

March 20, 2007

IRB Form #2
APPLICATION FOR EXPEDITED REVIEW

Project Title: An Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs

PIN: BHEW-Q-03-02-A

Anticipated Date of Submission of Proposals to Sponsors: Proposals have been sent and were funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation. A proposal is pending at the Department of Energy, and a proposal will be sent the United States Department of Agriculture in July 2006.

Other IRBs that will review this protocol, if any: Some universities may also wish to review the questionnaires and have them approved by their IRB Office

Detailed Research Protocol (may be provided in an attached file):

Protocol for the for the Faculty Survey of Preserved Program Quality

The contractor, Mathematical Policy Research, will conduct for the NRC Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs a sample survey of program faculty asking for their estimate of the quality of programs in their field. Each faculty member in the survey will be asked to rate the quality of 15 doctoral programs. Each program is to be rated on a scale of 1 to 6, if they have some familiarity with the program or to provide no rating, if they are not familiar with the program. Some information about each of the 15 programs will be available on the questionnaire and the Web URL for the program will be available for more information, if the URL was provided by the institution. In addition to the 15 programs a rater will be asked to rate, the rater will be given a list of all programs in the field.

The data for this survey will be collected and stored on a server at MPR. This is a secure server in the computer network that MPR maintains for other surveys that it conducts. Other surveys include ones for the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Education (DoE), and the MPR computer system meets the security requirements of those federal agencies. The data will be transferred to the computer system at the NRC and housed on the Athena 2 server for tabulations. This is a secure server and has been approved to store other unit record data from NSF and DoE.

The sample of faculty members to serve as raters will be drawn from a population of faculty members who on the faculty survey answered yes to the following question:

J1. Would you be willing to answer an additional questionnaire that would ask you to rate the overall quality of other doctoral programs in your field?

- Yes
- No

The sample will be stratified by of the size of the faculty members program, its geographic location and the faculty member's rank. The 15 programs that a faculty member is asked to rate will not include their own program or another program at their institution. The target response rate for each program is 60 ratings, and if this response level is not met, additional waves of the survey will be administrated. The stratification procedures of raters and programs for additional waves will be the same as for the original survey.

The programs being rated in a field will be a sample of the programs included in the Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs. This sample will be selected on the basis of program size and location of the program's institution. 50 programs will be in the sample for fields that have more than 50 programs in the study. For fields where there are 50 or fewer programs, consideration will be given to possibly combining fields and the feasibility of including such fields in the survey.

Category of Research Applicable to the National Academies [delete those that do not apply]:

(3) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies that is otherwise not exempt from IRB review.

Explanation of Reason for Selecting the Indicated Category of Research: In the Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs human subjects participate by completing a series of voluntary questionnaires.