American University

IRB Application for Approval to use Human Participants in Research

Principal Investigator: (name of person submitting application)	Timothy Snyder F. Douglas Powe (co-PI)
Project Title:	The Religious Workforce in Washington, DC
Date submitted:	Dec 1, 2019
E-mail:	tsnyder@wesleyseminary.edu
Telephone:	202-664-5707
School/College:	Other — Department: Wesley Theological Seminary

Research ethics training source: ☐ NIH/NCI ☒ CITI ☐ Other:

Date research ethics training completed: Nov 22, 2019

Anticipated Funding source/agency (if applicable): ☐ Federal ☒ Other

Name of funding source: The Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Relationship to University:

- ◉ Faculty
- ○ Student
- ○ Staff

Projected data collection dates: From Jan 15, 2020 To Apr 30, 2022

Note: Data Collection cannot begin before IRB approval is received.

II. Research Staff

◉ **Co-Investigator(s)**

American University

Name:	Amy Kubichek	Address:	The Lewis Center for Church Leadership 4500 Massachusetts Ave. NW Washington, DC 20016
Department:	Wesley Theological Seminary		
Phone:	202-664-5708	Email:	akubichek@wesleyseminary.edu

Date research ethics training completed: November 1, 2 Training Source: ☐ NIH/NCI ☒ CITI ☐ Other:

See Appendix E for full list of researchers.

○ **Faculty Advisor**

Required for students or post-doctoral research projects.

○ **Other AU Affiliated Research Staff**

III. Research Description

1. Please describe the major research questions of the proposed study in language that can be understood by an individual who is not a specialist in the field (maximum 700 characters).

Given today's changing religious landscape, with decline in old organizations and new ones emerging, how is the religious workforce of congregations in the Metro Washington, DC/DMV area adapting? What work do congregations prioritize, and what combination of paid and volunteer labor helps them accomplish that work? What organizational factors shape the work of congregations (e.g., budget, membership demographics, polity)? What ideological factors shape the work of the congregations (e.g., theology, history, views of social and political engagement)? And what external factors shape the work of congregations (e.g., polity, credentialing, workforce availability, social networks)?

2. What are the major procedures you will use to collect data? How will you carry them out and how will participants be involved? Please include separate information for each different procedure that you plan to use.

The research procedures will include: (a) a pre-interview questionnaire – completed by key informant, (b) interview with pastor/head of staff, (c) a participant observation of a staff/organization meeting, and (d) a participant observation of worship service. In conversation with the key informant, researchers will also collect relevant documents, including, but not limited to, budgets, capital campaign literature, position descriptions, official communications, and newsletters. See Appendix A for additional details.

3. Check ALL the different procedures planned for this study:

- ☒ Records review - retrospective
- ☐ Records review - prospective
- ☒ Questionnaires / surveys
- ☒ Interviews
- ☒ Audiotaping / videotaping
- ☐ Social or behavioral intervention
- ☒ Behavioral observation
- ☐ Other

- ☐ Data collection using the Internet
  Supplement D must be completed
- ☐ International research
  Supplement E must be completed
- ☐ Data stored long-term for future use
  Supplement H must be completed
- ☐ Physiological intervention
  Supplement L must be completed

4. Data Collection

NOTE. Please attach data collection information separately for each major phase, research strategy, tool, involved population, etc. that you plan to use. It will help the review committee if you present the materials in the same order that you present them in this application and if you label each clearly in terms of the research activity so the committee knows which questions, scales, etc. go with which research activity.

- Attach copies of all questionnaires, surveys, interview questions, etc. If a draft of one of these documents is attached, it should be clearly labeled as such and a final version must be submitted before data collection begins.
- If the research involves interviews that could evolve as the research progresses, include a list of discussion topics and any "starter" questions for each topic that can reasonably be expected to be covered.

5. Outline the planned timing and sequence of the research activities:

The typical research sequence is as follows: (1) Recruitment, (2) Worship Service Observation, (3) Key Informant Interview with Pre-Interview Questionnaire, (4) Staff/Organizational Meeting Observation, (5) Audio Journal/Document Collection. In most cases, all research procedures will be completed within 8 weeks of agreeing to participate. Some documentation (e.g., collecting publicly available newsletters) may last up to one year from the time of recruitment.

6. If there is more than one researcher involved, explain the division of tasks among research staff. What will be the roles and responsibilities?

