

Research Ethics Board

2020/2021 Annual Report



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Research Ethics Board

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Kwantlen Polytechnic University's REB is located in the unceded traditional and ancestral lands of the Kwantlen, Musqueam, Katzie, Semiahmoo, Tsawwassen, Qayqayt and Kwikwetlem peoples.

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INTRODUCTION

The 2020-2021 academic year remained challenging for the KPU community due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The KPU REB continued to adapt to the pandemic's impacts on research and research ethics and a key focus of our work this year was to provide better guidance to KPU researchers. The REB responded to requests from the KPU research community to develop guidance documents for online research, data security in particular. Other areas the REB prioritized were outreach to the KPU research community and relationship building with partners at KPU and with colleagues at Research Ethics BC and other REBs in the province. In this report details on the number of REB applications reviewed will be provided alongside highlights of the administrative, policy development, outreach, and relationship building the REB engaged in throughout the year.

Research ethics board policy and procedure

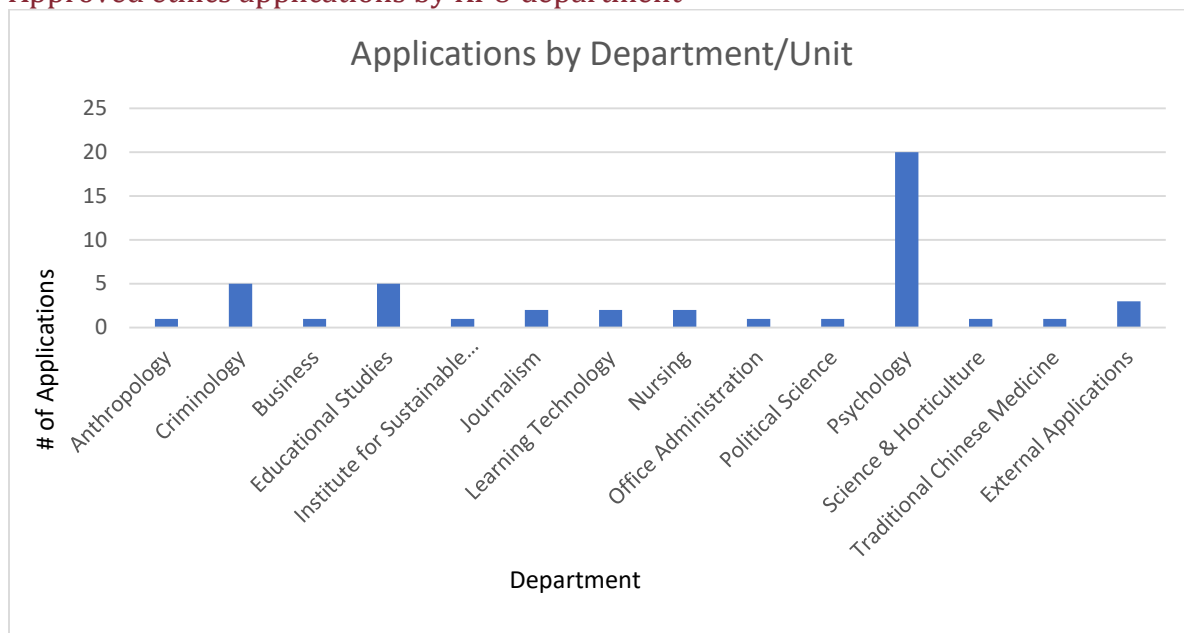
The KPU REB has a distinct function and is governed by specific agreements. KPU has signed the *Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions* and as such the KPU REB is mandated to follow and implement the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2)*. The REB's mission and mandate are governed by internal policies and procedures (e.g., RS1: Research Involving Human Participants) and relevant external policies, laws, and ethical frameworks.

Research Ethics Review Summary

PART I: KPU REB ETHICS APPLICATIONS RECEIVED THROUGH ROMEO

From September 1, 2020 – August 31, 2021 46 REB applications were reviewed on ROMEO. Two applications were withdrawn; one for failure to respond to requested revisions and the other because the researcher decided not to proceed with the application. One application was reviewed and deemed exempt from REB review. The majority of ethics applications were submitted by KPU faculty researchers. All of the applications were reviewed by the Chair and one or two other REB members with expertise in the area being reviewed, except for two applications that were deemed above minimal risk and were reviewed by the full board. Ten COVID-19 related ethics applications were reviewed and approved by the REB.

