UWG IRB

IRB applications and consent templates can be found at:
https://www.westga.edu/academics/research/orsp/irb-forms.php

Common problems with IRB submissions (things that slow the process):

1. CITI Training: CITI must be up to date. The UWG IRB requires Human Subjects and Responsible Conduct of Research modules. CITI training must be current through the duration of the project.
2. Project Dates:
   • **Start date:** your project cannot begin until after you receive approval from the IRB. Do not submit application materials with a start date that does not allow adequate time for IRB review. "ASAP" is not a date, dates must be in the dd/mm/yy format.
   • **End date**: must allow enough time to collect and analyze data.
3. Procedures: Procedures should be clear enough that someone unfamiliar with your research would be able to replicate the entire study from the description provided. Include how you have access to participants and how you will contact them. Must be written in future tense.
4. Number of Subjects: Provide the maximum number of participants, not a number range. The maximum number of participants should be consistent on all forms.
5. Conflict of interest/coercion: This can occur if one of the researchers is in a position of authority over research subjects (employer, teacher, counselor, etc.). If this is the case, you must explain how the participant will be assured that they are free not to participate and there will be no repercussions. A statement that participation is voluntary and there will be no repercussions is not adequate. See IRB FAQ for more information.
6. Incomplete materials: Ensure all relevant application questions are answered. The complete application package includes survey or interview instruments, recruitment email or flyers, district/Principal-site acknowledgement letters, and consent forms (Parent Permission/Child Assent).
7. Application consent section: must detail how signed consent will be obtained. If a physical signature is not being obtained, this must be explained. Use of electronic signatures must be explained.
8. Consent forms: Should be written at an age appropriate level. Typically written at an 8th grade reading level or less for Child Assent.
9. Inconsistency between documents: As materials are revised, be sure things like the study title, number of participants, dates, compensation, are consistent across all materials (Application, Consent Forms, recruitment materials)
10. Application and Consent not written in laymen's terms: do not use acronyms without spelling them out the first time, don't use jargon or area specific language.
11. Guarantees of anonymity: This is problematic when only using a few subjects and collecting demographic information.
12. Misusing terms:
    • Anonymous – no identifying information that can link to participants. Participant identity cannot be determined by anyone, including the researcher (not only cannot connect who said/answered what but does not know who participated).
    • Confidential – the researcher can identify participants but no identifying information will be presented in the analysis.
    • De-identified data – identifier have been removed. Researcher does not have access to links between data and the participant.
    • Coded data – identifiers have been removed from the data, but the researcher has access to the master-list (code) that can re-identify participants.

Student applications: Faculty Advisor must sign and submit student applications and must also be listed in "Key Personnel" section. Application materials must be submitted to irb@westga.edu by the faculty advisor.