Instructions: Research Ethics

**Getting Started**

Historically, engaging in ethical behavior in research was an option. In other words, researchers were allowed to do what they wanted, how they wanted to, and when they wanted to. Unfortunately, this led to some very unethical research practices. As a result, much has changed within research, prompting social researchers to understand not only what is and is not ethical, but also how to maintain ethical behavior both during and after the research process. This assignment will help you follow ethical guidelines of your research project in SWK-661.

**Upon successful completion of this discussion, you will be able to:**

* Suggest implications for practice based on research findings. (PO 13; ILO 5)



**Background Information**

In the years leading up to the early 1970s, individuals with disabilities were often placed in institutions, as most people, including health care professionals, believed that individuals with disabilities could not function within society. One such institution, Willow brook State School, was located in Staten Island, New York.

During a time when significant funding issues resulted in the mistreatment of the patients, doctors were also interested in conducting research on a vaccine for hepatitis. In an effort to do so, doctors purposely injected all of the patients at Willow brook with the hepatitis virus.

Willow brook is just one example of such behavior, and participants were harmed in several other types of incidents. Consequently, today, ethical standards are in place to protect the rights of research participants. First and foremost, researchers cannot conduct research without informed consent. Participants must have knowledge of the study before granting permission. Moreover, researchers must make efforts to do no harm to the participants. No longer can researchers use vulnerable participants at their own personal discretion. Plagiarism, fabrication/falsification of results, poor data storage, the use of anonymity, and confidentiality are other areas of ethical issues that researchers must keep in mind.



**Instructions**

1. Review the rubric to make sure you understand the criteria for earning your grade.
2. Read Chapter 10, “Research Ethics and Protection of Human Subjects in PBR” from the textbook, *Research Methods for Social Workers: A Practice-Based Approach.*
3. View the video, Research Ethics.

<https://youtu.be/wJzU_wQRZqg>

1. Respond to the following discussion prompts:
   1. From the readings or other material provided, discuss an example of unethical behavior from the past.
   2. Discuss at least three different ways in which researchers must maintain ethical behavior.
   3. Discuss which ethical behavior you think is most critical for researchers to adhere to and why.

Your initial post of at least 250 words is due by the end of the third day of the workshop.