

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Christopher Shamburg, University Senate President

DATE: Friday, May 01st, 2020

FROM: The University Senate Academic Support & Services Committee:

Dr. Amit Mokashi, Chairperson

Dr. Shanda Johnson

Dr. Erin O'Neill

Dr. William Westerman

SUBJECT: The University Senate Academic Support & Services Committee (SASSC)
ANNUAL Report (2019-2020)

This report serves both as an annual report as well as the concluding report of a study that was undertaken to evaluate the users' perception of NJCU's IRB process.

Since the start of the Fall 2019 Semester, the SASSC has met thrice virtually using Skype and Zoom (09/13/19, 10/09/19, and 04/29/20). The SASSC has, following the directions from the Senate President, developed the survey instrument for collecting the feedback on NJCU's IRB process from the potential review applicants. SASSC reached out to the IT helpdesk for access and training for Qualtrics.

The survey instrument was developed using Google Docs and then adapted for use with Qualtrics. The Qualtrics instrument was both auto tested using the inbuilt tool (Survey > Tools > Review > Generate Test Responses) as well as manually using dummy entries. The instrument was also reviewed using the ExpertReview tool for data quality of the survey elements (questions, logic, quotas, etc.). The instrument had an overall "Great" score and passed the quality check for all the elements.

The Senate office sent out an anonymous survey link to all faculty and staff in an email dated January 23rd. Data (survey responses) was collected between January 23rd and February 5th.

Summary of the quantitative results of the Qualtrics survey

This cross-sectional survey collected data from 81 participants here at NJCU. The participants of the survey ranged from full-time tenured faculty, associate professors, assistant professors, professional staff, and graduate students. The colleges represented in the survey were Arts and Science (41.43%), Professional Studies (25.71%), Education (20.00%), and the School of Business (12.86%). There were a total of 12 survey questions presented to the participants for

completion. A considerable proportion of the participants 41(50.62%) answered they have never applied for IRB approval before here at NJCU. The remaining 40 participants answered that have applied for IRB approval for a total of 1-3 attempts 30 (75.00%), and 4 or more attempts 10 (25.00%).

When looking at the questions “Did you have the information to determine the necessity of the IRB review?”, 35 (87.50%) of the participants answered “yes,” and the remaining 5 (12.50%) answered “no.” “Did you get the response that you expected from the Institutional Review Board Committee (IRBC) acceptance/rejection?”, 28 (70.00%) of the participants answered “yes,” and the remaining 12 (30.00%) answered “no.” The participants 21 (52.50%) did feel that the response time from the IRBC was reasonable, but 19 (47.50%) did not feel the response time was reasonable. An overwhelming number of the participants, 31(77.50%), indicated that the IRBC requested changes to the application in which they had submitted. The changes that were requested from the IRBC 28 (70.00%) of the participants answered it was not related to the survey instrument used in their studies. There were no additional questions in the survey asking about other changes the IRBC may have requested from participants.

The amount of time spent on completing the IRB application was reasonable, according to 21 (52.50%) of the participants. The participants of this survey 45 (60.00%) indicated the IRB approval guidelines for their disciplines are not clear, whereas another 30 (40.00%) participants indicated the IRB guidelines are clear. Lastly, data collected for the survey participants indicated that 39 (50.65%) feel they are sufficiently well-informed to apply for IRB approval, while another 38 (49.35%) of the participants do not feel they are well informed.

Interpretation of the qualitative open-ended comments

The open-ended qualitative comments were subject to the same limitations as comments on evaluations; since responses were voluntary, the group that chose to respond to the request for more comments specifically, and to the survey itself more generally, was self-selecting. Therefore it would seem that the written responses might skew more towards those with strong opinions on the matter at hand.

With that in mind, the qualitative responses fell into three broad types of responses, though we cannot deduce with any degree of precision how representative they are of a larger pool of like-minded individuals. However, the committee feels it is essential to outline the three broad response sets.

One group of respondents (about 10%) was generally satisfied with the IRB process itself, stating it did not take an inordinate amount of time or create an unreasonable set of burdens.

A second group (about 40%) was highly critical of the process, recommending that faculty have greater input into the oversight of the process; that guidelines needed to be more clearly stated and that there needed to be greater awareness of the differences between sensitive research on human subjects and research of a less potentially damaging nature (e.g. medical research

on cancer patients vs. administration of survey questionnaires); that there needed to be greater attention paid to the time it takes to approve research particularly of student researchers, which needs to be expedited in order to fit their time-sensitive degree paths.

