Cedar Crest College Institutional Review Board

Research Description Supplement

Title of Research: ASSESSING KNOWLEDGE OF IRB REGULATIONS

a. Objective(s) of Research: The goal of this research is to examine levels of knowledge and familiarity with Cedar Crest College Institutional Review Board (IRB) policy among Cedar Crest faculty and students. Findings will be shared with college community in hopes of educating faculty and students as to the purpose of IRB on campus, and the situations under which proposals must be submitted to IRB for approval.

b. Researcher(s) Qualifications: This research is being carried out by Dr. Kerrie Baker, Dr. James Scepansky and Sarah Taylor.

- Dr. Kerrie Baker, currently an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Cedar Crest College, holds a Doctoral Degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. Presently, she is the instructor for a section of the PSY 211 and PSY 212 series of courses focusing on research methods and statistical analyses. Dr. Baker has also served as Chair of the Cedar Crest College IRB.

- Dr. James Scepansky, currently an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Cedar Crest College, holds a Doctoral Degree in Experimental Psychology. Presently, he is also the instructor for a section of the PSY 211 and PSY 212 series of courses focusing on research methods and statistical analyses. Dr. Scepansky is currently serving as Chair of the Cedar Crest College IRB.

- Sarah Taylor is an undergraduate Psychology major who has completed and excelled in the PSY 211 and PSY 212 sequence of classes, giving her knowledge of IRB protocol, research methodology, and statistical techniques, all skills that qualify her to participate in this investigation.

c. Methods to be Used:

- Participants: Participants will be Cedar Crest College students, faculty and staff who agree to voluntarily participate in the research. The purpose of the research will be explained to the students and they will be asked to participate with the provision that they are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

- Procedures: This study will employ a combination of experimental design and survey techniques. Specifically, we are interested in surveying faculty, as well as students at different stages within their academic training, regarding their knowledge and familiarity with the role and procedures of the Cedar Crest College IRB. To assess understanding of IRB protocol, all participants will be asked to read a series of 6 hypothetical vignettes in the form of summarized research proposals. Several different themes are presented in the vignettes and all participants will be exposed to the same themes. However, based on random assignment, participants will receive one of two or more variations on each theme (again, six in total). Specifically, we will manipulate the following variables from vignette to vignette: 1) the level of anonymity, 2) sensitivity of study, 3) how information is to be used, 4) status of participants, 5) use of population at risk, and 6) level of risk/harm for participants based on proposed methodology. A copy of all vignettes is attached to this submission. After reading each vignette, participants will make several judgments: 1) should the proposed study be submitted to IRB for approval, 2) how confident are you in your decision, 3) to what extent do the procedures described put participants at risk, and 4) in your opinion, should the study be approved by the IRB? To save paper, a sample page is included which illustrates how ratings will be made upon reading a vignette. Demographic data (i.e., participant status,
Form Last Updated 8/24/12

gender, experience with IRB) will also be collected for comparative purposes (see attached survey). The study should take approximately 25 – 30 minutes to complete; participants will be informed of the anticipated duration on the consent form.

d. Recruitment Procedures: Faculty participants will be recruited at an upcoming Faculty Meeting. The researchers will make an announcement soliciting participation in the study. Packets will be available with the stipulation that completion of materials is strictly voluntary, anonymous, and that completed forms should be sent via campus mail to the primary researchers. Students will be recruited in several specific classes. We are interested in comparing students who have and have not completed PSY 211 (Experimental Methods), in which IRB procedures are introduced. For this reason, we will target PSY 100 (General Psychology), students who have not yet taken PSY 211, PSY 211 students, who have recently covered IRB procedures in class, and PSY 365 (Senior Capstone Research) students, who have completed PSY 211 and are in the process of getting ready to submit their own research proposals to IRB. All students will again be informed of the voluntary nature of the study, and that it is anonymous.

e. Requirements for Participation: All Cedar Crest faculty members are welcome to participate in this study. However, there are two limits to participating in the study for students: First they must be 18 years of age or older. Second, they must be enrolled in a section of one of the three courses mentioned above (PSY 100, PSY 211, and PSY 365). Student participants may receive extra credit in their courses at the discretion of their instructors; there will be no coercion to participate in as alternative options for earning extra credit will be offered to students who choose not to participate.

f. Possible Risks and Benefits: It is anticipated that participants will be at no physical, psychological, or emotional risk at any time during the research. Nor is it anticipated that participation in the research will place the participants at any risk of criminal or civil liability, or damage the participants' financial standing or employability. Participants may receive extra credit for participating in this study, but only in certain classes where the instructor has made it clear that extra credit is available for research participation.

g. Assurance of Anonymity and Confidentiality: Participants will be informed of the voluntary and confidential nature of the research verbally and/or via instructions on the data collection instruments. Participants will also be instructed not to put their name or any identifying information on the instrument. If using an identification number for coding purposes, the number associated with a participant will not be linked to the participant by name. When collecting data from participants, the researcher will immediately place the data in a large envelope, and will not examine any of the data until all data have been collected. The raw data will only be accessible to Sarah Taylor, Dr. Kerrie Baker and Dr. James Scepansky. In the event that any information provided by a participant should become known outside the research, it is unlikely that any harm would come to the participant.

h. Security of Data and Data Destruction. All data collected in this study will be stored in a secure location within the Psychology Department. Data will be stored for a period of three years, and shall be shredded on or after November, 2014.