

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) How to Submit a Quality Proposal

Use the appropriate protocol and consent forms available on the Loyola IRB website. These are written with very specific federal language. Some of this language has to be included. Don't change anything without asking your faculty mentor.

Students cannot serve as principal investigators. Your faculty mentor's contact information should always be listed on the protocol and on the consent form.

Do NOT submit a protocol without having your faculty mentor review it first. The IRB is a federally regulated body. As such, your protocol should be professionally written – free of spelling errors, clear, and specific. You will get a sloppily written protocol returned to you with instructions to clean it up.

Did I mention to be specific? For example, you cannot just tell us you are going to recruit 100 participants. HOW are you going to recruit them? Will you use a subject pool? Social media? The protocol should be accurate and complete. If you are using social media, please include the script you will use for recruitment – see our FAQs for an example.

Everything you write in the protocol becomes a contract. You cannot make changes without notifying the IRB. This would be a serious breach of protocol and may require the IRB to suspend or terminate your project.

Read directions carefully. For example, the consent form specifies that course credit is not considered a "benefit." That also means it cannot be listed as a benefit on your protocol.

While the IRB's job is to look at study ethics, it is also in the purview of the committee to consider methodology. Please make sure your methodology is clear and is based on sound design.

If you are putting your study online via Qualtrics, please specify electronic consent procedures.

Include ALL documents (protocol, consent form, all questionnaires including demographic questionnaires). You cannot include anything in your study that was not given to the IRB. Please include your CITI training certificate and your mentor's certificate. We keep a shared drive folder for each study and all documents must be contained within it.

You should expect protocol reviews to take about 1-2 weeks. If you do not receive a response by two weeks, please reach out to your designated IRB chair. This also means, if you have corrections to make, IRB review takes even longer. Full committee review may take up to 1-2 months. Plan wisely!