

USU Institutional Review Board Training Series: Bots & Fraudulent Respondents



UtahStateUniversity

*March 27, 2024
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Welcome & Housekeeping

Welcome to the USU Institutional Review Board Spring 2024 Training Series!

Upcoming Training Dates:

April 8, 2024: Collecting Data on Children in Schools

Let us know what training topics you want to see addressed in Fall 2024!

<https://research.usu.edu/irb/feedback>

Welcome & Housekeeping

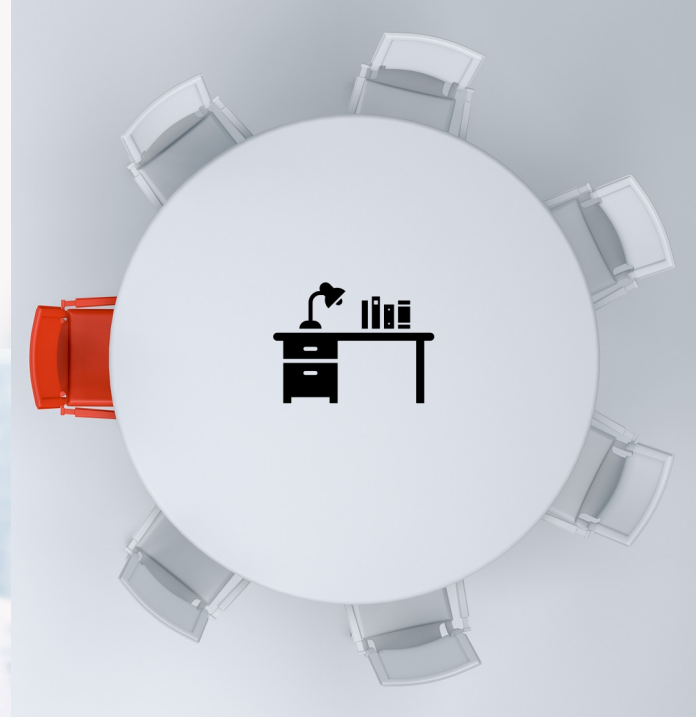


To ask a question, use the Q&A function at the bottom of this webinar screen. Anonymous questions are permitted.



All sessions will be recorded, and the recordings and/or slides from the presentation will be posted to the IRB's website, which can be accessed at irb.usu.edu.

The Institutional Review Board



The Human Research Protection Program

VP for Research

Responsible for overseeing all aspects of USU's Human Subjects Research portfolio & ensuring appropriate access to resources for a well-functioning Human Research Protection Program (HRPP)



Human Research Protections Office

Manages the day-to-day aspects of implementing and overseeing the HRPP, including:

- Researcher training
- Coordination with COI, IBC, ICOI, SPO processes
- Receiving complaints, concerns, and questions from research participants

The IRB

Reviews all proposed human subjects research at Utah State University according to:

- Established ethical standards,
- Policies & procedures, and
- Best practices

Researchers

Responsible for carrying out and overseeing research with human participants in a manner that:

- Complies with the terms of IRB's review,
- Ensures adequate resources and training for the safe conduct of the research, and
- Takes proactive steps to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of research participants

Utah State University IRB Review Standards

Utah State University's Institutional Review Board conducts its reviews according to two prevailing ethical standards:

Belmont Report

- Respect for Persons
- Justice
- Beneficence

45 C.F.R. 46 (The Common Rule)

- Subpart A: General Review standards
- Subparts C, D: Vulnerable Population Requirements

What/Who Are We Talking About?

“[I]ndividuals, groups, or computer processes (i.e. bots) participating in online, internet, or web-based data collection methods at a statistically significant level, such that data are or would be measurably distorted.”

Johnson, M. S., Adams, V. M., Byrne, J. (2024). Addressing fraudulent responses in online surveys: Insights from a web-based participatory mapping study. *People and Nature*, 6, 147 - 164. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pan3.10557>

What/Who Are We Talking About?