And the third group (about 50%) expressed ignorance about the process itself and a desire to be more educated about our University IRB process itself, from knowing what the guidelines are and where to find them, to which kinds of projects need IRB approval and which are exempt, even to understanding all the acronyms and other terms used in the process whose meanings are not universally understood, especially for those who don't have a background in the fields in which an IRB approval is standard.

The fact that half of those who responded expressed a desire to understand or simply know more about the process and how to access the application, or even confusion about when such approval is needed, must be significant and would suggest there are others who don't know what they don't know, and hence didn't respond to the survey.

Several concrete suggestions came in these comments, especially around accessible information on when IRB approval is required, what the process is at our university, and how much time is necessary; and providing training workshops for faculty (and student researchers) on the process itself, workshops that are mindful of the differences between scientific research and qualitative research, and between sensitive populations (such as experimental work or work with children, prisoners, or international research) and local, less vulnerable populations (such as anonymized surveys of college students, local residents).

It was also recommended to switch to an online application and review system like Interfolio.

Appendix (IRB Survey):

1. Survey Instrument
2. ExpertReview Report
3. Quantitative Data

IRB Process Survey

Survey Flow

Block: Block 1 (2 Questions)
Standard: Block 2 (2 Questions)
Standard: Block 3 (12 Questions)

Page Break

Start of Block: Block 1

Text-1
IRB Process Survey

Text-2 Whereas the Institutional Review Board provides a vital service for the faculty and students conducting research, the University Senate Academic Support & Services Committee requests feedback of the IRB process at NJCU from various participants and stakeholders in the process. Based on the data collected, the ASSC may make recommendations to the Senate.

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 2

QR Rank

- Assistant Professor (1)
 - Associate Professor (2)
 - Professor (3)
 - Staff (4)
 - Other (5) _____
-

QC College

- Arts and Science (1)
- Business (2)
- Education (3)
- Professional Studies (4)

End of Block: Block 2

Start of Block: Block 3

Q1 Have you applied for IRB approval before?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Skip To: Q9 If Have you applied for IRB approval before? = No

Q2 If yes how many times:

- 1-3 (1)
- 4 and more (2)
-

Q3 Did you have the information to determine the necessity of IRB Review?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
-

Q4 Did you get the response that you expected from IRBC (acceptance/rejection)?

- Yes (2)
- No (4)
-

Q5 Was the time required to get the response from IRBC reasonable in your opinion?

- Yes (23)
- No (24)

Q6 Did the IRBC request changes to the application?

Yes (44)

No (45)

Q7 Did the IRBC request changes to the Survey Instrument?

Yes (23)

No (24)

Q8 Did the amount of time you spent on the IRB application seem reasonable?

Yes (23)

No (24)

Q9 Are the guidelines clear about your discipline's requirements regarding IRB approval?

Yes (23)

No (24)

Q10 Do you feel you are sufficiently well-informed to apply for IRB approval?

Yes (23)

No (24)

Q11 What information do you need as you consider whether to apply for IRB approval?

Q12 What suggestions do you have to streamline the IRB approval process, while still supplying the necessary protections for human subjects?

End of Block: Block 3

Great job! We currently have no recommendations.



Severe	0
Moderate	0
Minor	0
Suggestion	0
Passed	12

FILTER BY ISSUE TYPE

- All
- Survey Error
- Methodology
- Compliance Assist

Valid Display Logic

Survey Error Passed

Smooth move! By using correct display logic, your survey should flow nicely.

[Learn More](#)

The Last Question In the Survey Is Not Descriptive Text

Methodology Passed

What a beautiful ending! It's smart to avoid ending a survey with a descriptive question.

[Learn More](#)

Minimal Use of Matrix Tables

Methodology Passed

You're a pro! By limiting the number of Matrix questions, you'll have better chances of survey completion.

[Learn More](#)

Mobile Optimized

Methodology Passed

Good call making your survey mobile friendly!

[Learn More](#)

Valid Piped Text

Survey Error Passed

Nice, all of your piped text is functioning properly!

