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Approved: Dr. Cheryl Thompson-Stacy Date: 01/29/2017	

Approval of Academic Studies and/or Research Projects

1.0 Purpose

To provide a policy and procedures for obtaining the approval of Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC) for academic studies and/or research projects.

2.0 Revision History

Revised January 2017.

3.0 Applicability

This policy applies to all individuals who desire to conduct academic studies and/or research projects and use LFCC and/or the LFCC Educational Foundation as subjects. This policy does not apply to the following:

- LFCC faculty or staff members who conduct research projects as part of their assigned work in their classroom as a curricular activity;
- LFCC students who conduct classroom-based research projects as part of their LFCC curriculum requirements within the confines of that specific classroom assignment and without involving parties outside the classroom; and
- LFCC employees engaged in official administrative activity for work-related assessment, surveys, and other types of research projects initiated by the College.

4.0 Policy

All individuals interested in using LFCC for academic studies and/or research projects must obtain prior approval according to the procedures below.

5.0 Definitions

Academic study: Any research conducted as part of an academic program.

Research project: Any research conducted as part of an academic program and/or grant-funded program.

Individuals: This policy pertains to all individuals -- internal and external stakeholders of the College and/or Foundation.

6.0 Responsibilities

Interested persons are responsible for knowing and adhering to the policy and procedures. The director of institutional research and effectiveness and cabinet members will perform the responsibilities outlined in section 7.0 of this policy.

7.0 Procedures

LFCC has established the following procedures for researchers requesting approval for conducting research involving LFCC and/or the LFCC Educational Foundation.

1. Persons wanting to conduct a research study at LFCC should submit the prospectus or research project proposal to the director of institutional research and effectiveness at LFCC via e-mail at least four weeks before the anticipated start date of the project.
2. The materials on the proposed study will be reviewed by the director of institutional research and effectiveness to determine if the proposal is complete. For a dissertation or master's thesis involving surveys or interviews of individual faculty, staff, and/or students, the following materials are required: (1) a defended copy of the proposal is required in electronic format; (2) official letter/notification of approval from the student's Institutional Review Board for the research; (3) an official request/letter stating the requirements of the research; (4) discussion of how FERPA and confidentiality of the results will be addressed, including security; and (5) specific steps for how the subjects of the study are to be contacted through email, in-person, or other method, including follow-ups and storage of individual respondent information.
3. The director of institutional research and effectiveness will share the proposal with the President and make a recommendation about whether the College should cooperate with the researcher.
4. The President will indicate his/her support or lack of support for the research study and provide the rationale to the director of institutional research and effectiveness. The decision will be made by the President. Additional direct reports to the President may be consulted as necessary if the research concerns their division.
5. The director of institutional research and effectiveness will communicate the decision to the researcher in writing within one month of receipt of the prospectus or research project proposal and all relevant requested materials.
6. At the conclusion of the study, the researcher will provide the director of institutional research and effectiveness with an electronic copy of the research/report. The director of institutional research and effectiveness will distribute the documents as appropriate.

7. Publications and/or presentations may not reveal the identity of LFCC as the study site unless such disclosure is specifically authorized (in writing) by the director of institutional research and effectiveness (in consultation with the President). Confidential and/or proprietary information may not be disclosed unless authorized (in writing) by the director of institutional research and effectiveness (in consultation with the President).
8. Information about the study may not be communicated to internal and external stakeholders – including the subjects of the study – unless authorized (in writing) by the director of institutional research and effectiveness (in consultation with the President).

8.0 Sanctions

Persons who fail to comply with the terms of this policy will not receive the cooperation of the College and will not be provided access to students, employees, information, data and /or records.

9.0 Interpretation

Authority for interpretation of this policy rests with the director of institutional research and effectiveness.

10.0 Authority/Reference

The Virginia Community College System Office provided the initial text used for the first draft of this policy.