

Piedmont Virginia Community College

Section II – General Administrative Services Policies

II – 70.4 Research

Effective Date: September 2019

Last Revised: March 2026

Responsible Dept.: Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research

1. Purpose

Research at the College sometimes involves human subjects for data collection and analysis. This policy applies to all research that would utilize Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) students, faculty, staff, resources, or data, and is not conducted directly by PVCC for the primary purposes of internal decision-making and institutional effectiveness. This includes, but is not limited to, research being conducted by PVCC students or interns, and undergraduate or graduate students at other institutions in the context of courses, theses, or dissertations, regardless of whether the researcher is employed by or otherwise associated with PVCC.

2. Policy Statement

This policy ensures that external research involving PVCC data or stakeholders is conducted to the highest ethical standards and does not interfere with college operations. Piedmont Virginia Community College has the right to refuse any external research requests.

3. Definitions

N/A

4. Applicability

This policy applies to all faculty, staff, and students.

PVCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. View the full nondiscrimination statement and find contacts at pvcc.edu/nondiscrimination.

5. Responsibilities

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) is responsible for the administration and oversight of research integrity at the College. IER has responsibility for dissemination and administration of this policy and communications with external researchers. Any PVCC employee who receives an inquiry or request regarding the conduct of research as specified in Section 1 should forward the inquiry to the IER Office.

PVCC's Institutional Review Board (IRB) protects the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in research. PVCC's IRB reviews and approves research proposals that involve human subjects and ensure the rights and safety of human subjects are protected.

IER also has responsibility for overseeing the functioning of the IRB.

6. Procedures for Implementation

6.1 Requests to Conduct Research

Prior to recruiting participants or collecting data, any individual, group or agency desiring to conduct research at PVCC, use College students, faculty, staff, or data in research, or recruit research participants by any means, including on PVCC grounds or at PVCC-sponsored events, must submit a written proposal to the Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Research at PVCC. The proposal must:

- a) Detail the purpose of the study, methodology to be used (e.g., participants, sampling, data collection, analysis), timeframe for research activities, format for the presentation/publication of results and intended audience and expected outcomes/benefits of the study.
- b) Include documentation of IRB approval or appropriate IRB exemption from the **researcher's sponsoring institution**. If evidence of approval or exemption is not available, an explanation must be provided. Research may be subject to approval of the PVCC IRB and the sponsoring institution.
- c) Current PVCC faculty and staff should refer to the Institutional Review Board Policy for detailed instructions on submitting research proposals *prior to recruiting participants or collecting data*. This process may require a full review by PVCC's Institutional Review Board.
- d) Affirm the researcher's acceptance of the Conditions of Approval below. If the researcher has previously contacted the Virginia Community College System about research at multiple VCCS colleges, and if the research involves any form of data collection directly from PVCC faculty, staff, or students, requests for approval must be submitted to, and approved by, PVCC before PVCC faculty, staff, or students can be recruited for the research.

6.2 Conditions of Approval

- a) Institutional Research and Institutional Effectiveness activities of the College have priority over all external research requests. Any proposed research, including recruitment of participants by any means or data collection in any form that would coincide with IR/IE activities, or would directly or indirectly interfere with the College's ability to effectively carry out IR/IE operations, may be denied approval.
- b) PVCC will not provide classrooms or meeting facilities for research.
- c) Class time will not be used for any external research activities unless participation in the research is both educationally valuable and a natural part of the course content. If use of class time is approved by IRPIE, the researcher must also secure the approval of the appropriate faculty member(s) before proceeding.
- d) PVCC will not provide a researcher with any identifiable student record data except Directory Information as allowed by FERPA and PVCC policy.
- e) PVCC will not endorse or promote any research within this policy as described in Section 1.
- f) PVCC will not solicit participation on behalf of a researcher. This includes sending emails or other communications to college distribution lists or contacts for derived samples. Likewise, PVCC employees, interns, or others affiliated with the College who are conducting research that falls within the scope of this policy as described in Section 1 may not use their PVCC affiliation in recruiting participants.
- g) Using PVCC's social media accounts to recruit research participants is prohibited.
- h) All external research will be conducted to the highest ethical standards. PVCC students, faculty, and staff participating in research must be fully informed as to the purpose of the research, risks and benefits, and what participation will entail; give their consent to participate; and be free to withdraw from the research at any time.
- i) PVCC, its students, faculty, and staff involved in external research will not be identified when findings are presented or published.
- j) The researcher agrees to inform PVCC when the research is complete and to provide PVCC with a copy of the results of the study.

6.3 Approval of Proposals

As an institution of higher education, PVCC supports academic inquiry and will strive to accommodate reasonable requests under the conditions specified above and in accordance with other applicable PVCC and VCCS policies.

The Associate Vice President will review all proposals and may circulate proposals to other members of the PVCC community for comment or forward to the PVCC Institutional Review Board.

A will issue a letter to the researcher indicating approval or denial of the proposal. Any request for a waiver of any aspect of this policy must be made in writing to the Associate

Vice President. Decisions of the Associate Vice President are final.
All inquiries and proposals should be submitted to: IRB@pvcc.edu

7. Sanctions for Violation of Policy

N/A

8. Other General Information

N/A