[Learn More](#)

Predicted Duration

Methodology Passed

Good job! The short duration of your survey will increase your chance of receiving a completed survey!

[Learn More](#)

End of Survey Scoring Set Up

Survey Error Passed

[Provide Feedback](#)

Great job! We currently have no recommendations.



Severe	0
Moderate	0
Minor	0
Suggestion	0
Passed	12

FILTER BY ISSUE TYPE

- All
- Survey Error
- Methodology
- Compliance Assist

Valid Display Logic

Survey Error Passed

Smooth move! By using correct display logic, your survey should flow nicely.

[Learn More](#)

The Last Question In the Survey Is Not Descriptive Text

Methodology Passed

What a beautiful ending! It's smart to avoid ending a survey with a descriptive question.

[Learn More](#)

Minimal Use of Matrix Tables

Methodology Passed

You're a pro! By limiting the number of Matrix questions, you'll have better chances of survey completion.

[Learn More](#)

Mobile Optimized

Methodology Passed

Good call making your survey mobile friendly!

[Learn More](#)

Valid Piped Text

Survey Error Passed

Nice, all of your piped text is functioning properly!

[Learn More](#)

Predicted Duration

Methodology Passed

Good job! The short duration of your survey will increase your chance of receiving a completed survey!

[Learn More](#)

End of Survey Scoring Set Up

Survey Error Passed

[Provide Feedback](#)

Great job! We currently have no recommendations.



Severe	0
Moderate	0
Minor	0
Suggestion	0
Passed	12

FILTER BY ISSUE TYPE

- All
- Survey Error
- Methodology
- Compliance Assist

Valid Display Logic

Survey Error Passed

Smooth move! By using correct display logic, your survey should flow nicely.

[Learn More](#)

The Last Question In the Survey Is Not Descriptive Text

Methodology Passed

What a beautiful ending! It's smart to avoid ending a survey with a descriptive question.

[Learn More](#)

Minimal Use of Matrix Tables

Methodology Passed

You're a pro! By limiting the number of Matrix questions, you'll have better chances of survey completion.

[Learn More](#)

Mobile Optimized

Methodology Passed

Good call making your survey mobile friendly!

[Learn More](#)

Valid Piped Text

Survey Error Passed

Nice, all of your piped text is functioning properly!

[Learn More](#)

Predicted Duration

Methodology Passed

Good job! The short duration of your survey will increase your chance of receiving a completed survey!

[Learn More](#)

End of Survey Scoring

Survey Error Passed

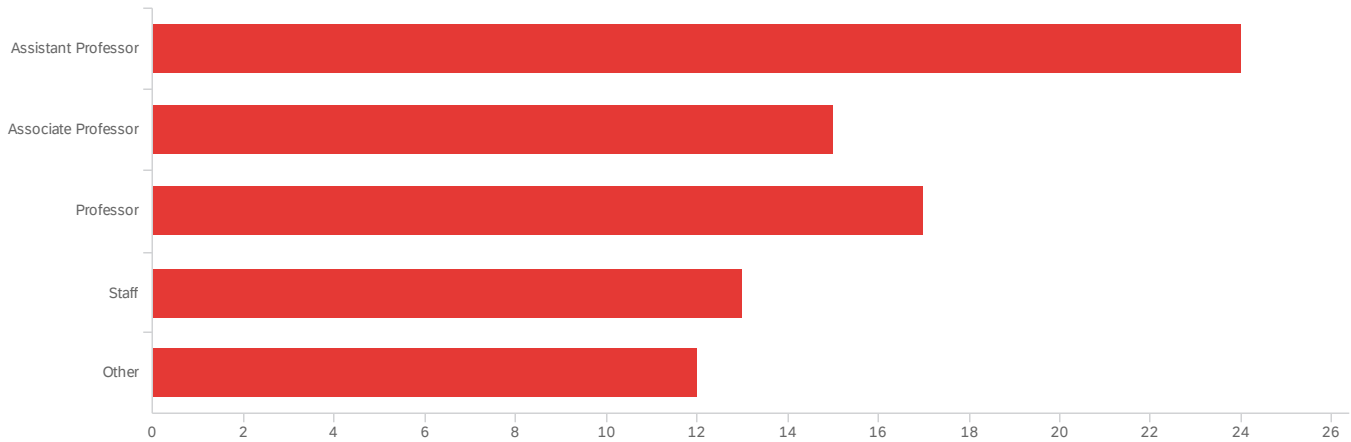
[Provide Feedback](#)