Approved ethics applications by KPU department



Ethics Applications reviewed and approved in ROMEO September 1, 2020 – August 31, 2021

APPLICATION BY DEPT / UNIT	No
Anthropology	1
Criminology	5
Business	1
Educational Studies	5
Institute for Sustainable Farming	1
Journalism	2
Learning Technology	2
Nursing	2
Office Administration	1
Political Science	1
Psychology	20
Science & Horticulture	1
Traditional Chinese Medicine	1
External to KPU	3
TOTAL	46

Post-Approval Activities

The KPU REB has a number of administrative controls while research studies are on-going. KPU researchers are required to:

- submit an amendment for changes to approved protocols
- provide a progress report and request a renewal of their existing approval on an annual basis for multi-year study
- submit a completion report when all data collection is completed

POST-APPROVAL ACTIVITIES	No
Amendments	34
Progress reports and renewals	11
End of project reports	62
Outstanding completion reports	45

Adverse events

The REB has a process by which research participants can submit complaints as well as adverse events notifications. Any adverse events must be documented by the research team and reported to the REB as soon as possible. This year one adverse event was reported by a researcher who pivoted the research to mitigate a problem, the REB followed up and determined no further action was needed.

PART II: MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL REVIEWS

KPU REB is a member of the Health Research BC, which is part of the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research.

“Research Ethics BC supports a provincial, harmonized system for research ethics reviews of multi-jurisdictional studies involving human subjects (i.e. involving the resources, people, patients or data from more than one BC institution). [...] Harmonization streamlines the ethics review and approval process, allowing for submission of a single ethics application across all partner institutions. It also standardizes processes among research ethics boards, ensuring review quality and compliance with national policies.”¹

The harmonization review process is facilitated by the use of the Provincial Research Ethics Platform ([PREP](#)), housed within UBC’s RISE system.

¹ www.bcahsn.ca/our-units/research-ethics-bc



The KPU REB acted as **Board of Record** on six harmonized ethics applications, **Partner Board** on eleven applications, and reviewed and approved eight **Post-Approval Activities**. The REB Chair reviewed and created provisos for all applications and post-approval activities for the KPU REB as both Board of Record and Partner Board.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The partnership with REBC resulted in important professional development opportunities for the REB. The Chair and Coordinator attended REBC's Research Ethics Board Administrators (REBA) meetings every three weeks. The meetings bring together research ethics board administrators and some REB Chairs from the 22 REBs in the REBC network. These meetings provided valuable opportunities to engage with colleagues from other REBs in the network as well as in-meeting learning and sharing. REBC also provided professional development opportunities outside of the REBA meetings. For example, the Coordinator attended a presentation titled "Biospecimen Analysis – New RISE Forms for Clinical Research Ethics Applications" led by Elmira Chan with UBC Clinical Research Ethics Board. Additionally, In February the Chair and Coordinator attended Provincial Research Ethics Platform (PREP) training in order to better navigate the RISE platform.

In July, REBA launched a Community of Practice (REBA-CoP) for new REBA (new to the REBC network or new in the role) to work more closely on specific topics related to harmonization,

RISe, etc. The meetings are a learning environment with a focus on mentorship, education and support. The Chair and Coordinator attended the REBA-CoP meetings and will continue to do so in the next year.

Four REB members along with the REB Chair and Coordinator attended the Canadian Association of Research Ethics Boards (CAREB) online conference titled “Shining a light on research ethics: How we have worked, overcome, and are moving forward.” The REB Chair attended the SoTL Canada Roadshow: Unwrapping Research Ethics. Given limitations due to online meetings the REB only hosted one internal professional development presentation this year. Chris Burns, KPU Data Services Librarian, delivered a presentation and shared resources on Data Management Plans at the May REB meeting.

OUTREACH

One of the REB priorities was outreach to and engagement with the KPU research community. This engagement was accomplished through a variety of activities including relationship building with specific departments, REB drop-in events, presentation to honours seminar classes, and one-on-one consultations with researchers.

Three virtual outreach drop-in sessions were held for the KPU researcher community. The first drop-in was held in November, followed by another in January. The third event was held in April through the KPU Employee Lounge. The sessions were advertised to the KPU community through Today@KPU and through department listservs.



Please join your colleagues and drop by the virtual "Employee Lounge" while you are taking your afternoon break. Come as you are, stay as long as you like, keep in touch with colleagues, and create new connections. Whether you are a new employee at KPU, or have been working here for a decade, you are welcome to join! We also encourage you to invite a colleague to attend as your "plus one"! This week, Tara Lyons will be joining from the Research Ethics Board (REB) to take over the Lounge. Bring your questions, find out what's new with the KPU REB, and learn more about the new provincial ethics review process.

The REB Chair attended a number of faculty meetings, including meetings with the faculty of Design's Research & Graduate Studies Committee to discuss course-based research specific to their program. The REB Chair also met with Criminology faculty and attended a Psychology department meeting to receive feedback on course-based research documents and processes.

