

**HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTOCOL AND  
GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH**  
**Important Information for Doctoral Students and Their Advisors**

If you are a doctoral student preparing to write your dissertation or DMA research project, you will need to determine whether or not your research is going to involve conducting research involving human subjects. The definition of a “human subject” from the federal guidelines is *“a living individual about whom an investigator (professional or student) conducting research obtains data through intervention or interaction with the individual or identifiable private information. Private information includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which the subject can reasonably expect that no recording is taking place or information the subject has provided for a specific purpose and can reasonably expect will not be made public.”*

Under these definitions, all research involving oral histories, personal interviews, questionnaires, analyses of existing data bases, or field work constitutes human subject research and must be reviewed by the University’s committee.

**For example, if your research for your written project, thesis, or lecture recital involves...**

- doing oral histories of any kind
- sending out questionnaires of any kind
- analyzing a pre-existing database of personal information gathered by someone else

**...THEN YOU ARE DOING HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH AND MUST COMPLY WITH UW GUIDELINES.**

As a student at the University you carry out your research under the supervision of a member of the legal faculty, typically your major professor or advisor. By agreeing to work with you, your supervisor assumes responsibility for the conduct of that research with respect to the proper safeguards of the rights of subjects. Therefore, both you and your supervisor must comply with guidelines. The School of Music is committed to respecting and supporting University policies and guidelines regarding responsible research and scholarship.

In order to comply with University guidelines, students and their supervising faculty member(s) will need to:

- take an on-line tutorial about human subjects guidelines.
- prepare and submit the human subjects protocol before starting the project.
- follow up with an institutional board throughout and at the end of your project.
- obtain informed consent from human subjects.
- retain records after your project is over.

The Graduate School has prepared a straightforward discussion for consultation as part of their Research and Sponsored Programs webpage. For complete information, please visit: <https://research.wisc.edu/compliance-policy/human-research-protection-program/> If you are still uncertain, please contact the School of Music’s Director of Graduate Studies at [dgs@music.wisc.edu](mailto:dgs@music.wisc.edu)