See Appendix B.

IV. Research Setting

1. Describe the settings in which research will be carried out (e.g., school, clinic, home, lab, etc.):

The research will be carried out in Christian congregations in the Metro-Washington, DC/DMV region.

2. List all AU sites where the research will be carried out. For each site, explain how the Investigator has access to a population that would allow recruitment of participants.

None

3. List all non-AU sites where the research will be carried out, including contact information where applicable. For each site, explain how the Investigator has access to a population that would allow recruitment of participants. What kind of permission is necessary to carry out research at this site? Has the researcher received permission? If so, please attach a copy of the permission.

This study will target 50 Christian congregations in the DMV. A stratified sample of congregations will be created from a database of congregations. Information collected for the database includes only publicly available information and publicly observable data. Additional details in Appendix C.

4. Do any of the other sites have an IRB? If so, describe the communication with the relevant IRB(s). What date was permission given?

No

V. Participant Population

1. The research involves the following (check all that apply):

- [x] Normal Adults
- [ ] Prisoners *(IRB Supplement G must be completed)*
- [ ] Pregnant Women, Fetuses, or Neonates (*IRB Supplement J must be completed)*
- [ ] Cognitively Impaired (*IRB Supplement K must be completed)*
- [ ] Children (*IRB Supplement F must be completed)*
- [ ] Children who are wards of the state
- [ ] Students - specify school:
- [ ] Non-English Speakers

2. In the chart below, please indicate the number of participants per category. If there is more than one research activity or phase, please break down for each phase/activity of the research. Please add additional information in a clearly labeled appendix.

	Male	Female	Total
Adults			50
Children			
Total			50

3. Please provide a rationale for use of special groups or participants whose ability to give voluntary informed consent may be in question (e.g., cognitively impaired).

N/A

4. Will any groups or categories of participants be excluded from this research?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

VI. Participant Recruitment

1. Describe how participants will be recruited for participation in this study.

See Appendix C.

Attach copies of any proposed flyers, posters, pamphlets, print advertisements, etc. and any scripts for on air advertisements or phone calls. All recruitment material must be approved by the IRB prior to use.

2. Recruitment Information

Which of the following recruitment methods will be used?

Recruitment Activity	Yes/No		Explanation
Paper files (e.g., school or medical records)	☒ No	☐ Yes (indicate where paper files are located)	
Electronic files (e.g., school or medical records)	☒ No	☐ Yes (indicate who maintains electronic files)	
Other records	☒ No	☐ Yes (indicate what they are)	
Databases	☐ No	☒ Yes (specify type and location)	Our research team has developed a database of congregations drawing on public observations and publicly available contact information.
Flyers / brochures	☒ No	☐ Yes (include a copy in application)	
Web postings	☒ No	☐ Yes (specify website address)	
Advertising company	☒ No	☐ Yes (If yes, specify company and service they will provide.)	
Letters	☐ No	☒ Yes (If yes, include a copy with application.)	
Any other method	Please specify in detail below:		
Add method			

3. Will participants be offered compensation for participating in the research?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

Are the terms of the participation agreement and the amount of payment specified in the informed consent form?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

VII. Description of Risks and Plans to Mitigate/Address Them

1a. Describe any physical risks that may be faced by participants in this research. If there will be physical risks, answer 1b. Otherwise, go on to question 2a.

N/A

1b. Describe how you will inform participants of the physical risks and what you will do to mitigate these risks or their effects. Describe availability of medical services that may be required as a consequence of research participation. If none are available, what provisions are made when necessary?

N/A

2. a Describe any psychological risks that may be faced by participants in this research. If there will be psychological risks, answer 2b. Otherwise, go on to question 3a.

While minimal, there is a risk that life-review questions related to career decisions could recall difficult or painful memories.

2b. Describe how you will inform participants of the psychological risks and what you will do to mitigate these risks or their effects. Describe availability of any psychological services, including counseling, that may be required as a consequence of research participation. If none are available, what provisions are made when necessary?

This risk is named in the informed consent. Interviewers will read the section on risks aloud while obtaining informed consent, and participants will be reminded that they may opt out of any question.

3a. Describe any social risks that may be faced by participants in this research. If there will be social risks, answer 3b.

While minimal, there is a risk that despite our best efforts to maintain privacy, that personal information shared in the course of this study could be embarrassing or could have other negative social impacts.

