

Research approval with the  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)  
**What you need to know RIGHT NOW**  
(before you even think about starting research)

The IRB oversees all  
**HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH**

Know whether you need to get approval from the IRB with these three words:

**HUMAN:**

- People, not animals, etc. (There are other procedures for lab animals, though)
- There are some special procedures for research involving children or other vulnerable populations (ask the IRB for details)

**SUBJECTS:**

- You interact with them (in any way, such as asking them questions)  
OR
- You access private information (such as academic or medical records)  
[This includes accessing *private* data from the research of others.]

**RESEARCH:**

- Any sharing of results academically (publications, conferences, theses, etc.)
- Yes! It DOES include pilot studies, unless the results from those pilot studies are NEVER reported and are just to test your methodology for yourself.
- Exceptions: NOT required for classes (including term papers), but only if you never use the data or results from your project outside of the classroom. Likewise, non-academic activities (conversations with friends, making a youtube video) are not considered research. (But don't use it in research!)
- Different procedures use different forms for different levels of risk. Most Linguistics research falls under "no more than minimal risk" and is "exempt" with a short application. (But even "exempt" studies need approval!)

**If these three conditions apply to your project, then you must get approval BEFORE you begin (even finding subjects). You won't get retroactive approval.**

**If you change anything not covered on your initial application you must submit a revision before you implement those changes!**

VISIT <http://irb.illinois.edu/>

**Students can't submit to the IRB. Work with a faculty "Primary Investigator".  
Step 1: do the training (see the website); Step 2: submit the application.**

If you have any questions, you should ask before you begin your project.  
Almost all researchers in Linguistics will at some point do experimental work.