Research Ethics and Integrity in Social and Behavioral Science Research

I. Course Overview
This course is designed to provide a broad overview of research ethics and scientific integrity, with particular attention to how an ethics framework and ethics regulations influence the design and conduct of social and behavioral science research in US and international settings. Using a combination of reading assignments, lectures, case-based analyses and topical discussions, the course is designed for graduate students who are undertaking or preparing to undertake research in the social or behavioral sciences. Other students enrolled at Rutgers or UMDNJ who are required to have training in human subjects research or Responsible Conduct of Research by a funding source would also benefit from this course.

II. Learning Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the philosophical approaches that guide the modern day research environment.
2. Identify values and belief systems that shape how social and behavioral science research involving individuals, vulnerable populations, and communities is conducted.
3. Understand the regulatory environment that guides modern-day research for the social scientist and the historical cases of research abuse that have shaped it.
4. Identify ethical issues in research protocol design and practical ways in which they may be resolved.
5. Apply ethical principles and regulatory requirements to their own current and future research program.

III. Course Structure
This course will meet weekly for one three-hour session during the Spring Semester. The course will use a combination of lectures, discussions, and analyses of cases studies.

1. Course Texts:

Ethics and regulatory guidance documents, including:

- American Psychological Association (2012). *Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in the Care and Use of Nonhuman Animals in Research*.

Journal articles and case analyses as assigned.

2. **Course Assignments**
   
a. **Participation in three in-class exercises that will include case analyses and mock-IRB activities** (Not graded, but students who are unable to attend an exercise will be required to submit a 1-2 page analysis of the case that was discussed in the missed session.)
   
b. **Informed consent exercise**: Students will be given a choice of two research studies - one domestic and one international for which they will draft an informed consent document.
   
c. **Completion of ORSP Human Subjects Certification Test**
   
d. **Mid-term exam**
   
e. **Final project**: Students will prepare 4-5 page case analyses for four cases provided by the instructor. Case analyses should reference texts and guidance documents covered during the semester.

3. **Course Topics**
   
a. Conceptual foundations- theoretical and moral frameworks
   
b. Historical foundations of the modern-day research environment
   
c. Respect for persons in the context of social and behavioral research
   
d. Beneficence and the welfare of research participants
   
e. Justice and vulnerable populations
   
f. The US regulatory framework and the Institutional Review Board
   
g. Special issues in international research
   
h. Ethical issues in animal research
   
i. Honesty in research
      
       i. Error, bias, and conflict of interest
       
       ii. Authorship and publication
       
       iii. Openness and intellectual property
       
       iv. Whistleblowing, mentorship, harassment
   
j. Scientific responsibility
   
k. Research in the practice setting

F. Barchi
15 August 2012
4. Grading rubric

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<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Informed Consent Exercise</td>
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<td>Completion of ORSP Human Subjects Certification Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
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<td>Final Project</td>
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Relevance of Course to School of Social Work Core Competencies and Practice Behaviors

1. Identify the philosophical approaches that guide the modern day research environment.

2. Identify values and ethics that shape how social and behavioral science research involving individuals, vulnerable populations, and communities is conducted. Educational Policy 2.1.1. – Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

3. Explain the regulatory environment that guides modern research for the social scientist and the historical cases of research abuse that have shaped it. Educational Policy 2.1.1. – Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

4. Identify ethical issues in research protocol design and the practical ways in which they may be resolved. Educational Policy 2.1.3 – Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments.

5. Apply ethical principles and regulatory requirements to his or her own current and future research program. Educational Policy 2.1.2 – Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.