

| Title of Policy         | Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects |
|-------------------------|---|
| Policy Number           | 7.1.2   |
| Category (Policy Type)  | 7 - Research  |
| Approval Body           | College Policy Committee                              |
| Policy Sponsor          | Vice President, Academic and Applied Research         |
| Operational Lead        | Manager, Applied Research and Innovation              |
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| Proposed Date of Review | January 2028  |

## **CONTEXT AND PURPOSE**

College of the Rockies carries a commitment to ensure high ethical standards in research involving humans are upheld. The College recognizes the importance of protecting potential participants and communities in which research may take place. The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 (2020) upholds three core principles: 1) respect for persons, 2) concern for welfare, and 3) justice. These principles guide the ethics review process.

College of the Rockies shall regulate and monitor all research involving humans conducted at the College. It will do so through the College of the Rockies Research Ethics Board (REB).

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to researchers engaged in any research activities that include human subjects and involve the College through:

- the inclusion of College employees and/or students, either as researchers or subjects; including course based research
- non-college individuals or organizations using the College name or its resources and/or conducting research on College students and/or employees.

This policy does not apply to ongoing information gathering activities that are related directly to the normal administration, evaluation, or improvement of an operation, program, service, or activity within the College.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Ethics Review:** The processes and guidelines by which research proposals are evaluated to determine if they meet the quality and ethical principles and standards for research involving human subjects.

**Minimal Risk for Research:** Risk that is within the range normally encountered by, and acceptable to, the human subject in their everyday life.

**Researcher(s):** The person(s) primarily responsible for conducting a particular research activity.

**Research Involving Human Subjects:** An undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a discipline inquiry or systematic investigation, which involves living individuals, human biological materials, as well as human embryos, fetuses, fetal tissue, reproductive materials, and stem cells. This applies to materials derived from living and deceased individuals (TCPS 2, 2020).

**Risk:** The likelihood that something harmful might occur and the magnitude of the harm.

**TCPS:** The *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS) is a joint policy of Canada's three federal research agencies – the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). This Policy expresses the Agencies' continuing commitment to the people of Canada to promote the ethical conduct of research involving humans. It has been informed, in part, by leading international ethics norms, all of which may help, in some measure, to guide Canadian researchers, in Canada and abroad, in the conduct of research involving humans. (TCPS2, 2020)

## **POLICY STATEMENTS**

### **A. AUTHORITY**

#### **A. 1 Related Acts and Regulations**

- A. 1. 1 The Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans is a joint policy of Canada's three federal research agencies: The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).
  - [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 \(2020\) \(ethics.gc.ca\)](#)
- A. 1. 2 The purpose of the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act is to make public bodies more accountable to the public and to protect personal privacy by: a) giving the public a right of access to records, b) giving individuals a right of access to, and a right to request correction of, personal information about themselves, c) specifying limited expectations to the rights of access, d) preventing the unauthorized collection, use or disclosure of personal information by public bodies and e) providing for an independent review of decisions made under the act.
  - [Table of Contents - Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

**A.2 Authority of the College of the Rockies Research Ethics Board**

- A. 2. 1 All research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the College of the Rockies community – including all administrators, faculty, staff, and students, including students carrying out research as part of class assignments and institutional research – fall within the jurisdiction of the College of the Rockies Research Ethics Board (REB). The College’s REB’s jurisdiction applies irrespective of the source of financial support (if any), or project location, as long as the researcher represents the work as College of the Rockies research.
- A. 2. 2 The REB will have the authority to cease research activity that has not been approved through the proportionate ethics review process or research activity that is found to be in violation of this policy.
- A. 2. 3 The REB Chair reports directly to the President and is administratively responsible to the Vice President, Academic and Applied Research.

**B. RESPONSIBILITIES**

**B. 1 Vice President Academic and Applied Research**

- B. 1. 1 The Vice President, Academic and Applied Research (VPAAR) has ultimate responsibility for ensuring research activities comply with this policy. Questions of interpretation of application of this policy or its associated procedures are referred to the Vice President, Academic and Applied Research, whose decision is final.

