

BROCK UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD
Wednesday, January 10, 2018
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
MC D350-L

Minutes of the SREB Meeting

Attendance

Michael Ashton
 Robyn Bourgeois
 Lynn Dempsey
 Ann-Marie DiBiase
 James Foley
 Christina Garchinski
 Karen Julien

Carly MaGee (non-voting)
 Linda Morrice
 Miya Narushima
 Mary-Beth Raddon
 Robert Steinbauer
 Christine Tardif-Williams
 Kendra Thomson
 Lori Walker (non-voting)

Regrets

Catherine Nash
 Esther Santos

MINUTES		
ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
1	<p>Motion to approve Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved <p>Motion to approve November & December Decision Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board briefly discussed the intention of making Decisions Reports (documents outlining approved protocols, continuing reports, modifications, and final reports containing the name of the Principal Investigator [PI] and the title of their research project) public on our website; this is in keeping with the Tri-Council's goal to maintain public trust and accountability. • Decision reports can also be a tool for participants to look up studies to ensure files are legitimate. • There is a statement in the REB Guideline for Confidentiality that states, "unless otherwise specified by the Principal Investigator, the file number and title of research projects that have received REB clearance will be posted on the Office of Research Services website. This list will be updated monthly." The Research Ethics Office (REO) should consider sending out an announcement to researchers, reminding them that this information is public knowledge. • The Board thought of instances when a researcher may not want this information public: perhaps if the student under their supervision was conducting researcher that the PI did not want to be affiliated with? However, LW pointed out that as PI, that researcher has overall responsibility of the project. As such, they need to be affiliated and involved with the project. • LW clarified that only the title of the project is posted, so it does not necessarily reveal too much about the project. • As well, PI's are able to change the title for their ethics submission if the project is risky or they do not want the title revealed publicly for any other reason. • November and December Decision Reports were approved. 	<p>Motion to approve: MA Seconded: RS All in favour</p> <p>Motion to approve: LM Seconded: MA All in favour</p>

	<p>Motion to approve November Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved <p>Motion to approve December Minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved 		<p>Motion to approve: LM Seconded: KT All in favour</p> <p>Motion to approve: CTW Seconded: MBR Abstentions for those absent from the December meeting All in favour</p>
2	New Business	<p>The REB Sub-Committee on Guidelines, Practice, and Procedure (GPP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new documents to be approved by SREB today were reviewed: <p>REB Standard – Eligibility to Serve as a Principal Investigator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The discussion from the December meeting when these documents were first viewed by the Board was recapped for those who were absent from the December meeting: • Board members asked whether PhD students who are teaching a course under a contract are eligible to serve as a PI. It was discussed that all sessional instructors (even if they are PhD students) may serve as PIs for research projects associated with the courses they teach for the duration of their appointments if granted permission from the Chair or Centre Director. • A member pointed out that there is different language across departments for sessional instructors (e.g., part-time instructor, sessional, contract). Are these all the same things? Should all terms be included in this standard to ensure understanding and applicability to all departments/faculties? • A member mentioned that CUPE uses the term “instructors.” Perhaps this language should go back to GPP for a final read to ensure it is consistent with the job titles listed under CUPE. • Members confirmed that although sessional instructors may serve as PIs for research projects associated with the courses they teach for the duration of their appointments if granted permission from the Chair or Centre Director, they cannot supervise a student in their studies (per policy). • After this recap, the Board discussed whether any other individuals need to see and approve this document after the Board. The REO confirmed that the Vice-President Research (VPR; Interim Joffre Mercier at the time) has already viewed the document to ensure our guideline is consistent with who can hold a grant. As far as we know, this is the only person who would need to provide approval however, CM will look into this. • Board members agreed to make the change from “sessional” to “non-BUFA Instructor” per BREB’s suggestion. • All members voted to approve the standard. 	