Default Report

IRB Process Survey

April 30, 2020 9:31 PM MDT

QR - Rank



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Rank - Selected Choice	1.00	5.00	2.68	1.42	2.02	81

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Assistant Professor	29.63% 24
2	Associate Professor	18.52% 15
3	Professor	20.99% 17
4	Staff	16.05% 13
5	Other	14.81% 12
		81

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

QR_5_TEXT - Other

Other

Librarian

Other

Adjunct Pofessor

Adjunt

Adjunct

adjunct professor

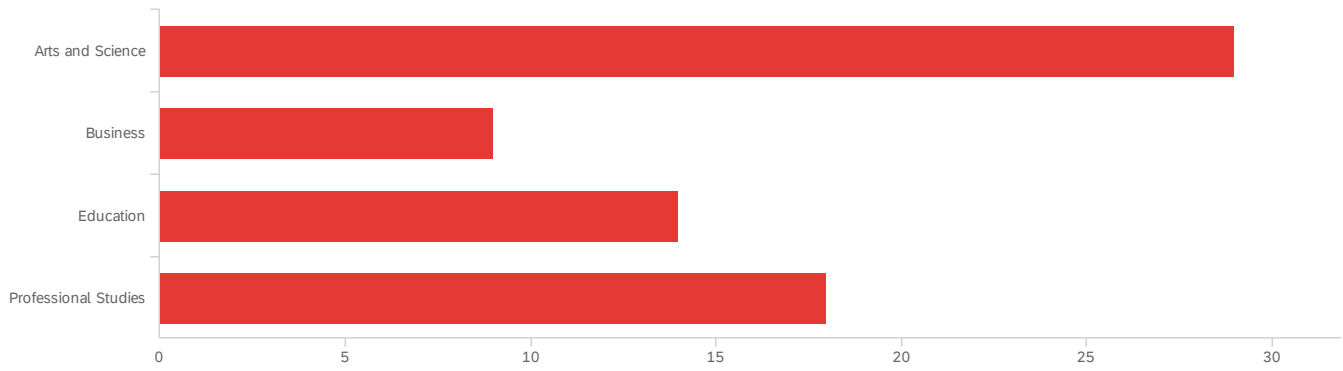
Adjunct

Graduate Student

Adjunct

Professional Staff

QC - College



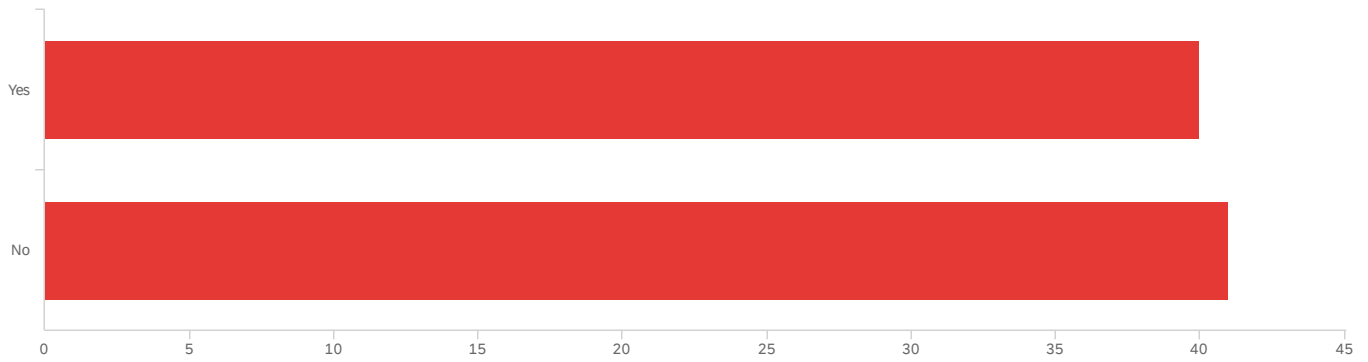
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	College	1.00	4.00	2.30	1.25	1.55	70

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Arts and Science	41.43% 29
2	Business	12.86% 9
3	Education	20.00% 14
4	Professional Studies	25.71% 18

70

Showing rows 1 - 5 of 5

Q1 - Have you applied for IRB approval before?