3b. Describe how you will inform participants of the social risks and what you will do to mitigate these risks or their effects. Describe availability of social services, including support services that may be required as a consequence of research participation. If none are available, what provisions are made when necessary?

This risk is named in the informed consent. Interviewers will read the section on risks aloud while obtaining informed consent, and participants will be reminded that they may opt out of any question.

4. Explain provisions to protect privacy interests of participants. This refers to how investigators will contact participants and/or access private information from or about participants during and after their involvement in the research (e.g., time, place, etc. of research procedures) and the participants' expectations of privacy in the situation.

The interviews for this study will take place either at the private offices of the pastors or the private offices of researchers on the campus of Wesley Theological Seminary. Participants can expect that identifying information in the interview transcripts will be removed or masked in all public findings. Raw data will be stored behind passwords or locked in the office of the PI. Only members of the research team will have access to the raw data. Wesley Theological Seminary contracts with a third party for their IT services. Employees of that company have administrative access to networked computers and cloud storage; however by policy, they do not open stored files unless directed by Wesley Theological Seminary employees.

5. Will data that identifies individual participants be published or in any way be disclosed to third parties other than project personnel?

   ○ Yes
   ◉ No

6. Will the data collected in the course of the study be considered sensitive data, e.g. mental health, HIV status, social security number, etc.?

   ○ Yes
   ◉ No

7. Describe any other resources needed for the protection of participants in the conduct of this research (e.g., participant communication needs, language translation services.)

N/A

8. Do you believe that this research is minimal risk?

   NOTE: According to Department of Health and Human Services regulations minimal risk means "The probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests."

   ◉ Yes
   ○ No

If yes, please provide justification.	The purpose of this study is to learn more about Christian congregations and those who do the work of congregations. Most of the data we are collecting would be available to ordinary members of the congregation in the course of their daily and weekly participation.

VIII. Precautions in Projects of More than Minimal Risk

1. If the classification is greater than minimal risk, describe all possible harms (including non-physical harms) in detail, assess their seriousness and estimate the probability of the harms occurring.

N/A

2. Describe other alternative and accepted procedures, if any, which were considered that might involve less risk and why they will not be used.

N/A

3. For all research involving more than minimal risk, describe the data and safety monitoring plan (DSMP). The DSMP should address the following statements.

   - A description of the plan to monitor research progress and participant reactions, including who will do the monitoring and how monitoring will be accomplished.
   - A plan for dealing with adverse events and unanticipated problems involving risk to participants or others.
   - A description of the plan to assure compliance with reporting of adverse events and/or unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or others.
   - A description of the plan to assure data accuracy and protocol compliance.

   Please attach this document as an appendix.

IX. Benefits

1. Assess the potential benefits to science and/or society which may accrue as a result of this research.

The benefit of participating in this study is to contribute to academic research on American religious life and the findings of this study may impact the future well-being of congregations and the future of those institutions that prepare leaders for careers in ministry.

2. Are there any benefits (other than the compensation described in VI. 3. above) which may accrue to the individual participants in this research?

   ○ Yes
   ◉ No

3. If the risk in this study is more than minimal, explain how the risks are reasonable in relation to the benefits.

.N/A

X. Informed Consent

Unless waived by the IRB, informed consent is necessary for all research involving human participants and must be documented in some manner. The investigator may determine which method would best serve the interest of the participant population, but the IRB reserves the right to require alternative or more stringent means of securing consent.

Note: Involvement of participants unable to give personal consent for reasons of age, mental state, legal or other such status, requires that parental permission or consent from a legally authorized representative (surrogate consent) be obtained. In this case, complete the following for parental permission or surrogate consent and complete Supplement F for research involving children or Supplement K for research involving cognitively impaired participants. Information regarding assent of participants will be requested in those sections.

If this project has different phases, activities, or participant populations, you may want to use several different forms of consent. If so, describe clearly which forms of consent will be used for which phases, activities, or participant populations.

1. Which of the following apply to this research?

☒ Informed consent will be obtained from all participants and documented with a signed, written consent form. If so, answer questions in part 2 below.

☐ Informed consent will be obtained from participants, but no signed consent form will be used. This includes oral consent and implied consent (e.g., completing a survey). If so, answer the questions in part 2 and complete Supplement A to request a waiver of documentation of consent.

