

General Guidelines for a Letter of Cooperation or Authorization

If you are recruiting on-campus students, persons at an institution outside of FGCU, or an outside entity is helping you with recruitment, the IRB requires a letter of cooperation from the department head and/or the faculty member for the course(s) in which the students are enrolled, or the appropriate person at the institution or entity.

The letter must:

1. bear a recent date
2. be on letterhead and signed by an appropriate signatory official
3. reference the researcher by name and the title of the research project
4. include a sentence or two to demonstrate the signatory official has a clear understanding of and approves the research procedures outlined in the research protocol (e.g., recruitment, consent, and data collection)
5. describe what they have agreed to allow the investigator to do including any restrictions or limitations
6. describe what responsibilities, if any, they are assuming (example - will they allow their students to use class time to fill out the surveys, will they grant you access to files, etc.)
7. include the time frame (if any) involved in completion of on-site activities
8. if archival data/documents about human subjects are being used in the research, the official must approve their use and state if the data will be released with or without identifying information

The original document should be submitted to the IRB and the researcher should make a copy for his/her records. An email *may* be acceptable if sufficient detail is provided.

Protocols can be submitted without all authorization letters having been received. **However, at least one letter must be included in the protocol** when it is filed. All letters must be forwarded to the IRB before the protocol can be approved and research initiated at those locations.