REB Guideline – Definition of a Research Team:

- The discussion from the December meeting when these documents were first viewed by the Board was recapped for those who were absent from the December meeting:
- A member asked how researchers will be informed of these changes – will a hyperlink to this document be embedded in the application? Or will definitions be provided in the application?
- The office explained we are still determining the best strategy for dissemination but most likely, definitions on the application will be provided for the first few months until researchers are aware of the change.
- The Board asked GPP to consider how onerous it may be to name every research personnel. These names change a lot as students filter in and out of projects. Is this reasonable or necessary? For example, does the REB want to know the name of a third-party transcriptionist who has been hired and signed a confidentiality agreement?
- The REO explained that research personnel only need to be named if they will be recruiting, interacting with participants, or have access to data in an identifiable form.
- After the recap, the Board discussed that naming each research personnel may also be context specific. If the data are sensitive (e.g., interviewing people on a risky or sensitive topic), we would need to ensure the interviewer is trained and has the qualifications or expertise to not only carry out the interview but deal with any adverse events that may arise. The REB may feel differently about research personnel who are operating research equipment – we may not need to have this person's name on file given the extent of their involvement and the type of data they have access to.
- It was discussed that as of now, the CORE tutorial is only a requirement for Brock University graduate students. In other words, if research personnel come from other institutions, we do not require that they complete the CORE before being involved in the research. However, most other universities also require their graduate students to complete the CORE tutorial which means the number of research personnel applying to our Board from other institutions who have not completed the CORE tutorial is very minimal.
- The Board proposed the following modification to this guideline: "Research personnel may come and go from the research team throughout the duration of the project, as long as the REB is updated with these changes, *on an annual basis at minimum.*" This would ensure members of the research team such as undergraduate students, transcriptionists etc. can enter and exist the project without having to wait for clearance

from the REB, and limits the number of email updates sent to the REO.

- The Board suggested that if the nature of the research is such that research personnel will be filtering in and out, the researcher might describe the anticipated practices for handling such changes in personnel in their application. Perhaps this is something we could incorporate into our guideline as well, which would gesture to the REB's sensitivity to these changing practices (perhaps a more practical approach than an email notification to the REO for each change), while also satisfying the REB's request to have all members of the research team listed in the REB file.
- The Board wondered whether the guideline is currently written to encompass the contextual risks, so that we avoid research personnel coming in and out of a project with a topic that is greater than minimal risk. Members agreed that the definition of a substantive change should cover this (i.e., "adjustments or refinements to research that elevate risk or affect participant safety, comfort, privacy, or confidentiality").
- Motion to put forward by AMD to approve the guideline in principle (with the above suggested changes). Seconded by CTW. All members voted in favour to approve the guideline in principle.

Discussion re: Ethics Annual Report

- LW explained to the Board that when the report went to Senate last year, there was a question as to why the REO is compiling the report instead of the Chairs. LW clarified that this is an administrative report and a lot of information in it pertains to tasks that the Chairs are not responsible for (e.g., member workload, community engagement, training, professional development and contributions to the field, etc.).
- LW also indicated that a lot of the background information in the report is carried over from year to year, to ensure all new members of Senate understand the context and background.
- LW identified that the REO's priorities are the same today as they were 14 years ago when she began in this position. We are still hoping to get an online application and clerical staff.
- The new VPR (Tim Kenyon), was concerned that we have not met those priorities yet. Although the Office of Research Services (ORS) has had various near launches of an enterprise system, none of them have taken off.
- Ideally, we are looking for a system that the PI would input their name into the form and it would self-populate with their personal information such as: Faculty,

		<p>department, contact information etc. Right now, this is all being done by hand in the office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also, the online system would allow for revisions to be made in the online document, allowing us to track in one place how the project has changed and been modified over time. As of now, with all different copies and versions of the application, it is sometimes difficult to assess the project in its current state. • LW brought to the Board's attention the slight increase in workload this past year. • We try to stress that the REO sees upwards of 1000 submissions a year (versus just 300 or so new applications). Each of these submissions includes a point of contact and action required by the REO. For example: processing the new application; reviewing; sending out a clarification and revision request; reviewing the clarification responses; sending out annual renewal/final report requests; processing annual renewal/final report requests; modifications etc.). • LW explained that the ethics year runs from July 1-June 30. So, although the Board will not see details regarding the external review in this report (it was not done until the 2017-2018 ethics year), this occurred in November 2017 for all of ORS and ethics. <p>Discussion re: External Review (in camera)</p>	<p>Motion to move in camera: AMD Seconded: RB All in favour</p> <p>Motion to move out of camera Seconded All in favour</p>
3	Adjourn	Meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m.	<p>Motion to adjourn: AMD Seconded: LM All in favour</p>