



Brandon University Policy on Research Involving Humans

1.0 BACKGROUND

The second edition of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)* is a joint policy of Canada's three federal granting agencies (Tri-Agency): Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR); Natural Sciences and Engineering Council of Canada (NSERC); and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). In order to receive and administer Tri-Agency funding, Canadian institutions must comply with the policies set out in the *Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions*. The TCPS2 falls under Section 3.4 of this Agreement.

2.0 POLICY

Brandon University is committed to the compliance of the Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 and requires that research projects involving human participants undertaken by any person (faculty, staff, students, visiting professors, adjunct professors, visiting professional associates, research associates, postdoctoral fellows) under the auspices of Brandon University or within our jurisdiction, or using any University resources, must be reviewed and approved by the Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC). Brandon University only endorses undergraduate and graduate student principal investigators conducting research with a course advisor and within the jurisdiction of an academic program. BUREC will only consider such applications and not those conducted outside the jurisdiction of an academic program. Furthermore, undergraduate students are limited to conducting research approved as minimal risk. The BUREC Policies and Procedures and other documents and forms applicable to the research ethics review process are available on the Research Office website at the following link: <http://www.brandonu.ca/burec>. This includes research that is: conducted on or off campus; funded or unfunded; conducted by formally affiliated organizations and institutes; and conducted on campus by organizations or individuals not affiliated with Brandon University.

The TCPS2 definitions:

- Research - an undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry and/or systematic investigation.
- Participant - an individual whose data, biological materials, or responses to interventions, stimuli, or questions by a researcher are relevant to answering the research question(s).

The TCPS2 outlines the minimum standards for research involving human participants and Brandon University is at liberty to develop higher standards where appropriate. Where the University, external agency or discipline has a higher standard or additional requirements for the protection of human participants, the higher standard will take precedent.

2.1 Research Requiring BUREC Review:

The following research requires ethics review and approval by BUREC prior to the start of research:

- a) research involving living human participants; and

- b) research that involves 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.

Given the breadth of possible research topics and methods to be reviewed, this policy cannot exhaustively cover all possible circumstances or ethical issues that may arise. It is the responsibility of the researcher to verify with BUREC whether review and certification is required, prior to commencement of the research project.

2.2 Research and Other Activities Exempt from BUREC Review:

In accord with the Tri-Council Policy Statement, BUREC makes the final decision on exemption from research ethics review. For more information, refer to the *Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC) Policies and Procedures*.

2.3 Internal Oversight and Accountability:

The Brandon University Research Ethics Committee (BUREC) is responsible for the administration and certification of human participatory research conducted under the auspices or jurisdiction of Brandon University. The BUREC review process is intended to provide assurance to research participants, researchers, and the University, that participants will be respected and protected, and will be involved in ethically sound research. BUREC:

- a) will maintain, develop, and revise internal policies and procedures as appropriate;
- b) has the authority to approve an ethics application, approve an ethics application subject to modifications, or reject an ethics application; and
- c) is responsible for reviewing and approving all amendments to approved applications; monitoring on-going research; and terminating ethics projects that do not conform to ethical standards or comply with approved policies and/or procedures.

2.4 BUREC Membership:

The BUREC composition shall be determined by BUREC for approval by the Senate Research Committee, and shall consist of at least five (5) members, who reflect gender diversity, of whom at least:

- two (2) members have expertise in relevant research disciplines, fields and methodologies covered by BUREC;
- one member is knowledgeable in ethics;
- one member who is knowledgeable in the relevant law, who is not the institution's legal counsel or risk manager;
- one community representative who has no affiliation with the institution; and
- one community representative who has no affiliation with the institution.

All appointed members of BUREC are to be approved by the Senate Research Committee. A detailed outline of the BUREC membership can be found in the *BUREC Policies and Procedures*.

2.5 Conflict of Interest:

A conflict of interest may arise when activities or situations place an individual or institution in a real, potential or perceived conflict between the duties or responsibilities related to research, and personal, institutional or other interest. These interests include, but are not limited to, business, commercial or financial interests pertaining to an institution and/or the individual, their family members, friends, or their former, current or prospective professional associates.

A conflict of interest may involve the institution, researcher, or BUREC member. Any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest shall be disclosed. This includes dual roles in which the researcher(s) and their associated obligations (e.g., acting as both a researcher and a therapist, health care provider, caregiver, teacher, advisor, consultant, supervisor, student or employer) may create conflicts, undue influences, power imbalances or coercion that could affect relationships with others and affect decision-making procedures (e.g., consent of participants). When acting in dual or multiple roles, the researcher shall disclose the nature of the conflict to BUREC, outlining how this conflict will be mitigated, as well as to the participant in the consent process.

2.6 BUREC Appeal Process:

Decisions of the BUREC may be appealed under the terms of the Brandon University and The University of Winnipeg bi-lateral agreement, whereby the ethics review committee of each University serves as the others Ethics Review Appeals Committee in formal cases of appeal. The decision of The University of Winnipeg shall be final and binding.

2.7 Compliance

Brandon University requires that all faculty members, staff, and students adhere to this policy and the BUREC Policies and Procedures derived from it. The University considers non-compliance and the inappropriate treatment of human participants to be a serious offence, subject to penalties, as outlined in the *BUREC Non-Compliance Policy and Procedures*.

Revisions Approved by BUREC – May 2020
Revised Approved by Senate Research Committee – September 2020
Revisions Approved by Senate – October 2020