

EXEMPT DETERMINATION

August 25, 2026

Laura K. Reed, Ph.D.
Professor of Biology
Barefield College of Arts & Sciences
The University of Alabama

Dear Dr. Reed:

On August 25, 2026 the IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Protocol Information	Submission Details
Type of Review:	Continuing Review and Amendment
Title:	Empowering Genomics Educators: Scalable and Effective Training Models to Build a Skilled Biomedical Workforce through Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences
Investigator:	Laura Reed
IRB ID:	25-07-8861-R1
Funding:	NIH & NSF
Grant Title:	(NIH) - Empowering Genomics Educators: Scalable and Inclusive Training Models to Build a Skilled Biomedical Workforce through Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences; (NSF) - Sustaining and Growing a Dispersed Community of Practice that Engages Undergraduates in Course-Based Genomics Research
Grant ID:	25-0005; 19-0250
IND, IDE or HDE:	None
Documents Reviewed:	Revised Study Protocol & Information Sheet

The IRB determined that this protocol meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review.

Attached are stamped approved consent documents. Use copies of these documents to document consent.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in HRP-103 - INVESTIGATOR MANUAL.

Ongoing IRB review and approval by this organization is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If

changes are made and there are questions about whether these activities impact the exempt determination, please submit a new request to the IRB for a determination.

If you have and questions or require further information, please contact the UA HRPP via email at rscompliance@ua.edu.

Informed Consent

Project Title: Genomics Education Partnership Classroom Undergraduate Research Experiences

Please read this informed consent carefully before you decide to participate in the study.

Consent Form Key Information:

- Participate in a 20-minute survey to collect baseline data on students' attitudes about science;
- Two forms of the survey, one taken before use and one after use of GEP materials;
- Information collected that will connect identity with responses is encrypted and stored in a separate system;
- There are no known risks from being in this study;
- Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary;
- The decision on whether to participate in the research study, and your responses to the surveys, will not affect your grade in the course.

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of the study is to learn more about the success of our science courses in empowering student learning and to assess the impact of participating in research dissemination activities. To accomplish this task, we have developed a pre-course / post-course research design to measure the learning gains and other outcomes of courses that include our shared genomics project. This research is funded by the National Institutes of Health.

What you will do in the study: You will begin by answering demographic questions and then answer a series of survey and quiz questions. You may choose to skip any questions by selecting the "not applicable" or "choose not to respond" options for each question. Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary and you may leave the study at any time. You will be invited to take two additional optional surveys: one at the end of your GEP course, and one two years after your participation in the GEP course.

Time required: The study will require about 20 minutes of your time.

Risks: There are no anticipated risks in this study.

Benefits: There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research study. However, we hope that others may benefit in the future from what we learn because of this study.

Confidentiality: This project is a collaborative effort involving the faculty and undergraduate students from many institutions participating in the GEP. Because of the complexity of tracking the data from many courses in many institutions, we ask you to identify your instructor, institution, and course. The first page of the survey will ask you to enter your name as it appears on your driver's license or student ID, and your email. Your name will be used to create a personal identification code that consists of 64 alphanumeric characters. The method used to construct the personal identification code ensures that it is not possible to convert the code back to your name.

The code enables us to match your pre-course responses with your post-course responses, allowing us to understand how your responses have changed over time. We will also contact you at a later time to invite you to participate in an optional 2-year follow-up survey.

Your name and email will be stored separately from your responses to the survey questions and quiz. Your instructor will not have access to your responses, and your responses will have no influence on your course grades. The lead analysts for the project, Prof. David Lopatto of Grinnell College and Dr. Emma Goodwin of University of Georgia will keep all individual data confidential. Only aggregate pre-course/post-course data will be reported back to your institution and to the GEP as a whole.

We will keep the information you provide confidential. However, federal regulatory agencies and The University of Alabama, including The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research.

To further protect your privacy, this research is covered by a Certificate of Confidentiality from the federal government. This means that the researchers can refuse to disclose information that may identify you in any legal or court proceeding or to anyone who is not connected with the research except if:

- there is a law that requires disclosure, such as to report child abuse and neglect, or harm to self or others;

- you give permission to disclose your information, including as described in this consent form; or
- it is used for other scientific research allowed by federal law.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to be in this study, you won't be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

Right to withdraw from the study: You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you stop participating at any time, you won't be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

How to withdraw from the study: If you want to withdraw from the study, just leave the site. There is no penalty for withdrawing. If you would like to withdraw at a later time, contact the PI, Dr. Laura K. Reed, to have your information removed from the dataset.

Compensation/Reimbursement: You will receive no payment for participating in the study. If you elect to participate in the longitudinal study, a modest financial incentive will be available.

Using data beyond this study: The researchers may revisit this data after the study is completed. Your information will be stored, used for future research studies performed by the GEP, including but not limited to longitudinal studies of student performance across programmatic changes (e.g., experiences in future scientific projects relative to current scientific projects). Researchers of future studies will not ask your permission for each new study. However, the information you provide will be combined with the information provided by others to create a larger dataset. No information that could potentially identify you will be included in the information shared with other researchers nor will they attempt to identify you. There will be no change in risk to you when datasets are reanalyzed or combined with other datasets.

If you have questions about the study or need to report a study related issue, please contact:

Name of Principal Investigator: Dr. Laura K. Reed

Title: Program Director, Genomics Education Partnership; Professor, The University of Alabama

Department Name: Biological Sciences

Telephone: (205) 348-1807

Email address: lreed1@ua.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in a research study, would like to make suggestions or file complaints and concerns about the research study, please contact:

The University of Alabama Office for Research Compliance (205) 348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066. You may also ask questions, make suggestions, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach Website at <https://research.ua.edu/offices/compliance/hrpp/participant-outreach/> You may email the Office for Research Compliance at rscompliance@ua.edu.

- o I am 18 years of age or older, and I agree to participate in the research study described above
- o I do not agree to participate in the research study described above.
- o I am younger than 18 years old.

End of Block: Preamble
