Tips for avoiding common Informed Consent Form mistakes

Contact information for the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects (ORSP):

- IRB@neiu.edu
- Stephanie Logaras / 773-442-4675 / s-logaras@neiu.edu
- Sharon Todd / 773-442-4671 / s-todd4@neiu.edu

Use the NEIU template

NEIU’s Informed Consent Template must be used for IRB applications at NEIU. It can be found here.

How to check the reading level (by grade level) of your informed consent document

- Generally, the reading level of the Informed Consent needs to be at 8th grade level.
- Keeping the Informed Consent form at the 8th grade reading level applies when subjects are from the general public or other non-academic settings outside of NEIU, other Universities, or Colleges and are not students, staff, or faculty.
- You can set Microsoft Word to show the Flesch-Kincaid reading level when utilizing the Spelling & Grammar check function.

For Microsoft Word 2007 edition:

- Click the Microsoft Office Button , and then click Word Options.
- Click Proofing.
- Make sure Check grammar with spelling is selected.
- Under When correcting grammar in Word, select the Show readability statistics check box.

For Microsoft Word 2010 & 2013 editions:

After you enable this feature, open a file that you want to check, and check the spelling. When Word finishes checking the spelling and grammar, it displays information about the reading level of the document.

Tip: The template itself can make the reading level higher than it should be. You may copy and paste the text you have written for the Informed Consent into a Word document and test that for reading level.

If you need to do this, please send a copy of the word document via email so that we can see that your text is at an acceptable level of readability.

If you are conducting research with people whose first language is not English, include a translation from your English language consent document.

Contact Information to Include on the Informed Consent document

This is a standard way that researchers provide contact information on Informed Consent documents at NEIU:

“If you have any questions about the study, please contact INSERT YOUR NAME at INSERT YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER or at INSERT YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS and he/she will gladly talk to you. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant, contact the Institutional Review Board at (773) 442-4671 or IRB@neiu.edu.”

- If you are a student PI, make sure your faculty sponsor’s contact information is also included.
- Make copies of the contact information and/or the consent form to leave with the participants.