Get to know the IRB’s workflow

What kind of research are you doing? Is it non-human subjects research (NHSR)? Does it use secondary data or biospecimens? Is there human interaction? Do you plan to generalize and disseminate the data/findings?

Based on the type of research you're doing, you'll want to complete and email to the IRB a completed Request for Waiver IRB Application for Class Projects form or a completed IRB's Request for Protocol Review form. (For NHSR, use the protocol review form, noting you're conducting NHSR.)

Once we receive the requisite form, the IRB will review your documentation/waiver/protocol. Protocol reviews will be determined as exempt (IRB approval not necessary), expedited (limited committee review necessary), or full board (extensive IRB review necessary).

Review timelines (ideally): Rolling submissions, no deadlines
- NHSR, class projects waiver, and exempt protocols: 14 days
- Expedited protocols: 3–7 weeks, based on project level of complexity
- Full board review protocols: Depends on volume of submissions; agenda space is first-come, first-served; keep IRB meeting dates in mind (no full board reviews during summer months).

The IRB will log your documents and follow up as needed. Kinds of follow-up:
- necessary changes/clarifications to your protocol (if any),
- a letter acknowledging your NHSR,
- recommendation to use the class projects waiver, or
- IRB protocol determination with assigned protocol number.

Once we go through 1–3 rounds of changes, we finalise your project, send you the invoice and hand over the finalised files ready for you to use! All done!

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