

Minutes
Institutional Review Board
14 November 2012

Present: Garrett Milam, Kirsten Wilbur, Grace Faucett (Grad Student Rep), Lisa Ferrari, Andrew Gardner, Eda Gurel-Atay, Katie Hall (Undergrad Rep), Anne James, Mita Mahato, Andrew Rife

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm.

A motion was made, and the minutes from 31 October, 2012 were approved.

Orders of Business:

1. Discussion of proposed Draft of IRB Changes

- Milam reviews the plan of action for the day. He suggested that we review the draft memo to Kris Bartanen about the changes we'll propose to the senate. We also need to discuss whether we need to inform the senate or departments first as we begin the change process. First, however, we need to approve the minutes from the last meeting.
- Ferrari noted that since Milam was unable to attend the meeting, we need to clarify in the notes who called the meeting to order. James adds suggestions for some slight revisions to the minutes. Ferrari discussed the fact that students submitting projects for IRB approval need letters (note the plural) of support. Milam commented on additional typos that could be cleaned up, and we had a motion to approve the minutes. This motion was approved.
- James noted some questions related to the draft letter. She noted that in regards to the plan described in the draft letter, there are some departments that heavily rely on the IRB. In some of those departments, protocols arrive throughout the year, and perhaps it would be better not to have departments review their own proposals. The IRB could spread out the task among many members. Those protocols that are very technical and particular to a discipline could be handled by the representative(s) from that department, but the remainder could be distributed to other IRB members.
- Milam wondered if that suggestion perhaps went against the essence of the proposed change, and particularly the suggested division of labor between administrative IRB appointees and review-oriented IRB appointees.
- James noted that while this perhaps may be the case, that is the inherent nature of the IRB: to look at protocols together, and to rely on perspectives from outside the discipline.
- Milam noted that there is or at least can be some flexibility in the proposed plan. At times, individual loads of protocols could be lightened by dispersing protocols to other members. Milam wondered if we should revise the memo to clarify this, or if the memo already conveyed this.
- Mahato pointed to some possible additional modifications to the last paragraphs of the draft memo. James noted that, basically, the protocol goes to the department when it's submitted, and it's either reviewed or they find someone to review it.
- Ferrari noted that from her perspective, it's possible that these changes could substantially change the culture of review and oversight related to research on campus, and that we'll really need to be careful in describing the differences between members who serve on the "full board" and those who are simply charged with reviewing protocols. Ferrari wondered if there is a way to set up expanded IRB membership without any implication of some members being indentured servants.
- Milam suggested that we also consider and hear from some of the departments that rely heavily on IRB, like Psych and CSOC. Who should bear that load, he asked.

- James noted that the IRB should not be reviewing protocols that don't qualify as human subjects research under the evolving definition.
- Milam noted how unclear this can be in practice: projects that may, superficially, appear not to require IRB approval (because they are only for class) can have their status and eligibility for IRB review altered simply by the student having (at any point in the future) the intention of carrying on and building on that research later.
- Gardner asks the IRB to review the new definition of research as he was unable to attend the earlier meeting where this was discussed.
- In regards to the quantity of protocols to be reviewed, Milam noted that while we don't have to review projects that are only for class, in PSYCH there were 60-odd projects that were handled by "designates" previously, as those protocols were either exempt or expedited. Now those will be the responsibility of the full IRB. That's why this idea of the division of labor came up and why it made sense. While it's basically the same structure, we'll bring in four full board members from the departments that produce large numbers of protocols for review. We can compensate the new members by awarding them credit for standing committee responsibility.
- James noted that based on Ferrari's national-level meetings regarding changes to the IRB, protocols can be reviewed by individuals in the same department, but not by faculty who are listed as PIs on the protocols.
- Ferrari noted that she'll be going to a second meeting in December of this year.
- Rife noted that having people outside the department review a protocol is a good thing. We should definitely not create a system in which no one outside the department evaluates a given proposal.
- Milam noted that even with the proposed changes, only exempt and expedited would have the possibility of circumventing the full board. Those protocols requiring full board review would proceed to the full IRB. Right now designates make those decisions.
- James noted that right now, the IRB checklist requires a letter from the advisor, but we rarely receive that.
- Ferrari noted that in regards to the previous review situation (from last meeting), the issue of the letter should be addressed. Jimmy can screen submissions for the required inclusions.
- Gardner considered this requirement, and noted that now he's imagining the task of writing 25 letters for each section of CSOC 302 he regularly teaches.
- Ferrari wondered if that requirement could perhaps only be for protocols requiring full board review.
- Mahato concurred: that would really address the issue, and keep the focus on those proposals going to full board review.
- Milam suggested that we return to the draft letter issue. Do we need to further edit this draft? Ferrari wondered if we should recommend when the proposed changes should occur. Should they begin in the new semester or the new academic year? Milam noted that it's probably best to stick with the academic year, particularly as that's when committee assignments shift.
- Wilbur wondered if having two representatives from one department would be a burden for small departments in particular. Perhaps they'll want influence on other committees.
- Mahato suggested that we could be clearer in the letter about the responsibilities of the various components of the new/reconstituted committee. A diagram would be ideal.
- Ferrari noted that she wasn't clear we actually had to have two representatives from particular departments. Milam agreed, and noted that it's more a requirement for at least one, and not really about two representatives.

- Rife noted that he feels an ongoing concern that norms within a particular department might gravitate away from universal IRB norms. Ferrari added that she's still concerned about the institutional culture issue, and also with the fact that there is a history of some parties passing projects that should have come to the full board for review.
- Milam moved to shelve this draft letter for further discussion during the next administrative IRB meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Gardner