



MEMORANDUM

To: Gillian Balfour, Chair APPC

From: Noah Arney, Policy Specialist
Office of the Provost & VP Academic, Office of the General Counsel

Date: January 23, 2025

Subject: Research Ethics Board Policy

Purpose of this document:

Approving a Research Ethics Board policy ED (number to be assigned).

Background:

TRU is required to have a Research Ethics Board (REB) in alignment with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2). Senate is our highest body for academic and research matters and so oversight of the REB is under the Senate, while the Office of the Vice President Research provides administrative support for the REB. With the change to the Integrity in Research and Scholarship the Research Ethics Board policy the Research Ethics Board will no longer be established under that policy. This new policy then will establish the REB as an independent board with oversight by the Senate.

Summary of Proposed Amendments:

This policy replaces brief mention in the Integrity in Research and Scholarship with a policy that gives the REB a framework within which they will be independent but accountable to Senate. It establishes the REB, sets their mandate, and gives them the responsibility for developing terms of reference, procedures, processes, and reviewing research involving humans. It affirms that all researchers conducting research that involves human participants, their private data, or human biological material must be reviewed and approved by the REB. It structures the role of the VP Research in relation to the REB and to education on and promotion of research ethics.

Summary of Engagement:

- Identified as an issue in the proposed updated Scholarly Integrity policy
- Reviewed with Director of Research Contracts and Compliance and Director of Research Initiatives
- Reviewed by the Chairs of the REB
- Reviewed by Provost and Vice President Research
- Reviewed by Legal



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- Reviewed by Policy Subcommittee of APPC
- Reviewed by Research Committee of Senate
- Shared broadly with TRU Community

Recommended Steps:

1. Review by APPC February 2025
2. Notice of Motion at Senate February 2025
3. Approval of the policy proposal by Senate March 2025
4. Assigning of policy number by Secretariat

Proposed Motion:

APPC: RESOLVED that APPC approves the proposed Research Ethics Board policy and recommends Senate approve it.

Senate: RESOLVED that, on the recommendation of APPC, Senate approves the proposed Research Ethics Board policy.

Attachments:

- Research Ethics Board Policy

POLICY NUMBER	(If a new policy, leave blank)
APPROVAL DATE	(Leave blank; will be completed once approved)
AUTHORITY	Senate
CATEGORY	Educational; Research
PRIMARY CONTACT	Vice President Research
ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT	Director of Research Contracts and Compliance; Chair, Research Ethics Board

POLICY

The ethical conduct of research and respect for human dignity are a priority for Thompson Rivers University (TRU). This policy establishes an independent Research Ethics Board (REB), accountable to the Senate, which is authorized to establish and oversee appropriate procedures to ensure ethical conduct of research involving humans.

This policy aligns with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2) (2022) and will be updated to remain consistent with them. To better align with TCPS2, language in this policy may be adopted directly from that document. Should there be any discrepancies between this policy and the TCPS2, the most recent version of the TCPS2 takes precedence.

In alignment with TCPS2 the core principles of the REB are:

- Respect for Persons
- Concern for Welfare
- Justice

REGULATIONS

1 RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD

Thompson Rivers University (TRU) establishes the Research Ethics Board (REB) to ensure that TRU upholds the highest standards in the involvement of human participants for teaching, research or testing. The REB is established in compliance with the TCPS2 and the Tri-Agency Agreement which requires that institutions conducting human participant-based research, teaching, or testing establish an REB and that it be functionally active.

All research that involves human participants, their private data, or human biological material as defined in TCPS2 requires review and approval by the REB.

The REB has a mandate to approve, reject, propose modifications to, or terminate any proposed or ongoing research involving humans conducted under the jurisdiction of TRU.

2 RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the entire University Community to support a culture of research ethics. No member of the University Community will breach this policy, engage in unethical research as defined in TCPS2, or engage in retaliation against anyone following this policy.

2.1 RESEARCHERS

All those conducting research and scholarship, or otherwise involved in the research enterprise in any capacity whatsoever, at TRU are responsible for:

1. Adhering to ethical standards as defined in TCP2.
2. Seeking, obtaining, and maintaining approval from the relevant approval committee which may include the REB, Animal Care Committee, and/or Biohazards Committee.

2.2 RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD

The REB is responsible for:

1. Developing and submitting to the Senate for approval a Terms of Reference for the REB which will include membership, conduct of their business, development of processes, and reporting frequency and method.
2. Development of any procedures and processes for reviewing and overseeing research involving humans.
3. Making the Terms of Reference, procedures, and processes available to the University Community.
4. Approving any research involving human participants before it can proceed
5. Independent decision making on any applications that come before them.

2.3 VICE-PRESIDENT RESEARCH

The Vice-President Research is responsible for:

1. The development and implementation of this policy.
2. Promoting and providing education on research ethics including providing guidance to researchers on relevant policies and applicable laws, rules, and guidelines.
3. Supporting researchers in their confidentiality obligations.
4. Providing administrative support for the REB.

The Vice-President Research may not be a member of the REB or have influence on any decision making of the REB.

3 ASSOCIATED POLICIES

Other TRU policies that affect this include but are not limited to:

1. Biosafety and Biosecurity ADM 25-0
2. Care and Use of Animals in Research and Teaching BRD 21-1
3. Research Integrity ED 15-2