KPU | KWANTLEN POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY

Research Ethics Board

REB Guidelines for Undergraduate Course-Based Student Research Involving Human Participants*

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These guidelines define the scope of student research activities permitted under the Research Ethics Board of KPU's ("the REB") Course-Based Student Research Involving Human Participants. Once approved, an REB Protocol for Course-Based Student Research documents the scope of projects, methods, and participant populations that student researchers may undertake with REB approval as part of a course under the supervision of the course instructor.

Course-Based Student Research (CBSR) Ethics approvals are attached to an instructor and a particular course where students are practicing research skills that fall under "research involving human participants" according to the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2).

A CBSR application is required when an instructor seeks to supervise student research involving humans in the context of a course. The research activities are supervised by the instructor who, upon approval, is **delegated** by the REB to assess and monitor the ethics of student research according to the principles, guidelines, and requirements of the TCPS2. Even when students are collecting data from other students enrolled in the same course, this is still considered CBSR and requires REB approval.

The TCPS2 describes CBSR in Article 6.12(2): "An institution may decide that ethics review of minimal risk course-based research activities with a primarily pedagogical purpose can be delegated to non-REB members at the institution's department, faculty or equivalent level." Thus, the objectives of CBSR research activities must be first and foremost educational.

If a student research project begins with approval of an REB Protocol for CBSR and later expands outside the scope of approved activities, a regular application for ethical review must be approved by the REB prior to recruitment of participants and/or collection of research data.

Data from a course-based approval may not be used by the course instructor for their own research purposes.

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*Adapted from the University of Victoria's Course-Based Research Ethics Guidelines for Instructors Student Research Activities Within a Course; UBC's Course-Based Research Project Applications for Undergraduate and Graduate Projects; and Vancouver Island University's REB Guidelines for Minimal Risk, Undergraduate Course-based Student Research Involving Human Participants.

Instructor Responsibilities:

a. Instructors are eligible to complete a Course-based Research Ethics Application for students' activities and assignments under the following conditions:
    i. Within the course presentation, instructors set parameters and instructions for students as to the research skills and conditions under which students will undertake activities.
    ii. Instructors supervise and teach students about conducting one or more research activities (e.g., students practice recruiting participants, collecting data, interpreting data, compiling the data in various formats, and reporting on findings).
    iii. All students complete and submit proof of completion of the TCPS2 CORE certificate to the instructor before beginning any research activities.
b. The course instructor is responsible for the ethical conduct of all student research activities conducted under the auspices of the course.
c. The course instructor is responsible for the storage and destruction of consent forms and research data.

Storage of Student Data:

Data should be retained until the end of the course in a secure location and then destroyed. If students may be disseminating the results of their research, such as through a conference presentation or publication, instructors may indicate this in their CBSR ethics application and specify how long data will be retained for. Below are some suggestions for how instructors can store physical and electronic data sources.

- Physical data
    - Hard copy data, such as consent forms and surveys, can be provided to the course instructor to store in a locked cabinet.
    - Some departments may have an alternate secure location for the storage of data. For example, the Psychology department has a locked cabinet in the Psychology lab for the storage of student research materials and data.
- Electronic data
    - Instructors who have access to online survey software, such as Qualtrics, can store student data within the software until it is time to be deleted.
    - Instructors can provide a designated electronic space, such as setting up a space in their course in Moodle or a folder in MS Teams where students can upload copies of electronic data, such as survey data, data files, audio files or transcripts. Folder need to be set up for individual student/groups so that other students cannot access the data. Files should be password protected.
    - Instructors may choose to have students submit a signed document prior to the end of the course that declares that they have destroyed the data for their student projects.

Ultimately the course instructor is responsible for ensuring that the research data has been destroyed appropriately.

How to Complete a CBSR Ethics Application:

a. Submit your application at least two weeks in advance of any course research activities to ensure that the REB has time to review it and so that you have time to make any necessary changes before the research activities start. You must demonstrate how you will provide guidance and instruction to ensure that students adhere to the university's policies and procedures for research. The REB will look for evidence in the application that you are prepared to instruct, give guidance on, and monitor adherence to ethical research procedures involving humans.
b. Your application should demonstrate how the following general guidelines will be addressed in designing and teaching the course, with variances considered on a case-by- case basis:
    - Research must be characterized as minimal risk (TCPS2 Article 2.8B), defined as: "*minimal risk* research is defined as research in which the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research are no greater than those encountered by participants in those aspects of their everyday life that relate to the research." Risks should not outweigh benefits.
        i. Sensitive personal information that may be collected by students presents context-specific risks, but usually includes the possibility that individuals could be directly identified, even in confidential research, based on their intersectional identities (e.g., racial or ethnic origin, gender or sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs or associations, socio-economic status, ability, medical information including mental health information, and employment and educational history). This is sometimes called the "mosaic effect." Care needs to be considered when a person's public intersectional identity may put them in a vulnerable position to be identified when participating in the research.
    - Potential research participants are usually:
        i. Adults competent to give their own informed consent to participate in research. The TCPS2 does not define the age of adulthood, but rather focuses on potential participants' capacity for giving voluntary and fully informed consent to participate in research. To be considered minimal risk, CBSR must only involve participants who have the capacity to give their own consent;
        ii. Live freely in the community (e.g., not hospitalized or incarcerated);
        iii. Are not considered vulnerable, or if vulnerable, their vulnerability is not the focus of the research questions. According to the TCPS2, vulnerability is "A diminished ability to fully safeguard one's own interests in the context of a specific research project."
    - Participants must give free, informed, and documented consent to participate in research. Student researchers should use the most recent KPU Consent Form Template for Course-Based Student Research and adapt the consent form to their project.
    - Research must be considered non-invasive, such as interviews and surveys, rather than invasive, such as collecting blood samples.
    - Research must not involve the use of deception, which is an alteration to the