☐ Fully informed consent will not be obtained from all participants because it is impossible logistically to obtain consent (for example, participant observation research, classroom observation, etc.). If so complete Supplement B to request a waiver of consent without deception.

☐ Fully informed consent will not be obtained from all participants, because some deception, withholding information, etc., will be involved. If so, complete Supplement C to request a waiver of consent with deception.

2. Informed Consent.

Please see the Informed Consent Checklist for the basic required elements of informed consent that should be included in informed consent. It is recommended that you use the informed consent template on the AU IRB website (http://american.edu/irb/IRB-Forms.cfm).

a. How will the participants' informed consent be documented? Please indicate all the ways in which consent is documented.

Signed written consent.

b. Describe how the required information is being presented to participants (consent form, orally, information sheet, etc.). You must provide copies of all written consent forms. If you will be presenting information orally, present a “script” of the information being presented to participants.

Consent form

c. Describe the circumstances under which consent will be obtained, including where the process will take place.

At the beginning of the key informant interview, the participant will be given the informed consent form. The interviewer will highlight risks and benefits, along with privacy procedures. Time will be allowed to read over the form and a signature will indicate that the participant gives their informed consent to

participate.

d. Who will obtain consent? Describe their experience in obtaining consent from participants.

Interviews will be conducted by the PI and the CI. Both have graduate-level methodology training (PhD coursework), and both have conducted prior, IRB-approved human subject research.

e. How will it be determined that the participants or the participants' authorized representatives understand the information presented?

Their signature on the informed consent form will indicate that they have been given the opportunity to read the informed consent form and ask questions.

f. If non-English speaking participants will be included, describe how translation of consent forms will be provided. All translated consent forms must be submitted to the IRB.

N/A

g. If participants cannot read the consent form, due to literacy or language problems, how will consent be documented?

N/A

h. Will any participants be cognitively impaired so that they may not have the capacity to give consent?

- ○ Yes (complete Supplement K)
- ◉ No

XI. Conflict of Interest

1. Do any members of the research team or any of their immediate family members have any financial interest in the sponsor of this research and/or in the results of this research?

- ○ Yes (complete Supplement I)
- ◉ No

XII. Checklist

Please check all the categories that apply to this research. For those checked, please complete the supplements indicated. You do not need to complete any supplements which do not apply. Supplemental forms are available from the same source as this form. Visit http://american.edu/irb/IRB-Forms.cfm

List of Forms:

- ☐ Waiver of documentation of consent - complete IRB Supplement A
- ☐ Waiver of consent, without deception - complete IRB Supplement B
- ☐ Waiver of consent, with deception - complete IRB Supplement C

- ☐ Use of the Internet (DO NOT complete if only using Internet to recruit participants) - complete IRB Supplement D
- ☐ International research - complete IRB Supplement E
- ☐ Children - complete IRB Supplement F
- ☐ Prisoners - complete IRB Supplement G
- ☐ Stored data for future use - complete IRB Supplement H
- ☐ Conflict of interest - complete IRB Supplement I
- ☐ Pregnant women, fetuses or neonates - complete IRB Supplement J
- ☐ Cognitively impaired participants - complete IRB Supplement K
- ☐ Research involving physiological intervention - complete IRB Supplement L

XIII. Signatures

Please submit a signed application along with initialled supplements to the IRB office. Applications can be sent from a valid AU e-mail address in lieu of a physical signature. If you are a student, we must receive a signature or an e-mail from your faculty advisor from her or his AU e-mail address stating that the advisor has read and approved the contents of the submission. Student research will not be reviewed without faculty advisor approval.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: I will conduct the study identified above in the manner described. If I decide to make any changes in the procedure, or if a participant is injured, or if any problems occur which involve risk or the possibility of risk to participants or others, I will immediately report such occurrences or contemplated changes to the AU Institutional Review Board.

Please print your name: Timothy K. Snyder Date: Dec 18, 2019

FACULTY ADVISOR (IF THE INVESTIGATOR IS A STUDENT, A FACULTY ADVISOR MUST SIGN BELOW): I have read and approve of this protocol. I believe this is research as defined by the Department if Health and Human Services (i.e., a systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge) and that the student is competent to conduct the activity as described herein.

Please print your name: Date:

Print Form

Please save a copy of the form for your records and submit the final form electronically to irb@american.edu