Luzerne County Community College (LCCC) encourages and supports scholarly endeavors. Pursuit of scholarly work and research may involve the use of human subjects for data collection and analysis, and may involve a request for data to be obtained through the College’s records and data management systems. LCCC allows such research and data collection to be conducted through the College provided the following conditions are met: the rights and welfare of human subjects used in research studies are protected; risks have been considered and minimized; the potential for benefit has been identified and maximized; all human subject participation is voluntary, and subjects only volunteer to participate after being provided with legally effective informed consent; research is conducted in an ethical manner and in compliance with established standards, College policy, and local, state and federal regulations; and existing College resources, including staffing, are adequate to handle the request. All research and data collection conducted through LCCC must be approved by the LCCC Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is authorized to review, approve, require modifications in, or disapprove research activities conducted by or through the College using human subjects. Requests to conduct research at LCCC will not be approved unless the research project has been approved by the researcher’s home institution.

Those individuals seeking to conduct such research may not solicit subject participation or begin data collection until they have obtained clearance by the LCCC IRB. Contact with research subjects will be handled through the Institutional Research and Planning Office in most cases. Unless expressly granted permission by the IRB, researchers may not recruit or contact subjects on College property and/or at College-sponsored events.

The LCCC IRB has responsibility to oversee procedures for carrying out the College’s commitment to protect human subjects in research. The Institutional Research and Planning Office serves as the liaison between the individual requesting research data and the College once IRB approval has been obtained. The role of the Institutional Research and Planning Office is to provide information and data needed as part of the research project and determine the appropriate method of contacting or surveying College constituents based on privacy regulations and other considerations.

The IRB does not assume the role of evaluating the soundness of the proposed research study, the merits of the research design nor the potential contribution of the research to scholarly literature. Rather, the IRB is charged with evaluating each project’s compliance in regard to issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, protection of rights and welfare of subjects, the ethical implementation of the research methods, the availability of College resources, and any risk to the participants.

The basic principles that govern the IRB in assuring that the rights and welfare of subjects are protected are contained in Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research ("The Belmont Report"), the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, April 18, 1979 [see http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.htm].

The LCCC IRB is registered with the Federal Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) as Institutional Review Board # FWA00011825.

SUPPORTING PROCEDURE: Requests for Research Participation IRB Review and Data Collection Procedure