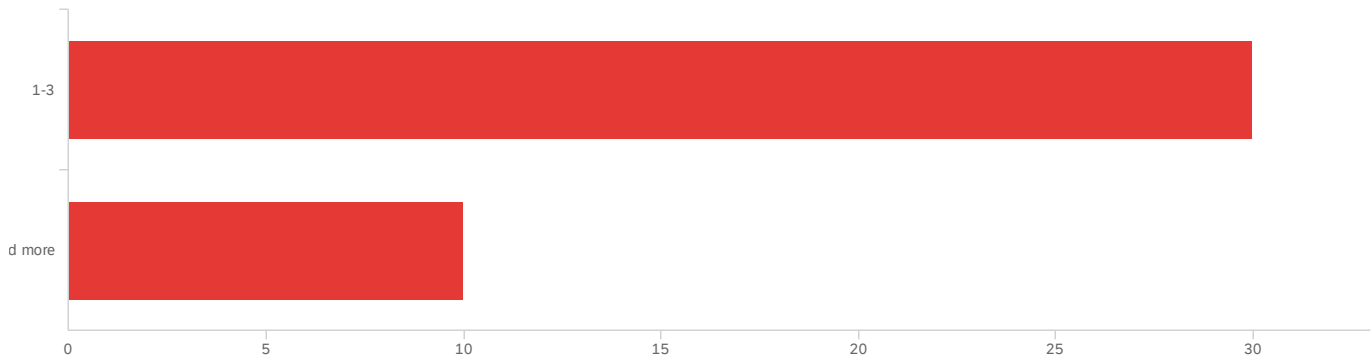
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Have you applied for IRB approval before?	1.00	2.00	1.51	0.50	0.25	81

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes	49.38% 40
2	No	50.62% 41

81

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q2 - If yes how many times:



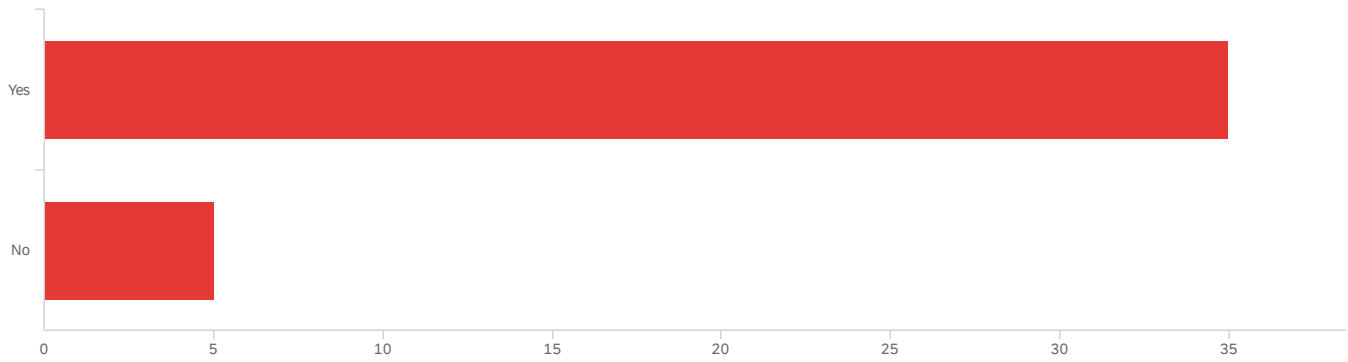
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	If yes how many times:	1.00	2.00	1.25	0.43	0.19	40

#	Field	Choice Count
1	1-3	75.00% 30
2	4 and more	25.00% 10

40

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q3 - Did you have the information to determine the necessity of IRB Review?



