

Welcome to our April edition of IRB updates!

Melissa Spadanuda Accepts New Position

Melissa Spadanuda has accepted a new position as Associate Vice Chancellor of Facilities, Planning and Management (FPM), beginning June 1. She is taking over for Geoff Hurtado, current AVC and also our Institutional Official, who is retiring this summer. Please join us in congratulating both Melissa and Geoff on these exciting new beginnings!

The day-to-day IRB office activities have already been mostly transferred to Leah and Melody over the past year or so, but over the next few weeks we'll be taking over the remaining responsibilities as well. If your study is open to enrollment and your consent form has Melissa's phone number listed as the IRB contact (414-229-3173), please update to list both Melody & Leah's numbers instead (414-229-3182 and 414-229-7455). No amendment is required for this administrative change.

Recruiting Students for Online Surveys

Recruiting students via email is a convenient way to reach a large population. However, there has been growing concern about students becoming overwhelmed with the numbers of emails they receive, so the Provost has put new guidelines in place. If you plan to recruit UWM students outside of your department for online survey research, be aware that you need administrative approval in order to contact them. If you're contacting students within a specific school or college, contact the Dean of that school. For permission to email students from multiple schools/colleges, contact the Provost.

Dropbox and Research Data

Dropbox is not considered a secure method of storing and sharing data, and generally we discourage our researchers from using it. Exceptions would be if you are working with de-identified or anonymous, non-sensitive data, or data that has been approved by the IRB to be shared publicly (such as creating a publicly accessible archive). Otherwise, opt for UWM-contracted storage and cloud sharing solutions, such as OneDrive, Sharepoint, or Teams.

Open Records Laws and Research Data

With the increase in use of Microsoft Teams for conducting research remotely, a researcher asked us about how this relates to Wisconsin open records laws. Kathryn Amato, Public Records Custodian, provided the following guidance:

"Teams is presenting a lot of opportunities for collaboration and research, but also raising potential issues of what might be subject to public records law. The simple answer is that all university records, including phone and video recordings and transcriptions in Teams, are subject to public records law. Whether or not we release them is another question. This determination is made on a case by case

basis. Certainly, we would argue that records reflecting ongoing research or research where subjects expected confidentiality are not subject to release.

I think another pressing issue is how faculty store and label research records. This has implications for public records law and record retention issues. I think we are still figuring out some of these issues. But, my recommendation would be for researchers to make an attempt to somehow label files or folders in a way that anyone searching those files would be alerted to the fact it's research-related.”

As always, please feel free to reach out to us with any questions you have. We're happy to help!

Your friendly IRB office staff,

Melody, Leah, and Melissa