

## Research Ethics Clearance Process

### Overview:

The purpose of the research ethics review is to protect the rights of research participants. It has emerged out of gross violations in medical and social science research, where human subjects were lied to, used against their will, or without full understanding of what they are consenting to. An independent review board has been established in all Canadian universities with the expressed purpose of protecting research participants. At Queen's it is the General Research Ethics Board (GREB), with each academic unit having their unit REB. The principles by which this process is conducted are outlined in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2- 2018):

[http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique\\_tcps2-eptc2\\_2018.html](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique_tcps2-eptc2_2018.html)

All research involving human participants is required to undergo this process. It is a multi-step process which requires time. Typically, students apply **after** their proposal defense and approval of the study design by the committee. If applying for GREB clearance **before** the proposal defense, the supervisor's letter should address the approval of other committee members. Applications should be submitted a minimum of **three months** before field research is planned.

### The process:

1. Take the online ethics tutorial CORE and obtaining the certificate  
<http://tcps2core.ca/welcome>
2. Start the application on TRAQ <http://queensu.ca/traq/signon.html> If you need help with the online application you can attend a monthly session. Dates are available here: <http://queensu.ca/traq/human-ethics/hsrebgreb-workshops>
3. Review the application with your supervisor(s) and obtain a detailed letter of support from supervisor(s). If working in a community or within an organization, support letters from those might be appropriate. If working with vulnerable groups, follow specific sections in the TCPS2 (the most common ones are linked below under resources). If need be (especially for CBR and R-C projects where students may have various additional roles

such as artist/activist) consult with any of the members of the Unit REB (listed below).

4. Once submitted, the unit REB members will receive a prompt that an application has been submitted. We will review it within two weeks and in most cases, return it with requests for modifications and clarifications. The unit REB **does not** approve applications, it only helps prepare them within disciplinary appropriate standards for the General Research Ethics Board (GREB). When the unit REB is satisfied that the application is complete, we forward it to GREB.
5. Based on the level of risk for participants, GREB will determine whether the application requires a delegated or full board review. If delegated (most of our applications), the student will hear back within two weeks. If full board, the timeline is longer. GREB might ask for further clarifications before awarding clearance.

### **In preparation for applying please consider the following:**

To ensure a smooth and expedient review process, please note the following points:

- While writing your application, you need to position yourself in the “shoes” of the participant. What are the risks they might endure? What part of your methodology could affect the participants? In the process of applying, relate the aspects of the methodology as they pertain to participants.
- If you are working in a multi-jurisdiction situation (e.g., another country; a reserve), you may need to obtain ethics clearance there. Once obtained, the process at Queen’s is simplified.
- To find out which activities do not require ethics review (e.g., art practices under certain conditions; observation in public space), consult chapter 2 of the TCPS2: [http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2\\_2018\\_chapter2-chapitre2.html](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2018_chapter2-chapitre2.html)
- Please note that all submissions to GREB must be done online. The TRAQ/Romeo interface that is provided by the Office of Research Services is mostly user friendly. If you have any questions or trouble signing in please contact the TRAQ/Romeo Sustainment team by sending email to [traq@queensu.ca](mailto:traq@queensu.ca)
- If you have different groups of participants (i.e., professionals as well as individuals; interviews and surveys) you will need a different Letter of

Information (LOI)/Consent Form (CF) for each group. Similarly, you will need to supply the questionnaires/surveys for each group and identify risks/benefits for each group separately.

- If you identify various recruitment methods, you will need to supply a draft of each method (phone, email, etc.).
- Before submitting, review the “New Letter of Information and Consent Form Checklist” (under “LOI/CF information”) and the Guidance on Completing and Reviewing the Standard GREB Application form (under “Application Form Resources”). Both are on the GREB website: <https://www.queensu.ca/urs/ethics/general-research-ethics-board-greb>
- For how to store data securely, please consult “Research Ethics Data Security Recommendations” under “guidelines” on <https://www.queensu.ca/urs/ethics/general-research-ethics-board-greb>
- **It is vital that you provide enough turnaround time for the internal REB process and GREB review, particularly if you are dealing with sensitive issues and vulnerable populations.**

#### Resources:

- The TCPS2 Tutorial Course on Research Ethics <http://tcps2core.ca/welcome> is a requirement for all research ethics review applicants. You will be asked to upload your certificate before your application is accepted for review.
- Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2018) guides all research ethics reviews in Canada. The following guidance chapters often apply to Cultural Studies research. Researchers are strongly advised to review these statements:
  - Chapter 9 Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada [http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2\\_chapter9-chapitre9.html?wbdisable=true](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_chapter9-chapitre9.html?wbdisable=true)
  - Chapter 10 Qualitative Research [link - [http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2\\_chapter10-chapitre10.html](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_chapter10-chapitre10.html)]
- Also see, the new TCPS2 training Module 9 Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada [link - [http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/documents/Module9\\_en.pdf](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/documents/Module9_en.pdf)]
- Multi-jurisdictional review - [http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/documents/Module10\\_en.pdf](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/documents/Module10_en.pdf)

## Suggested Readings:

Elizabeth Miller, et al. *Going Public - The Art of Participatory Practice*. UBC Press, 2017, <https://www.ubcpres.ca/going-public>.

Reed, Patricia. "Co-Autonomous Ethics and the Production of Misunderstanding." *Fillip*, <https://fillip.ca/content/co-autonomous-ethics-and-the-production-of-misunderstanding>.

Tuck, Eve. "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities." *Harvard Educational Review* Vol. 79 No. 3 Fall 2009

Tuck, Eve and Guishard, Monique. "Uncollapsing Ethics: Racialized Scientism, Settler Coloniality, and an Ethical Framework of Decolonized Participatory Action Research." In Kress, Tricia M., Malott, Curry Stephenson, and Porfilio, Brad J., Eds. *Challenging Status Quo Retrenchment: New Directions in Critical Research*. Information Age Publishing. 2013. 3-27.

Younging, Gregory. *Elements of Indigenous Style: A Guide for Writing By and About Indigenous Peoples*. Brush Education Inc, 2018.

## Unit Research Ethics Board mandate

The SCCS Unit REB is charged by the Queen's University General Research Ethics Board (GREB) with providing initial research ethics review for Screen Cultures and Curatorial Studies research that involves human participants in accordance with GREB Policy – "Unit REB Policies & Procedures". The bulk of this work is carried out electronically, using the Queen's Human Ethics Application e-System (TRAQ/Romeo). The SCCS REB meets on an as-needed basis to deal with non-routine applications or questions of general policy.

## Other duties include:

- Raising the profile and understanding of research ethics issues and procedures among members of the SCCS community. This includes annual presentations about research ethics and the review process in the SCCS PRESENTS series.

- Making and revising ethics-related policies, to be approved by Steering and included in the SCCS policy document.
- Presenting a regular report to Steering, via the SCCS REB Chair or delegate.
- Ensuring that appropriate expertise is available for reviewing applications, by maintaining a pool of faculty who have done the training for ethics review.

### **Unit REB members**

Chair

Dorit Naaman (Dept. of Film and Media)

Members: Emily Pelstring

Last updated: October 2019.