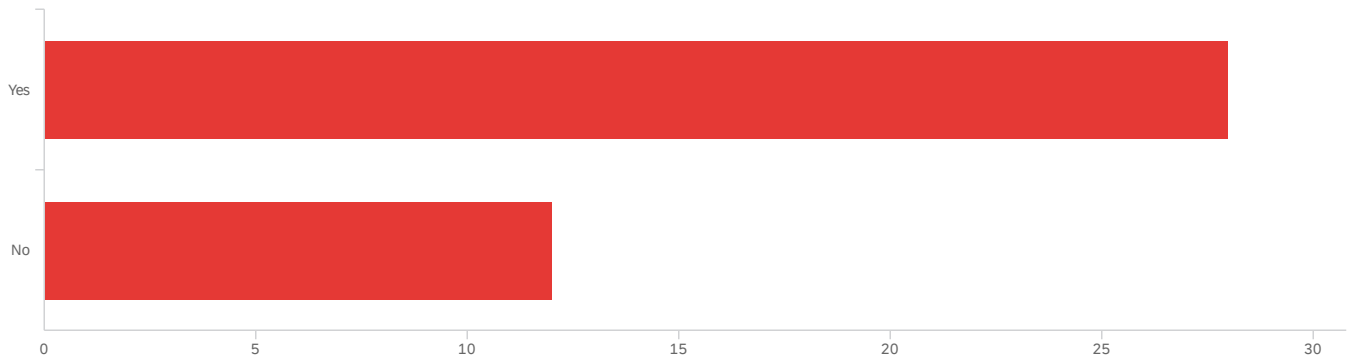
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Did you have the information to determine the necessity of IRB Review?	1.00	2.00	1.13	0.33	0.11	40

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes	87.50% 35
2	No	12.50% 5

40

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q4 - Did you get the response that you expected from IRBC (acceptance/rejection)?



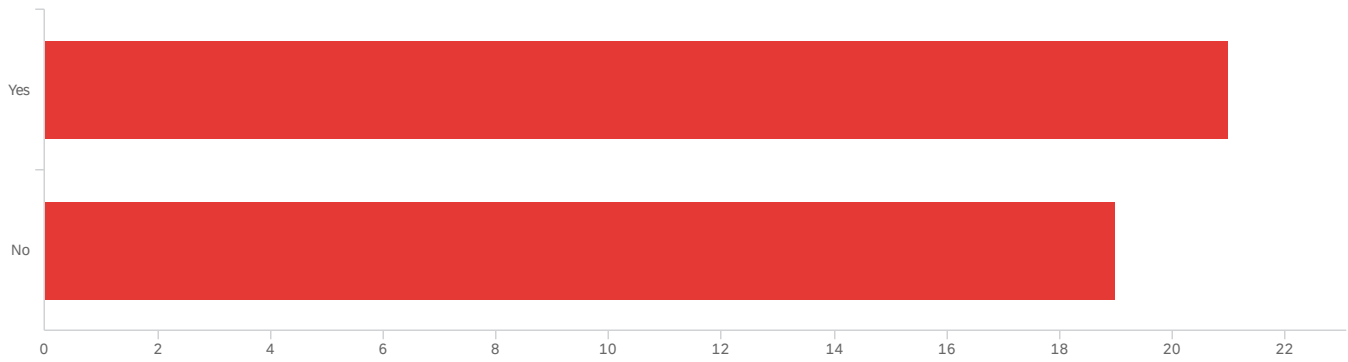
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Did you get the response that you expected from IRBC (acceptance/rejection)?	2.00	4.00	2.60	0.92	0.84	40

#	Field	Choice Count
2	Yes	70.00% 28
4	No	30.00% 12

40

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q5 - Was the time required to get the response from IRBC reasonable in your opinion?



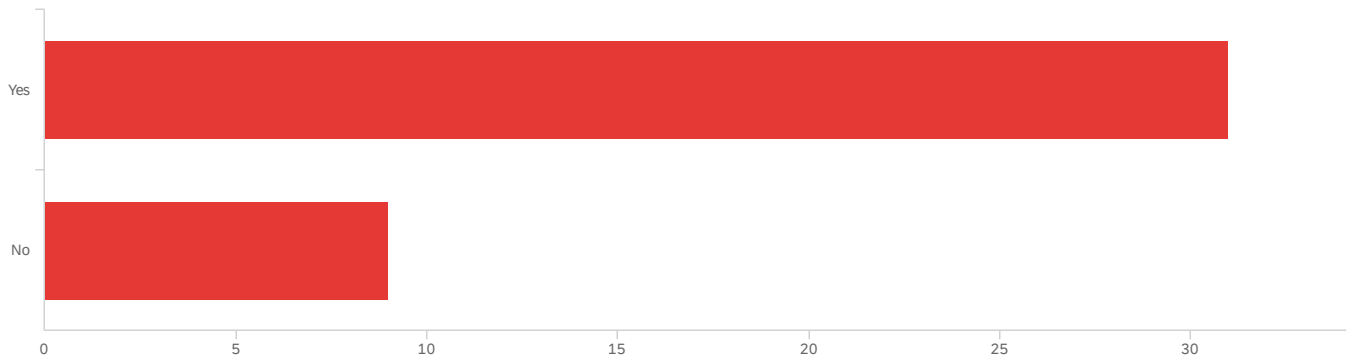
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Was the time required to get the response from IRBC reasonable in your opinion?	23.00	24.00	23.48	0.50	0.25	40

