



Research Guideline Memo #3 Research Staff and Ethics March 26, 2020

This message provides Faculty with important updates regarding research activities. In particular, we are further detailing the role of Research Staff and changes to ethics procedures for current protocols.

I would like to begin by thanking Faculty, Deans, Chairs and Staff at the University of Winnipeg. It has been a trying few weeks and we are all feeling the pressure of the changes brought on by COVID-19. Many of the changes came very quickly, requiring us to make some difficult decisions. Together, we have helped not only support ongoing research and teaching but we put the wellbeing of all of us first.

Research Staff (Student and Non-Student)

With University of Winnipeg limiting access to campus, Faculty are asked to continue to monitor research projects and to limit in-person activities. At present, Faculty are permitted on campus for research and other purposes but are asked to take care and check in with security upon arrival.

Faculty with ongoing campus research should be assuming the majority of duties necessary to maintain their research during this period of reduced access.

Non-Student Research staff working with Faculty on campus must be limited to absolutely essential personnel only, such as Post-Doctoral Fellows whose own research may be impacted.

Other non-essential personnel, such as (but not limited to) Research Associates/Assistants, Visiting Scholars and Technicians, should not be on campus for activities related to Faculty research.

It is important to contact the Dean and Vice President Research and Innovation for questions related to Non-Student Research Staff.

We will be consulting with Human Resources to assess each situation carefully to determine the best set of options for each position impacted by changes to access to campus and/or research activities.

As communicated in the previous memo, **Student Researchers are not permitted on campus** to support faculty work.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WINNIPEG

Faculty should continue to find alternative tasks that can be done remotely (most likely from home). The Tri-Council greatly supports faculty finding alternative opportunities for students to remain engaged in research.

Fieldwork and Research

We are entering what would normally be a busy period for fieldwork. Requests to undertake fieldwork in the coming month should be carefully considered in your research plan and communicated to the Dean who will inform the Vice-President, Research and Innovation.

We expect that inter-provincial travel restrictions may impose additional challenges. Travel within Manitoba is also likely to be disrupted as many communities try to manage health situations.

We are monitoring Tri-Council for additional information and will communicate updates as they become available.

Research Ethics

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, the University Human Research Ethics Board (UHREB) advises investigators to consider if their research protocols could be modified or delayed to limit personal contacts, laboratory visits, or trips into clinics and hospitals.

Specifically, in some research settings in-person participant interactions should be reduced and/or replaced with telephone or online communication. This is particularly important if students are involved.

Considerations include: the nature of your protocol, the type of participants engaged in the research, and any additional risk that may arise by switching from in-person to virtual communication. Revised participant consents or consent addendums may be required (e.g., to update privacy considerations with use of different communication channels).

Where research staff are feeling unwell, care should be taken to stay home to prevent transmission of any illness. If COVID-19 is known or suspected, Manitoba Public Health protocols should be followed <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/index.html>

While TCPS 2 typically requires review and approval of modifications prior to implementation, an exception can be made where the change is necessary to eliminate an immediate risk to participant(s) (Article 6.15). Such changes may be implemented but must be reported to the REB at the earliest opportunity (within 5 business days as a guide).



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WINNIPEG

Reminder: where the research involves physical assessments and use of equipment (e.g., metabolic carts, facemasks, mouthpieces, nose clips, straps, turbines, valves, tubing, cannula, treadmills, etc.) disinfection according to manufacturer's standards where applicable is paramount and use of single use accessories is advisable. In the absence of manufacturer standards, thorough cleaning between participants is advised.

Please see Health Canada's website for up-to-date information:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

Research Support Services

As a final reminder, research support staff have moved to email and video conferencing (where possible). Please note that office phone numbers will not be actively monitored.

All Research staff are working remotely to ensure that faculty have resources to assist with current projects and for applying for new grants.

Reach out as needed. We are here to help with research questions and to provide support.

We will be using the website to provide faculty key updates but also ask that you also frequently visit Tri-Council pages.

Ultimately, our goal is to provide timely information. If there is any feedback or comments, please feel free to share with me directly.

Stay healthy,

Jino Distasio