

Rowan University  
Institutional Review Board for the  
Protection of Human Subjects (IRB)

Policy on Exclusion of Oral History from IRB Review  
(Approved 11/22/06)

The Rowan University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) acknowledges that there may be certain cases where projects that involve oral interviews may not need to be submitted to the IRB for review. It is up to the individual faculty member, in consultation with their department chair and/or dean, to determine whether a project must be submitted to the IRB. If the project meets the guideline for research established by the U.S. Office for Human Research Protection, it must be submitted to the IRB for approval. That definition states that research is a “systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.”

If the faculty member determines that the project does not meet the definition of research, then the project must be conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the Oral History Association, which includes obtaining informed consent from the participant/s in the project.

If a faculty member is unsure whether a project is research, the project should be submitted to the IRB for review.

Projects that involve participation by protected groups under US Code 45 CFR part 46 (e.g., children, prisoners) must be reviewed by the IRB.