

Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education and Psychology
EDUCATION DIVISION PRE-IRB DESIGN REVIEW POLICY

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Effective November 1, 2009, all GSEP Education Division graduate students conducting non-exempt research are required to gain approval from the Pre-IRB Design Review Coordinator prior to submitting their proposal to the Graduate and Professional Schools' (GPS) Institutional Review Board (IRB).

The purpose of this review is to better ensure that students' proposed procedures and design plans will not be an impediment to their IRB review. At times, this review may also touch on research ethics and protection of human subjects issues, though it is neither the intent nor the desire of the Coordinator to duplicate the work of the GPS IRB. Rather, the Pre-IRB Design Review speeds up the IRB process by helping ensure that the IRB can keep its focus on issues related to the protection of human subjects.

1. All **Expedited Review** and **Full Review** studies to be conducted by GSEP Education Division graduate students **must** be submitted to and approved by the Pre-IRB Design Review Coordinator prior to submission to the GPS IRB. **Exempt Review** IRB applications **do not require** clearance by the Coordinator and can be submitted directly to the GPS IRB Manager. Applicants should see the "IRB Decision Tree" at <http://services.pepperdine.edu/irb/irbforms/> to determine the level of IRB review necessary for their study.
2. Applications for Pre-IRB Design Review must be approved before applying to the GPS IRB, but doctoral students may submit either **prior to** or **following** their Preliminary Oral Defense. Because of its importance, this decision should be **discussed** and made with the **approval** of the student's doctoral advisor. Benefits of each approach differ:
 - a. Doctoral students submitting for Pre-IRB Design Review **30 days or more prior** to their Preliminary Oral Defense will be provided with feedback prior to the defense. Students clearing the Pre-IRB Design Review in advance of their defense will also be able to apply to the GPS IRB as early as the day their Pre-IRB Design Review is approved. However, because a student's doctoral committee may require substantial modification to their procedures and design plans during Preliminary Oral Defense, those who clear Pre-IRB Design Review in advance of the defense may not benefit from a review of their final research methods.
 - b. Doctoral students electing to submit for Pre-IRB Design Review **following** their Preliminary Oral Defense may benefit from having their application reflect any methodological modifications required by their doctoral committee during defense. However, since it is first be necessary to receive approval from the Pre-IRB Design Review Coordinator prior to applying to the GPS IRB, such students should allow for a greater period of time (typically 1 to 2 months) between completion of their Preliminary Oral Defense and commencement of their data collection.
3. To submit for Pre-IRB Design Review, complete the "Expedited or Full IRB Application" IRB application and attach all supporting documents as indicated by the GPS IRB guidelines. The applications should be carefully prepared, with the close involvement of the student's faculty

supervisor. Both the student and the faculty supervisor must sign the IRB application. **Rough drafts or partially completed applications will not be reviewed.**

4. Applications ready for Pre-IRB Design Review may be sent directly to the GPS IRB Coordinator at gsepedpreirb@pepperdine.edu as a **Microsoft Word document**, with any signed pages mailed or scanned and emailed. Applications will be reviewed on a continuous basis, with every effort made to provide written feedback within **two weeks** from the time an application is received. Students should note that proposals submitted during critical times of the year, such as finals week and holidays, may require additional time for processing.
5. Students expecting to apply for Full Review should plan ahead regarding the GPS IRB schedule (please see the “GPS IRB Schedule/Calendar for Full Review Applications” at <http://services.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/>). In other words, applicants for Full Review should be sure to allow sufficient time to address any feedback they may receive based on the Pre-IRB Design Review.
6. The Coordinator will typically be solely responsible for reviewing submitted proposals, although they may be reviewed by another member of the GPS IRB for the sake of expediency and accuracy.
7. There are three possible results for proposals submitted for Pre-IRB Design Review:
 - a. **Cleared for submission to the GPS IRB:** these are proposals that are deemed to be free from any substantial concerns regarding procedures and design plans, and are therefore ready for submission to the GPS IRB following the Preliminary Oral Defense.
 - b. **Cleared with recommendations:** these are proposals that are free of substantial methodological concerns, although recommendations and suggestions for design-related changes have been made. They are cleared for submission to the GPS IRB, but students are required to confer with their chairperson or faculty supervisor to develop a strategy for responding to the feedback. Re-submission of such proposals for Pre-IRB Design Review is optional.
 - c. **Revise and resubmit:** these are proposals with substantial design or procedures difficulties and thus are not cleared for submission to the GPS IRB. Students must attend to the feedback provided and resubmit their proposal for Pre-IRB Design Review.
8. Upon clearance by the Pre-IRB Design Review Coordinator, the student’s **cover letter to the GPS IRB** should indicate when the Pre-IRB Design Review was cleared and approval was granted to submit their application to the GPS IRB. Clearance by the Pre-IRB Design Review Coordinator cannot be viewed as a guarantee of approval of the final application by the GPS IRB.

If you have questions or require more information, please feel free to email the GPS IRB Manager at gpsirb@pepperdine.edu or at (310) 568-5753. Yuying Tsong, Ph.D. – the Pre-IRB Design Review Coordinator – can be contacted at gsepedpreirb@pepperdine.edu or (310) 568-5768.