

University of Southern Maine

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACULTY ADVISOR: USM IRB GUIDANCE

What is the faculty advisors role in student-conducted research?

The faculty advisor shares with the student the responsibility for the ethical conduct of the research. The advisor is responsible for ensuring that research activities involving human subjects are reviewed and approved by the USM IRB before they are initiated. The faculty advisor is expected to take an active role in student research activities and provide supervision for the duration of the project. The faculty advisor is legally responsible for all research activities and must review, approve and sign the submission to the IRB.

What are the responsibilities of the faculty advisor in student-conducted research?

1. **Be informed.** Contact the Office of Research Integrity and Outreach (ORIO) to discuss policies and procedures for obtaining IRB review before the initiation of research activities. Faculty advisors are expected to be familiar with institutional requirements for the conduct of human subjects research. Familiarize yourself with the [IRB website](#).
2. **Complete the CITI training** for human subjects research. Faculty advisors are expected to be familiar with ethical and regulatory requirements.
3. **Know what must be reviewed.** Determine when an undergraduate or graduate student project constitutes research with human subjects and requires review by the ORIO and/or the IRB. If you are unsure about whether or not a planned activity constitutes research with human subjects it is your responsibility to contact the ORIO for guidance.
4. **Assist students with protocol submission.** When proposed activities constitute research with human subjects, it is the responsibility of the faculty advisor to assist students in preparing and reviewing materials to be submitted to the USM IRB. Faculty advisors are responsible for reviewing the scientific integrity of the project, including evaluating the scientific rigor and merit of the study.
5. **Educate students** on the role of the USM IRB and the importance of research review. Students must complete the [CITI training](#) for human subjects research before submitting an application to the IRB.
6. **Maintain ethical standards.** Faculty advisors ensure that projects are conducted to the highest ethical standards and that students understand and implement these ethical standards in the conduct of their research.
7. **Help students navigate the IRB process.** Faculty advisors contact the ORIO to determine what the requirements are for submission to the IRB and help students understand the USM IRB process.
8. **Take an active role** in the IRB review process and assist students when presented with questions and comments from the IRB and/or ORIO staff.
9. **Oversee changes.** Ensure that before a change is implemented to an approved protocol that it is approved by the IRB. All changes must be reviewed by the faculty mentor before submission to the IRB.
10. **Report any adverse events** or other research-related problems to the IRB as soon as possible.
11. **Ensure that continuing review requirements** are satisfied when applicable.
12. **Ensure that the study is closed** at the conclusion of the study.