IRB Decision Tree #1

Will you, a member of your research team or, a collaborator observe, interact with, or intervene with living individuals to gather information that will be used for research?

Examples:
- Surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, interviews
- Physical/Electronic games, experiments, or tasks
- Biomedical/Physical procedures, e.g., imagine, scanning, blood collection, exercise, etc.
- Diet or nutrition studies, taste tests
- Studies on effectiveness of educational strategies, teaching methods, curricula
- Use of instruments, sensors, electronic devices, apps, software, or recording mechanisms (e.g., video, screen capture, key logging, etc.) to collect data or monitor or influence behavior
- Passive observation of private behavior (in physical/online environments, incl. social media)
- Any other activity that involves observation of, or interaction with, individuals to gather information for research (in physical or online environments, including social media)

Is the information being collected 'about' individuals?

If YES, refer to IRB Decision Tree #2 (Secondary Use of Data) and/or Non-human Subject Research guidance, as applicable.

If NO, this is not human subjects research. IRB review/approval is NOT required.

Is this a class assignment or project?

If NO, is the project an oral history, ethnography, or journalistic piece?

If YES, is this a quality assurance / quality improvement / organizational effectiveness study?

If NO, will information be used by the researchers to draw broad conclusions about a population, culture, or norms and practices even if no research hypothesis is being tested or validated?

If YES, refer to IRB Decision Tree #1. This is NOT human subjects research. IRB review/approval is NOT required.

If NO, is there intent to generalize outcomes for other organizations, programs, or services?

If NO, this project is research with human subjects and IRB approval OR determination of exemption IS REQUIRED before the study may begin. Questions? Contact irb@coloradomesa.edu

If YES, refer to the “Request for Waiver” IRB Application for Class Projects’ form.

Is the sole intent of the project to meet course requirements, and the results will not be used for something other than the course assignment?

If YES, this is not human subjects research. IRB review/approval is NOT required.

If NO, refer to IRB Decision Tree #1.
Note 1: If you, a member of your research team or, a collaborator are not observing, interacting with, or intervening with living individuals to gather information that will be used for research, then you are doing research involving secondary use of information/specimens.

Note 2: The project gathers information about people (their behaviors, attitudes, opinions, personal characteristics, demographics, decisions, reactions to stimuli, biological specimens, physical or physiological responses, etc.).

Note 3: Data will involve only factual information (not opinions, attitudes, beliefs, etc.) on products, methods, policies, procedures, or organizations (e.g., interviewing school staff about school policies or factual information).

Note 4: The Colorado Mesa University (CMU) Institutional Review Board (IRB) must review all projects that involve human participants. Student projects conducted within an academic course may be categorized as either a course assignment or disseminated research. Course Assignment/Project includes human participant data collected during or outside of class by students enrolled in an official course, as well as activities for a course that involve persons not part of the course. Course assignments involving research activities are considered educational in nature and not subject to IRB review. This Request for Waiver Form must be submitted to the IRB. Disseminated Research includes human participant data that are formally presented to any audience beyond the course (e.g., poster, oral presentation, written paper, seminar, Show Case etc.). In this case, contact the IRB to complete the appropriate protocol and the project will need to be approved.

Note 5: The results of the project may be shared outside of the classroom (e.g., for publication, presentation at academic conferences, in a thesis/dissertation/graduate creative component, etc.) or departmental/interdepartmental seminars designed to exhibit coursework. A prime example of this would be sharing results, data, etc., at Student Showcase.

Note 6: Outcomes will remain specific to the organization, programs, or services, although other organizations may use the results for their own programs.

Note 7: Published materials will be limited to only documenting or reporting on specific events, situations, policies, institutions or systems without the intent to generalize the outcomes for other organizations, programs, or services.