requirements of consent. Partial disclosure of research purposes may be permitted if TCPS2 Article 3.7A and 3.7B conditions are met:

- Article 3.7A: "The research involves no more than minimal risk to the participants; the alteration to consent requirements is unlikely to adversely affect the welfare of participants; it is impossible or impracticable to carry out the research and to address the research question properly, given the research design, if the prior consent of participants is required; in the case of a proposed alteration, the precise nature and extent of any proposed alteration is defined; and the plan to provide a debriefing (if any) that may also offer participants the possibility of refusing consent and/or withdrawing data and/or human biological materials, shall be in accordance with Article 3.7B."
- Article 3.7B: "Debriefing must be a part of all research involving an alteration to consent requirements (Article 3.7A) whenever it is possible, practicable and appropriate. Participants in such research must have the opportunity to refuse consent and request the withdrawal of their data and/or human biological materials whenever possible, practicable and appropriate."

- Student researchers are also in a situation of minimal risk in conducting the research.
- Accessible and transparent data protection measures that the student can easily adhere to must be put in place and must be proportionate to the sensitivity of the data being managed.
- Data collected by students in the context of a course must normally be destroyed once the course is over as a part of completing assignments, and cannot be used for secondary purposes. The course instructor is ultimately responsible for the storage and destruction of the data collected by students.
- Students are conducting research that falls under the instructor's general areas of expertise in which they are competent to assess research protocols.

c. To apply for REB approval for Course-based Student Research, please submit a complete CBSR application on ROMEO and include the following documents:
    i. The course syllabus
    ii. TCPS2 CORE Certificate of Completion of the course instructor, completed in or after 2022
    iii. A description of the student research assignments
    iv. Template consent form that will be adapted by students. Please adapt or consult the REB's current Consent Form Template for Course-Based Student Research to ensure the template adheres to current ethical guidelines. If the description of the population, method of recruitment, purpose, and procedures is different for each student's project, provide an example completed consent form that will be representative of the students' consent forms. Please also ensure that the consent form clearly indicates which course students are conducting the research for and that the purpose of the research is pedagogical.

Renewals and amendments

a. Once approved, the approval is attached to the instructor and the specific course for one year from the date of issue of the REB ethics certificate.
b. Once approved by the REB, KPU instructors may apply to renew an approved REB Protocol for CBSR on an annual basis. If major changes are made to student research activities before the year is up, please submit a descriptive amendment.

ROMEO Questions/Sections

Minimal Risk, Course-Based Student Research

1. CBSR Checklist

Should you be unable to check one or more of these boxes, consult the REB chair. A full ethics application may be required.

- ❑ Research conducted by students is minimal risk (TCPS2 Article 2.8B), defined as: "*minimal risk* research is defined as research in which the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research are no greater than those encountered by participants in those aspects of their everyday life that relate to the research." Risks should not outweigh benefits.
- ❑ Potential research participants: are adults competent to give their own informed consent to participate in research; live freely in the community; and are not considered vulnerable, or if vulnerable, their vulnerability is not the focus of the research questions. According to the TCPS2, vulnerability is "a diminished ability to fully safeguard one's own interests in the context of a specific research project."
- ❑ Participants will give free, informed, explicit, and documented written/electronic consent to participate in research. Student researchers can use the KPU template; please attach your consent form template if you are not using the KPU form.
- ❑ Research will be considered non-invasive, such as interviews and surveys, rather than invasive, such as collecting blood samples.
- ❑ Research will not involve the use of deception, or partial disclosure of research purposes, unless TCPS2 Article 3.7A conditions are met.
- ❑ Student researchers are in a situation of minimal risk in conducting the research.
- ❑ Students are conducting research that falls under the instructor's general areas of expertise in which they are competent to assess research protocols.
- ❑ Data collected by students in the context of a course will normally be destroyed once the course is over. The course instructor is responsible for ensuring the destruction of the data. Any secondary purposes are clearly elaborated in the application and consent forms, if the REB grants an exception.

2. Course Design, Assignments, and Instructor Role

Describe the pedagogical purpose(s) of the research assignment(s). Summarize the primary focus of the research assignment(s) that you have developed for your course.

Q Briefly describe the types of student research projects that may take place in this

course.