“Survey respondents who: a) are ineligible respondents due to the study specifications; b) take the survey repeatedly to either distort results or take advantage of incentives; and/or c) are potentially eligible but have responded in a way that may challenge the validity of survey results or noticeably distort research data.”

Arthur, W., Hagen, E., & George, F. (2021). The lazy or dishonest respondent: Detection and prevention. Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 8(1), 105–137. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-012420-055324>

The IRB's Role in Managing Fraudsters

- Belmont Principles of Respect for Persons
 - Identifying fraudulent respondents appropriately; crediting honest work as committed to at the start of the study
- Belmont Principle of Beneficence
 - Minimize harms (wasted time, discredited user ratings)
- Belmont Principle of Justice
 - Ensuring requirements for honest and complete work are understood by all participants, but especially those who might have a more difficult time understanding the requirements

The IRB's Role in Managing Fraudsters

- **Common Rule: Informed Consent**
Ensuring timely, accurate, and complete payment according to the informed consent document
- **Common Rule: IRB Contact for Complaints**
Minimize harms (wasted time, discredited user ratings)
- **Accreditation Standards: Resolving & Reporting Participant Complaints**
Ensuring requirements for honest and complete work are understood by all participants, but especially those who might have a more difficult time understanding the requirements

The IRB's Role in Managing Fraudsters

- Institutional Concerns
 - Inaccurate or untimely payment decisions impact USU's reputation in communities and platforms where online data collection occurs
 - Ineffective use of institutional resources (funds, survey platforms, etc.)
 - Quality and trustworthiness of the research produced

How to Protect Your Data Collection Efforts from Fraudulent Responders

- Deter
- Prevent
- Detect
- Remove

Deterrence

Single Use Links

Identity Verification

Targeted Recruitment

Compensation Approaches

Informed Consent

Deterrence

If you are using Qualtrics Fraud Protection or other kinds of attention checks, which are highly recommended for online studies (particularly with compensation), you must use this paragraph (which you can reformulate, but the gist must be captured): To ensure the integrity of the information we collect, this survey utilizes checks to prevent fraudulent responses. Failure to successfully navigate these checks will result in [termination of participation AND/OR nonpayment].

Risks & Benefits

Please list the circumstance(s) under which you would terminate a participant from the study, and how you will effectuate that termination.

Consider: incomplete participation, fraudulent responses to online studies, study disruption, discovery of previously undisclosed conditions or circumstances, etc. If a circumstance is not listed here, you may not terminate a participant from the study except as required to keep them or others safe, so be comprehensive in your disclosures here.

- ?

Sans Serif



Normal



Prevention

Multi-Step Screening

IP Address Requirements

Digital Tools

Ballot Box Stuffing

Qualtrics: RelevantID

Detection

IP Address Requirements

Personal Identifiers

Ballot Box Stuffing

Specific Instructions

Qualtrics: RelevantID

Removal

Response Patterns

Frequent Data Review

Follow Up Contact

Qualtrics Bot Detection

Reporting to the IRB

Get Started Informed Consent Procedures Reliance 118 Determination

Protocol # *

If you do not know the protocol number, please enter 99999

Principal Investigator

+ Add

Reportable Event Classification

You can learn about the different types of Reportable Events here:

<https://research.usu.edu/irb/files/reportable-events-guidance.pdf>. You can

also simply say "I am uncertain."

For Notice Only



irb.usu.edu/reportable-events



Resources

- 2024 Qualtrics Summit in Salt Lake City, May 1-3 – [Information Here](#)
- Qualtrics Fraud Detection Knowledge Base - [Article](#)
- USU IRB Informed Consent Templates – [Box Folder](#)
- Reportable Events - [Form](#)
- USU Legal Affairs – [Contact Form](#)
- Ask The IRB Slack – [Invite Link](#)



Q

&

A

Thank You!

Please use the feedback link on our home page (irb.usu.edu) to provide ideas for future IRB training topics.

Mark your calendars for our upcoming training topics & dates!

- **April 8, 2024: Collecting Data on Children in Schools**
 - Register at irb.usu.edu beginning tomorrow!