

Is My Project Research?



Did you know that even if you consider your project research, it may not be considered “research” according to the federal definition that is used by CSU’s IRB? So – what is the definition of Research, and if your project isn’t considered “research,” what next?

Research is: **A systematic investigation, including development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.**

What is **generalizable knowledge**? Knowledge where the intended use of the research findings can be applied to populations or situations beyond the studied population. Do you plan to submit the findings from your research project to journals for publication? Will you be presenting your findings at professional meetings? If so, this is considered contributing to generalizable knowledge and thus your project would need to be reviewed by the IRB.

◆ Examples of projects that **ARE** considered research:

- Asking a group of participants questions that would reveal their opinions and beliefs associated with a topic, and then submitting this data to a journal for publication.
- Project conducted to complete the requirements for a dissertation or thesis. The student’s first publication will be the finished dissertation or thesis placed in the CSU library. The results may be submitted to journals for publication and/or presented at professional meetings.



◆ Examples of projects that would **NOT** be considered Research:

- Evaluation of a classroom curriculum (evaluations are gathered from students and analyzed solely for internal review to improve the curriculum).
- Plan B Master’s student project to complete his/her technical paper. The project is for internal purposes only and the data will not be submitted for publication.



If your project is **not** considered Research, you do not need to submit any paperwork to the IRB.



If you are not certain if your project qualifies as research or not, please complete the “[Does My Project Require IRB Review](#)” form and submit it to RICRO for review.