#	Field	Choice Count
23	Yes	52.50% 21
24	No	47.50% 19

40

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q6 - Did the IRBC request changes to the application?



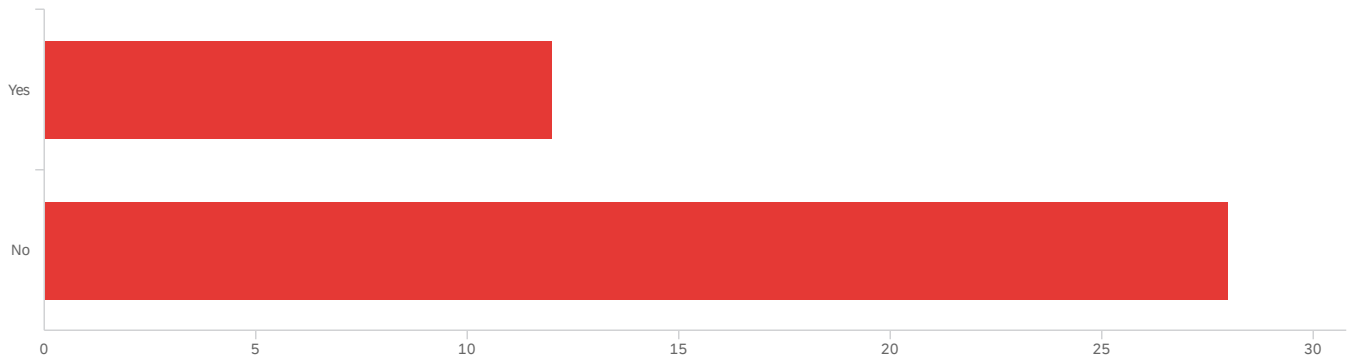
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Did the IRBC request changes to the application?	44.00	45.00	44.23	0.42	0.17	40

#	Field	Choice Count
44	Yes	77.50% 31
45	No	22.50% 9

40

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q7 - Did the IRBC request changes to the Survey Instrument?



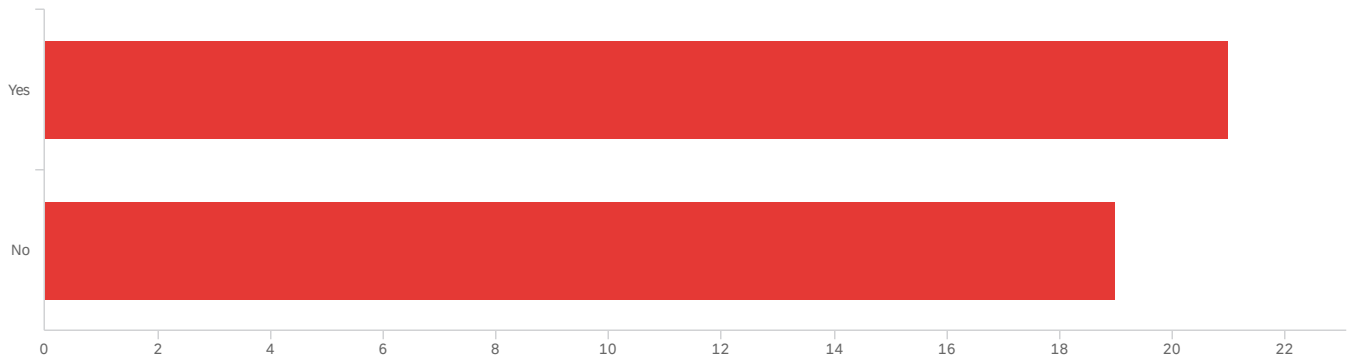
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Did the IRBC request changes to the Survey Instrument?	23.00	24.00	23.70	0.46	0.21	40

