Human Subjects Review Protocol for Extension and Outreach Education

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Iowa State University, as the lead university for the CenUSA project, is the institution evaluating extension and outreach educational programs delivered by CenUSA partner institutions. The surveys that CenUSA will implement follow ISU Institutional Review Board guidelines for exemption eligibility.

Rationale for Exemption from Review

At Iowa State University, research conducted in established or commonly accepted education settings involving normal educational practices, such as Extension programs, are eligible for exemption from human subjects review if certain criteria are included through informed consent such as a survey introduction. These criteria are:

- participation is voluntary;
- participants may skip any questions they do not feel comfortable answering;
- personally identifiable information will be treated as confidential throughout the evaluation process and thereafter, and;
- no risk is associated with responding to a survey.

CenUSA is not conducting research studies, therefore the evaluation tools and diagnostics used do not require the rigor that a peer-reviewed journal submission requires. Results from CenUSA evaluations for educational events are not eligible for that level of analysis but are sufficient for USDA grant reporting purposes. Contact your institution's IRB office to determine if the bioenergy project's approach to human subjects review for educational activities is acceptable.

In addition, project members of the Outreach and Extension team are free to initiate and conduct their own evaluations, following their usual protocol for human subjects review as defined by your own institutions.

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