- Q Briefly describe the types of methods (e.g., surveys, participant observation, interviews, etc.) that may be used and the kinds of data that may be collected by students. If students will have latitude to develop their specific project methodology within broad parameters, you will need to describe the range of options. If possible, please attach any copies of questionnaires, interview guides, or other tests that may be used.
- Q If partial disclosure of research purposes is proposed, please outline how the conditions outlined in TCPS2 Article 3.7A conditions will be met.
- Q Describe what training will be provided to students with regards to research ethics
- Q Briefly describe what research-related training will be provided to ensure that the research methodologies described above will be properly conducted by the students and no harm comes to them or to participants.
- Q Describe how the course instructor will review students' research activities for sound ethical procedures before they proceed and during the research (e.g., research proposal submission, in-class discussions, individual meetings, assignments). Explain the steps the instructors will take to confirm that students are following the allowable methods.

3. Participants & Recruitment

- Q Describe the human participants/participant groups that students will be permitted to include in their research activities. Include an estimated number of participants per student assignment.
- Q Describe the exclusion criteria that you will establish and communicate to students to ensure that risks are non-existent or minimal. (Participant populations may vary across students' assignments but are expected to represent a range of demographics and characteristics).
- Q Explain how participants' identities will be kept confidential in students' research output (e.g., assignments, presentations).
- Q Describe the recruitment method(s) that you will permit students to use and will train students for. The most common recruitment procedures in CBSR ethics protocols include the following, because they do not usually involve any implications:
  - Approach participants face-to-face on campus
  - Email, text or telephone people they already know (other students, friends, colleagues) by using their own existing personal contact information
  - Request that a third party (e.g. a KPU department) forward a recruitment invitation or a poster to students, faculty or staff on their behalf.

4. Data Management

- Q Describe the data management plan that your students must adhere to in order to safeguard participants' confidentiality. Describe how and where students will keep raw and/or electronic data during the course to protect data confidentiality (e.g., codes will be used and kept separate from raw data, transcripts will be de-identified, identifiers

will be removed at the earliest possible time).

Q Describe when students will be instructed to delete/dispose of the data they collected for their course-based research assignment or how they are to transfer the data they collected. Describe the plan for the destruction of data.

Q Do you propose that students share their findings after the course has ended? Under the conditions of a course-based ethics application, it is expected that, in the usual case, instructors will ensure that students destroy their collected data immediately after the course requirement has been fulfilled. If your course is designed for students to share their findings, report, or essay outside the context of the class (e.g., undergraduate student journal, undergraduate conference, a community partner), or to otherwise archive the data in some way, please provide a rationale. Include how the data will be stored and when it will be destroyed. Note that consent forms must make participants aware of all potential uses of data.

5. Data collection

Q Specify each type of data gathering activity that you will permit students to use for the purposes of the course-based research assignment (e.g., questionnaires, focus groups, interviews). If you will provide students with options or a range of activities from which to choose, describe the limitations or parameters that you will communicate to students to ensure that their individual activities are minimal risk.

Q Describe the geographic location(s) where students will conduct their recruitment and data collection activities (e.g., KPU campuses, within Surrey).

6. Consent process

The most common consent procedures in course-based ethics protocols include the following, as they are the most ethically straightforward:

- Signed consent for in-person data collection (interviews, focus groups)
- Implied consent for anonymous surveys (in-person, online)

Q Describe how students will obtain consent from their participants.

Q Will deception, or the partial disclosure of research purposes, be used? If so, how will the conditions of Article 3.7A of the TCPS2 be met? (E.g., minimal risk research with use of debriefing.)

Q Describe how, where, and by whom consent documents will be stored and protected during the course.

Q Describe how the consent forms will be destroyed at the end of the course and who will be responsible for their destruction.

7. Supporting Materials: Please attach the following materials:

a. Your course presentation/syllabus
b. Documentation, if available, pertaining to the course-based research projects (e.g., Research Assignment instructions, consent forms, recruitment posters, etc.).
c. Your TCPS 2 CORE Certificate dated 2022 or more recent.

8. Instructor's Delegated Review Agreement

In submitting this application, I acknowledge (with a check) that:

- ❑ I have reviewed KPU's Research Involving Human Participants Policy and Procedure (RS1) and I agree to comply with the requirements of the guidelines associated with these policies and procedures.
- ❑ I understand that I am the delegated reviewer of all student research conducted in this course.
- ❑ I will ensure that all student research projects are minimal risk.
- ❑ I will ensure students complete the most recent online Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 CORE.
- ❑ I will actively monitor the research progress of students, and make myself available to students should problems arise during the course of the research.
- ❑ I will ensure that student data has been destroyed by the end of the course, or other specified date.
- ❑ If I have questions about the ethical conduct of student research, I will contact the KPU Research Ethics Board at reb@kpu.ca.
- ❑ Adverse Events (unanticipated negative consequences or results affecting participants) must be reported by the instructor to the REB in a timely manner.
- ❑ Approval covers only the course described in the application. A renewal is required for each year through an amendment stating the new course dates and any changes to the course design.