

Part 1

Faculty role:

A medical student whom you worked with earlier in the academic year contacts you seeking input regarding a project s/he hopes to submit to 2 conferences with due dates of less than 1 month away. You provide recommendations for what is needed to conduct a project like this, you suggest that the student narrow the scope of the project, and you mention you do not have time to participate at present time. The next day, the student emails you saying s/he submitted “our” project to the IRB. Then, you receive an email from the IRB with you listed as project director. You email the student immediately expressing disapproval and say the two of you need to meet.

Student role:

You are halfway through your 3rd year of medical school and believe it is important to show evidence of scholarly activity on your CV. You have been searching for upcoming conferences and find 2 that sound interesting. Submission deadlines are approximately 4 weeks away. You brainstorm ideas and decide on one that relates to curriculum you encountered during your Family Medicine clerkship. Because the project you are considering involves surveying students about the curriculum, you seek participation from faculty responsible for that curriculum. The faculty member you contact offers suggestions regarding your proposal including steps to follow, a suggestion to narrow the scope of the project, and also mentions that he/she does not have time to participate right now. Because you need to meet the submission deadline for the conference and have already invested a good amount of time into the project as you envision it, you submit your original proposal to the IRB (a step suggested by the faculty whose input you sought) with the faculty member’s name listed as the project director. The next day you email the faculty member to tell them you submitted the project to the IRB and that you understand they are busy, but all they will have to do is send a survey to their students. The faculty member contacts you expressing disapproval and says she/he would like to meet to discuss the situation with you.

Part 2

You counsel the student on the unprofessional nature of her/his actions. The following week, you learn the student has since gone to other faculty in your department to try to obtain an endorsement for the same project, withholding information that s/he had communicated with you.