

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

ANNUAL REPORT

2014/2015

I. Executive Summary

As of July 30, 2015, 87 research proposals were submitted, with 84 receiving approval from the Human Subjects Research Committee; 78 were expedited, 8 were exempt, and 1 required full review. Two reports of research non-compliance were reported. As a result of these non-compliance issues, data were destroyed and the faculty member and student were provided with additional human subjects training.

II. The Committee's Charge (from the Shared Governance Document)

1. To review compliance with and administer the University of North Alabama policy on the Use of Human Research Participants
2. To examine the University of North Alabama policy on the Use of Human Research Participants annually and assess university practices in light of the information obtained
3. To propose changes in university practices relating to the use of human research participants
4. To handle any proposals the committee may make affecting university policy according to section C.2 "Shared Governance Procedure for Policy Change Recommendations"
5. To submit a final written report electronically by the first day of the fall semester to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost with a copy sent to the Chair of the SGEC.

III. The Committee met on the following dates:

The HSC committee met on September 2, 2014 to elect a chair and vice-chair. Ryan Zayac was elected as the chair, and Eric O'Neal was elected as the vice-chair.

On September 22, 2014 the HSC met and reviewed 1 proposal submitted under the direction of Dr. Matt Green in the Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (HPER). The committee made several recommendations regarding

issues related to the informed consent. The proposal was resubmitted and ultimately approved on September 28, 2014.

- IV. What were the Committee's actions and accomplishments this year relative to each of the items of the charge?

One research proposal received full review and subsequent approval from the HSC (the 78 expedited and 8 exempt submissions were reviewed solely by the chair). Drs. Blackstone and Zayac continued to review the NIH and HHS IRB Policies and updated UNA's policy to meet those requirements. UNA's website was updated in October, 2013 to reflect these changes. The web page is still being updated as additional documentation is developed. The HSC also has collaborated with the Social and Behavioral Science Research Center (SBSRC) to facilitate the dissemination of research on campus. All IRB proposals now require applicants to complete a form that asks if they would like to share a summary of their research on the SBSRC website.

- V. What were the Committee's formal recommendations?

HSC recommends that we continue to look into a mechanism for updating the website to allow for proposals to be directly uploaded on the website instead of being emailed.

- VI. What does the Committee plan to accomplish

- A. In the coming year?

We aim to continue to improve efficiency of the IRB process in order to review proposals in a timely fashion. This may include revising the website and discussing the process of how exempt/expedited reviews are handled. Given the extraordinary time commitment required of the chair to conduct reviews, one possibility is to create multiple co-chairs. For example, each College would have a chair that is responsible for reviewing exempt and expedited proposals from departments in their college.

- B. In future years?

Future years' goals will be similar to the above stated goals.

- VII. What are the Committee's weaknesses?

The HSC committee worked very well together this past year, and there are currently no identifiable weaknesses.

- A. What can the Shared Governance Committee help you do to address the weaknesses?

Not applicable.

VIII. Comments.

The steady increase in research at UNA led to the Human Subjects Committee reviewing the largest number of proposals (87) since the HSC was established. It is especially noteworthy that the turnaround time for exempt and expedited proposals was within 1-4 days; with a number of faculty and students complimenting the chair and committee on how quickly their proposals were vetted. However, if the upward trend in submissions continues, it will be necessary to reconsider how the proposals are reviewed, as the preponderance of work on the committee is done solely by the chair. With increased submission levels, we may need to provide a course release to the chair, examine the possibility of hiring a part-time staff member with experience reviewing IRB proposals, or elect College IRB co-chairs to lessen the burden on the HSC chair.