#	Field	Choice Count
23	Yes	30.00% 12
24	No	70.00% 28

40

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q8 - Did the amount of time you spent on the IRB application seem reasonable?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Did the amount of time you spent on the IRB application seem reasonable?	23.00	24.00	23.48	0.50	0.25	40

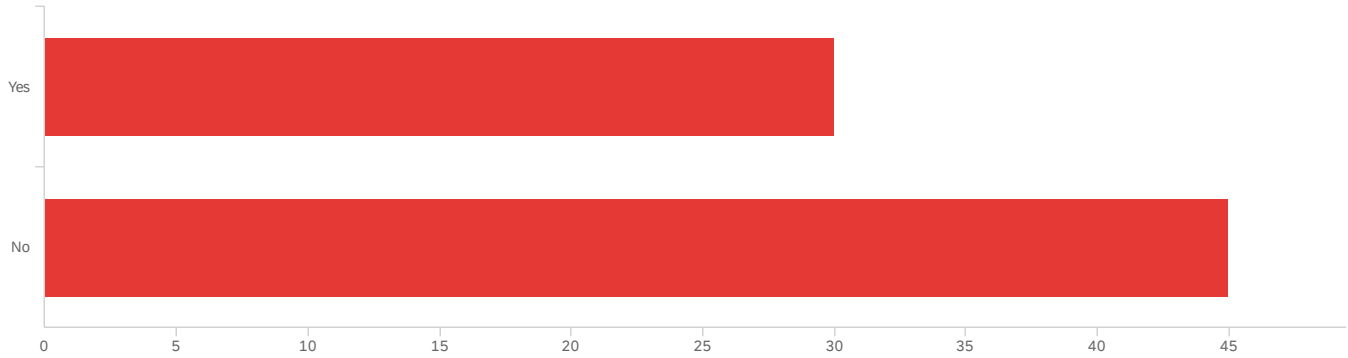
#	Field	Choice Count
23	Yes	52.50% 21
24	No	47.50% 19

40

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q9 - Are the guidelines clear about your discipline's requirements regarding IRB

approval?

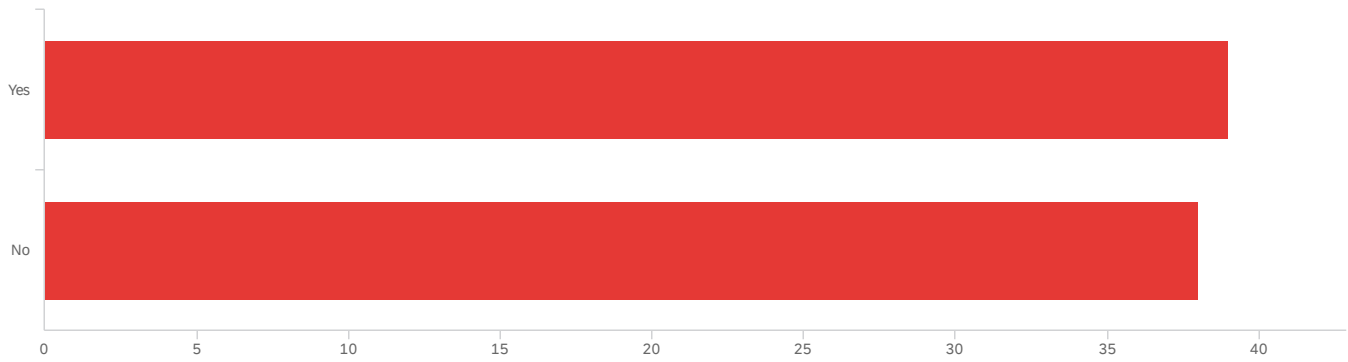


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Are the guidelines clear about your discipline's requirements regarding IRB approval?	23.00	24.00	23.60	0.49	0.24	75

#	Field	Choice Count
23	Yes	40.00% 30
24	No	60.00% 45
		75

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3

Q10 - Do you feel you are sufficiently well-informed to apply for IRB approval?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Do you feel you are sufficiently well-informed to apply for IRB approval?	23.00	24.00	23.49	0.50	0.25	77

#	Field	Choice Count
23	Yes	50.65% 39
24	No	49.35% 38

77

Showing rows 1 - 3 of 3