

Appendix B

Research Ethics In-Class Discussion

Course: [Graduate Counseling-Research & Program Evaluation...insert course name]

Due Date: [Insert Due Date]

Total Points: [Insert Points]

Assignment Overview

Ethics are broadly defined as a set of rules or guidelines pertaining to what is appropriate conduct in a specified setting. When conducting research, we have ethical responsibilities to several groups which can include research participants, other researchers we may be collaborating with, employers, and potentially agencies providing financial support for the research. There are many different opportunities to consider inclusion and ethical research practices when conducting research. Ethical issues are especially paramount when conducting research with individuals with disabilities. Thoughtful consideration of all stakeholders across the various points of research can help to ensure responsible and ethical research practices in our professions.

Potential readings and material for students prior to lecture:

- Relevant professional organization code of ethics related to ethical research practices
 - [ACA Code of Ethics](#)
 - [CRCC Code of Ethics for Certified Rehabilitation Counselors](#)
- Rumrill Jr, P. D., & Bellini, J. L. (2018). Ethical issues and guidelines for rehabilitation research (pp. 100-124). In P. D. Rumrill, Jr. & J. L., Bellini, *Research in rehabilitation counseling: A guide to design, methodology, and utilization* (3rd ed.). Charles C Thomas Publisher.
- [PBS Special on Remembering Willowbrook](#)

Assignment Instructions

Part 1: For each of the research ethics topics included below, make a list of possible ethical issues that may arise when designing research. (This can be done as an individual activity or in small groups)

Part 2: As a class, facilitate a discussion with students' responses and provide additional considerations for each of the ethics topics.

[Alternate Instructions]: If the course already has an assignment where students are coming up with their own research project, rather than thinking about these items for *any* research project, you can adjust the assignment to have students "critique" themselves and brainstorm how each of these ethical research guidelines may apply and what considerations they need to make before conducting the proposed study.

Think about ethical issues focused on inclusive research practices through:

1. **Language:** Is the language of any communication documents or materials adjusted to research participants? How might you need to adjust items (surveys, recruitment materials, scripts, etc.) to reach intended participants?
2. **Non-maleficence:** “Do no harm” means that researchers must take every precaution to ensure that participants are not subject to danger or negative consequences. What are the potential risks that research may pose to participants? How might you ensure minimization of risk to participants to every extent possible?
3. **Beneficence:** This means acting in a manner that promotes the well-being of others. What are the benefits of the research? What about benefits specific to research participants? Does the research team have the proficiency and skills to carry out the research?
4. **Autonomy and Informed Consent:** This means respect for freedom of choice. To provide consent an individual must (a) be capable of making a well-reasoned decision; (b) have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the nature of the study, its risks and benefits; and (c) meaningful consent must be given willingly. What are some of the ways a research team can ensure autonomy of research participants? How will research participants provide consent? What are some examples where these three elements of consent may not be met? What should be done by the research team in these instances?
5. **Justice:** This means that resources and services are disbursed fairly and not on the basis of advantaging or disadvantaging characteristics. What are some examples of carrying out research procedures in a just manner (hint: think about control groups in an experimental study)? How might some groups be advantaged or disadvantaged? What are some standards or procedures that can be put in place in a research study to ensure justness and fairness? What should be stated in study inclusion criteria to maintain fairness?
6. **Fidelity:** This includes research responsibility to faithfulness, keeping promises, and honoring commitments. What are some examples where fidelity may be in question? Is deception of participants ever allowed? Why or why not?
7. **Confidentiality:** Are participants’ data anonymous? What are some of the ways a research team can protect personal data? How is data going to be shared and stored? How will the data be reported out? Are there concerns about maintaining confidentiality (e.g., direct quotes from interviews being tied back to an individual)?