**B. 2 College Responsibilities**

- B. 2. 1 The College is committed to safeguarding the rights and well-being of human subjects of research activities in which the College is involved by adhering to ethical standards for research involving human subjects stipulated in this and other College of the Rockies policies and procedures.
- B. 2. 2 Article 6.2 of the TCPS2 states that the College shall ensure the REBs are provided with necessary and sufficient ongoing financial and administrative resources to fulfill their duties. The College will maintain the REB accordingly, with the primary responsibility to evaluate and monitor the ethical standards of College research activities that involve human subjects (as described in corresponding procedures).
- B. 2. 3 The REB will regulate the conduct of all research involving human subjects in accordance with the most current version of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2). Any new versions of the TCPS will be adhered to by the REB.

### B. 3 Researchers

B. 3. 1 Researchers are responsible for respecting the principles set out in the TCPS2, and complying with this policy and its associated procedures.

B. 4 Researchers, the College, and the REB are jointly responsible for safeguarding the rights and well-being of human subjects of research activities in which the College is involved. The primary responsibility for adhering to the principles and guidelines stated in this policy and for ensuring high standards of conduct in research involving human subjects, rests with the researcher(s).

### C. RESEARCH INVOLVING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

C. 1 This policy acknowledges that research has often advanced into Indigenous Peoples' communities with little regard for the notions of Indigenous worldviews and self-determination in human development (Biin, et al., 2021). The REB aligns with the recommendations of *Pulling Together: A guide for researchers* (Biin, et al., 2021) and the Tri-council Policy Statement: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis People of Canada.

C. 1. 1 Research ethics review by community REBs or other responsible bodies at the research site will not be a substitute for research ethics review by the REB and will not exempt researchers affiliated with the College from seeking REB approval.

C. 1. 2 Researchers and the REB recognize that research ethics review by community bodies will often pursue purposes and apply criteria that differ from the provisions of the TCPS 2. The express purpose of most Indigenous community codes of research practice is to ensure the relevance of research undertakings to community needs and priorities and respect for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis identities, cultures, and knowledge systems (TCPS 2, 2020).

C. 1. 3 When proposing research expected to involve First Nations, Inuit, or Métis participants, researchers shall advise the REB on how they have engaged, or intend to engage, the relevant community (see corresponding procedures to this policy). The conditions under which engagement is required include, but are not limited to:

- research conducted on First Nations, Inuit, or Métis lands;
- recruitment criteria that include Indigenous identity as a factor for the entire study or for a subgroup in the study;
- research that seeks input from participants regarding a community's cultural heritage, artefacts, traditional knowledge or unique characteristics;
- research in which Indigenous identity or membership in an Indigenous community is used as a variable for the purpose of analysis of the research data; and
- interpretation of research results that will refer to Indigenous communities, peoples, language, history or culture.

- C. 1. 4 The nature and extent of community engagement in a project shall be determined jointly by the researcher and the relevant community and shall be appropriate to community characteristics and the nature of the research.
- C. 1. 5 The REB membership will include an Indigenous expert when reviewing applications of research that involve working with Indigenous communities, as per the College's REB Terms of Reference and as per TCPS (2022) mandated REB composition that includes at least two experts on the research matter.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

### [Policy 7.1 Research](#)

#### [7.1.7 Ethical Review of Course-based Research Involving Human Participants - Policy](#)

- [7.1.7 Ethical Review of Course-based Research Involving Human Participants - Procedures](#)

#### [7.1.3 Responsible Conduct Research - Policy](#)

- [7.1.3 Responsible Conduct Research - Procedures - Appendix A Complaint Process](#)

#### [7.1.2 Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects - Procedures](#)

#### [TCPS 2 \(2020\)](#)

#### [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

Biin, D., Canada, D., Chenoweth, J., & Neel, L. (2021). Pulling Together: A Guide for

Researchers, Híł̓k' al. BCcampus. <https://opentextbc.ca/indigenizationresearchers/>

[Memorandum of Understanding between College of the Rockies and Ktunaxa Nation Council](#)