

HARTFORD SEMINARY

GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY PERSONS AFFILIATED WITH HARTFORD SEMINARY

It is expected that all persons who conduct research under the auspices of Hartford Seminary will treat everyone involved in the research with respect and care. The following measures are intended to guide our efforts.

1. Informed Consent

The principal investigator shall explain to subjects, prior to their participation,

- A. the objectives of the research;
- B. the procedures to be followed;
- C. the expected duration of the subject's participation;
- D. any foreseeable risks or discomforts to the subject;
- E. any benefits to the subject or others which may reasonably be expected from the research; and
- F. the extent to which the confidentiality of the records identifying the subject will be maintained.

Where it is determined that the research involves no more than minimal risk to the subject (see below) and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context, informed consent may be obtained either through a signed consent form or in an oral discussion. All investigators are advised, however, to document their discussion of informed consent.

In circumstances of minimal risk, and where it is in the interest of the research not to provide full information before administering research instruments, the investigator shall provide subjects with additional pertinent information after their participation.

Investigators shall not use individuals as subjects unless satisfied that they, or others legally responsible for their well-being, consent to participation freely and with understanding of the consequences. Subjects shall not be induced to participate by means or in circumstances that might affect their ability to decide freely. It shall be made clear to subjects that they are free to withdraw from active participation in the research at any time. Subjects who indicate a desire to withdraw shall be allowed to do so promptly and without penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled.

2. Confidentiality

Investigators shall respect the privacy of subjects. They shall protect confidential information given them, advising subjects in advance of any limits upon their ability to insure that the information will remain confidential.

3. Disclosure of affiliation and sponsorship

Investigators may indicate their position at Hartford Seminary, but (if indicating their affiliation) shall disclose whether or not the research is sponsored by the Seminary. An investigator shall disclose to a subject, upon request, the source of support for the research.

4. Requirements for review

Research that involves minimal risk shall not be subject to special review. Minimal risk means that the probability and magnitude of physical or psychological harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

Research shall be subject to special review if it is deemed to pose more than minimal risk to subjects. The appropriate committee, as designated by the Dean of the Seminary, will conduct the special review.

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Such risks include:

- A. responses or observations of the subject will be recorded in such a way that direct identification of the subject may be possible; and
- B. the responses or observations of the subject, if they became known outside of the research, could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing or employability; or
- C. the research deals with sensitive aspects of the subject's own behavior, such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior, or use of alcohol.

5. Suspension of Research

Research shall be immediately suspended and reviewed if investigators observe that such risk factors are present or if they observe any adverse consequences that may be attributable to the research.

(approved by Hartford Seminary faculty on December 1, 1997)