

## WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### **CAMPUS FACULTY RESEARCHERS**

Each campus has a designated faculty member who receives release time to conduct research on teaching, student learning, assessment and other topics. Your college's Faculty Researcher can assist you as you plan and conduct your own study as well as facilitate your access to additional college and district data and research-related resources.

### **RESEARCH OFFICES**

In addition, each College and the District have a Research Office. These offices can also provide assistance to you in your work, particularly if you decide to move beyond classroom based research.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

#### **ARC**

Faculty Researcher: Dr. Jim Higgins  
(916) 484-8220  
Research Office: (916) 484-8679  
<http://research-web.arc.losrios.edu/>

#### **CRC**

Faculty Researcher: Dr. Jeanne Edman  
(916) 691-7501  
Research Office: (916) 691-7385  
<http://research.crc.losrios.edu/>

#### **FLC**

Research Office: (916) 608-6525  
<http://irweb.losrios.edu/FLC/flc-res.htm>

#### **SCC**

Faculty Researcher: Dr. Alan Keys  
(916) 650-2941  
Research Office: (916) 558-2511  
<http://www.scc.losrios.edu/~sccro/welcome.html>

#### **LRCCD**

Office of Institutional Research  
(916) 568-3131 or [IR@losrios.edu](mailto:IR@losrios.edu)  
<http://irweb.losrios.edu/>

### **LOS RIOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT**



1919 Spanos Court  
Sacramento, CA. 95825

Phone: (916) 568-3131  
E-mail: [IR@losrios.edu](mailto:IR@losrios.edu)

Los Rios Community College District

## ISSUES TO CONSIDER WHEN CONDUCTING FACULTY OR STUDENT RESEARCH IN LRCCD

AMERICAN RIVER COLLEGE  
COSUMNES RIVER COLLEGE  
FOLSOM LAKE COLLEGE  
SACRAMENTO CITY COLLEGE



TEL: (916) 568-3131

# HOW TO CONDUCT ETHICAL RESEARCH ON CAMPUS: A GUIDE TO FACULTY AND THEIR STUDENTS

## **WHAT KINDS OF RESEARCH DO FACULTY AND STUDENTS ENGAGE IN?**

Below are examples of some of the kinds of research projects that LRCCD faculty and/or their students participate in.

### **Classroom-based or student service research**

Basic classroom assessment research generally does not require a formal research protocol or approval. This is because it is formative in nature in that the results can be used to inform both student and instructor on the impact of teaching methods and learning processes associated with a particular class.

Examples would include research conducted by a professor where data is collected from students on their study habits, test preparation skills, effectiveness of teaching strategies or other factors that relate to the student's successful completion of a course.

### **Student research projects**

Many professors require their students to conduct a research study as part of their coursework. Some of these studies involve developing surveys and collecting data from their fellow college students or even outside of the LRCCD college setting.

These projects typically involve, but are not limited to, surveys of social, political, attitudinal, or behavioral aspects of people. Not only do these activities provide a rich experience where students learn about themselves and the scientific method, but it provides an excellent opportunity to teach the ethical and procedural requirements for using human subjects in research projects.

### **Extra-Curricular research that is conducted by faculty/staff**

If a faculty member is conducting research that is not classroom-based (e.g., as part of a sabbatical, for professional interest or for a graduate thesis or dissertation) and plans to use data either from college students or the community, he or she should contact the college Faculty Researcher and/or the college Research Office.

## **BEST PRACTICES WHEN CONDUCTING RESEARCH**

One of the most important components of any study that involves the collection or use of data from human subjects is the inclusion of a plan that assures that each study participant will be protected from any form of physical, emotional or social harm. Whenever you plan to use human subjects as part of a research project, your study should include the following:

### **Ensure that the research participant is not at risk**

This means that you ensure that the questions you ask or the tasks that the research participant is expected to complete will in no way harm the participant. This is not as easy as it sounds. Sometimes a loaded or insensitive question may evoke memories or responses that cause psychological stress to the research participant. Carefully review your questions and tasks and perhaps pilot test them with a small group of students or other faculty members to verify that they are safe to use.

### **Ensure that the research participant has given their “informed consent” to participate in the study**

Informed consent implies that the research participant has been informed with regard to what will be required of them as well as any danger or risk (both physically or psychologically) that they face. The research participant must know that they have the right to opt out or refuse to participate without any negative consequences.

### **Protect the anonymity/confidentiality of the research participant**

Every research project involving human subjects—particularly those that collect personal and/or sensitive information—should have procedures in place to protect the participant's confidentiality and/or anonymity.

*Confidentiality: While the researcher may know who the research participants were, access to these data is restricted so that nobody else will be able to match research data to a particular participant.*

*Anonymity: Nobody, not even the researcher, will know which participant provided the research data.*

If you have any questions about how to protect confidentiality, contact your college Faculty Researcher or college Research Office.

### **Maintaining Data Security**

Many research projects collect sensitive information about a study participant. While not typical of classroom based research, examples of this kind of information might be name or social security number. These kinds of variables are called “personal identifiers” and allow for the identification of the individual from whom the data were collected. Classroom-based research often may collect student IDs which, although not “confidential” in the same sense as a social security number, still allows for linking data to an individual. In general, it is strongly recommended that collecting this kind of data be avoided—especially social security number.

It is absolutely critical that you protect study participants by maintaining their data in a manner that ensures their confidentiality. Keep all data disks locked in a cabinet. Do not leave them on your desk or in your computer. Password protect all data files if possible. Consider encrypting data files so that nobody can access them but yourself.

If you need help with any of these or other security procedures, contact your college Faculty Researcher.

### **Requirements for those seeking access to student subjects other than for classroom-based research**

Each LRCCD college campus has a research office with staff who are knowledgeable about research and who have access to a wide range of data and technical resources. Faculty are encouraged to contact these staff for assistance as they design and conduct their studies as well as for help in data analysis.