The REB Chair presented to the:

- Arts Faculty Meeting to provide updates on course-based research and the multijurisdictional research ethics process, as well as reminders and instructions on how to submit completion reports.
- Open Education Research Institute on a panel titled *Ethical Considerations for Open Education Research*.
- Psychology honours seminar regarding the REB process and fielded questions regarding the harmonization process.

Additionally, the Chair engaged in one-on-one consultations with a number of KPU departments including AVPRIGS, Finance, and Privacy relating to ethical issues with applications as they arose. The Chair and Coordinator held numerous virtual meetings and fielded email inquires from the KPU research community as well as external researchers. The REB Chair and Coordinator also met with Emily Carr University of Art + Design's REB Chair and Coordinator.

COMMUNICATION

Guidance documents & guidelines

The REB developed a number of guidance documents, guidelines, and templates with the objective of improving communication with the KPU research community and updating the consent form template.

- a. A new consent form template was developed to replace the dated template in circulation. The template was distributed through Today@KPU, department listservs, and posted on the REB website and SharePoint site in December 2020.
- b. The REB consulted on Payments to Participants Guidelines led by ORS. These guidelines are under development.
- c. The REB worked with KPU Information Access & Privacy Manager to develop a guidance document on privacy and research ethics. The document is available on the REB SharePoint site.
- d. Two Covid-19 guidelines were issued by the REB for all KPU researchers in December 2020 and July 2021
<https://kpuemp.sharepoint.com/Today/SitePages/My%20Drafts.aspx> .

Senate Standing Committee on Research & Graduate Studies

To support communication between the REB and KPU's community of researchers, the REB Chair provides monthly reports and presents each report to meetings of the Senate Standing Committee on Research & Graduate Studies.

Website & SharePoint updates

A new [REB SharePoint](#) page was launched with additional resources, guidance documents, and templates for faculty researchers to access. Information on the external-facing website was streamlined and all internal documents were moved to the SharePoint site.

REB MEETINGS & MEMBERSHIP

The REB's 2020-2021 membership was compliant with the [TCPS 2 Article 6.4](#). Members represented a range of disciplines and areas of expertise. Following an openly advertised completion, an REB sub-committee made recommendations for appointment to the AVP Research, Innovation and graduate studies.

Members	Department
Paul Adams	Biology
Irina Ceric	Criminology
Ari Goelman	Business
Richard Le Grand	Psychology
Tara Lyons (Chair)	Criminology
Joan Posivy	Community member
Katie Warfield	Journalism

Dr. Irina Ceric completed her term on August 31, 2021. Tragically, Dr. Katie Warfield passed away in May. She is deeply missed on the REB.



<https://katiwarfield.com/>

REB meetings

In the 2020 – 2021 academic year, the REB held 10 meetings. All meetings were held virtually on Microsoft Teams due to COVID-19 restrictions on in-person meetings. All meeting dates were published on the [REB's website](#).

LOOKING AHEAD

In terms of policies and procedures, the REB will continue revising the RS1 Policy for Research Involving Human Participants and is working to implement a variety of SoPs in order to improve standardized processes. A priority for the upcoming year is to continue outreach and

relationship building in addition to undertaking revisions to the course-based research process and requirements.

Improvements can be made in order to better track one-on-one consultations with researchers regarding inquiries about applications, exemptions, harmonization, etc. The Chair and Coordinator have developed a tracking document in response to capture the time and resources needed to support researchers. Additionally, tracking average queue time for applications would be beneficial in order to track trends and areas for improvement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The REB would like to thank the REB Coordinator, Foluso Fagbamiye for her professionalism and administrative support. We would like to thank Kathy Leung for her assistance with the SharePoint and website development. Lastly, we thank Dr. Deepak Gupta, AVP, Research, Innovation and Graduate Studies, for his on-going support to the REB. Dr. Gupta's collaborative leadership style and commitments to research and research ethics are appreciated.

DEFINITIONS

Board of Record – The Board of Record (BoR) for a multi-jurisdictional study is decided based upon the location of majority of participants and/or study team; as well as which institution is best placed to mitigate risk to participants/data.

Exempt – Not categorized as research as defined by the TCPS 2 (2018).

Harmonized review – A streamlined ethics review and approval process that allows for submission of a single ethics application across partner institutions. This applies to all minimal risk and above minimal risk ethics applications.

Post Approval Activity (PAA)– Amendments or changes after a study has been approved. PAAs take place after an application has received REB approval and a certificate of approval has been issued.

Principal Investigator (PI)

The Principal Investigator is the main person responsible for conducting the research, data analysis, report findings and compliance with policies, terms and conditions of approval.

Provisos – Provisos are questions or requests from the Research Ethics Board to the PI regarding the application.

RISe – The Provincial Research Ethics Platform (PREP) for harmonized studies, hosted by UBC in their Research Information System Enterprise.