are neither therapeutic nor diagnostic. Ideal recruiting procedures include bulletin board placement of an IRB approved advertisement; IRB approved ad in a newspaper and announcements in other classes. If a survey is to be completed by a specific class, investigators must do so at the end of the class period to allow non-participating students the option of leaving the classroom. This process alleviates the pressure of participating.