

## University of Winnipeg

### Policy for Human Research Ethics Training

The University of Winnipeg has a University Human Research Ethics Board (UHREB) to ensure that all human research conducted by UW faculty, staff and students meets the requirements of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2, 2010) and its own policies and procedures.

Researchers, institutions, or partnering organizations will only receive funding from Canada's federal granting agencies (NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR) if they agree to adhere to the ethical principles and articles of the TCPS2. Further to that end, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of Winnipeg and the three federal granting agencies, Schedule 2.1d, states that Institutions must promote education for, and provide training opportunities to, members of the institution's community in the area of ethics of research involving humans.

The second edition of the TCPS represents the first substantive change since it was first adopted in 1998. This major revision reflects more than 10 years of experience in the application of the TCPS by the research community to existing and emerging ethical issues and new areas of research.

The federal Panel on Research Ethics (PRE) released a tutorial in June 2011 to increase awareness and understanding of TCPS2 in the research community. The Course on Research Ethics (CORE) tutorial is free, self-paced, and online. The tutorial features interactive exercises and multi-disciplinary examples, and is intended as an introduction to the TCPS2. CORE consists of eight modules and is designed primarily for researchers and ethics review committee members to assist them in the interpretation and application of the TCPS2. The tutorial does not have to be completed in one sitting as progress points are automatically saved allowing users to resume their session at another time. The length of time a person takes to complete the tutorial is up to them. PRE indicates the entire tutorial may take on average three (3) hours or more to complete depending on how many examples and activities one chooses to explore. The tutorial is not a test or examination and there is no pass or fail assessment. The tutorial is a mastery-based session providing a certificate of completion that can be printed.

#### University of Winnipeg Policy on Human Research Ethics Education Training

To ensure competency with the TCPS2, the UHREB, with the support of Dr. Jino Distasio, Vice-President, Research and Innovation, has set completion of the CORE Tutorial as a requirement for human research ethics reviewers and all researchers whose research with human participants falls under the auspices of the University of Winnipeg. This requirement applies to any faculty members, thesis supervisors, course instructors, post-doctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students, as well as research/laboratory staff, project managers, and research assistants who will be responsible for recruiting or interacting with human participants or who will have access to data containing identifying information about human participants.

Numerous other institutions across Canada are also in the process of implementing mandatory ethics

education training and the CORE tutorial is being used to satisfy this requirement. Since July 2011, the Research Office at the University of Winnipeg has recommended that all student researchers complete the CORE tutorial before submitting a research ethics application for review and clearance. During the past year, several University of Winnipeg research methods instructors have implemented a requirement for mandatory completion of the CORE tutorial by its students.

Many faculty members are already familiar with the TCPS2 and have been conducting human participant research for numerous years. The first priority will be to ensure that anyone conducting human research ethics *review* has received the appropriate training; therefore, a multi-phase approach is being implemented for completion of CORE training by all members of the University of Winnipeg community who are involved in human research:

- CORE completion is already a requirement for members of the UHREB and the Research Ethics Program Officer.
- By October 1, 2013, CORE completion will be a requirement for Departmental Ethics Committee members (and Chairs who act as their department's DEC Chair) as well as for faculty members who review course-related student ethics applications. (As an exception, DEC members appointed after September 1, 2013 will have a one-month deadline for completion.)
- Beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, all students, staff and faculty who are involved in human research will be required to complete the CORE tutorial before an ethics application on which they are named will be approved. This also applies to those involved in an already-approved human ethics protocol that is submitted for renewal or amendment from that date forward. (See details below.)

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### **Researcher Milestones for Human Research Ethics Education Training**

As mentors and role models to junior colleagues and students, it will be a principal investigator's (or faculty supervisor's or course instructor's) responsibility to ensure that anyone conducting human research under their authority has completed the CORE tutorial. Principal investigators (or faculty supervisors or course instructors) must be duly diligent by ensuring the TCPS2 guides human research conducted at the University of Winnipeg. Signing the research ethics application is a principal investigator's (or faculty supervisor's or course instructor's) attestation that the proposed research adheres to the TCPS2 requirements and that ethics education training has been completed by themselves, their students, and/or members of their research team.

This policy applies only to University of Winnipeg researchers who are named on the application. Co-investigators and collaborators from other institutions should be encouraged to complete the CORE tutorial.

**Beginning January 1, 2014:**

- All University of Winnipeg researchers including post-doctoral fellows and visiting scholars will be required to complete the CORE tutorial before submission of a human research ethics application on which they are named.
- All undergraduate and graduate students, research/laboratory staff (including co-op or summer students and casual employees), project managers, and research assistants, will be required to complete the CORE tutorial before submission of a human research ethics application on which they are named. This includes applications for independent studies, course credit, fourth year and Master's theses, PhD dissertations, and faculty research.
- Instructors of undergraduate and graduate courses that require students to undertake a human research project will be required to integrate the CORE tutorial into the course syllabus as a requirement for all students to complete as part of their course work. The tutorial should be completed before the student begins their research project. Students may be provided bonus marks for completing the tutorial at the discretion of the instructor.
- For protocols that received original approval prior to January 1, 2014, all researchers, staff and students will be required to complete the CORE tutorial before any request for amendment or renewal of an existing human ethics protocol on which they are named will be approved. However, all researchers, research staff and students working under an already-approved protocol are encouraged to complete the CORE tutorial by 1 January 2014 even if there is no application made for amendment or renewal.
- Individuals who join a research team after approval of an ethics protocol will be expected to complete the tutorial within one month. Principal investigators will be required to inform UHREB of changes to research teams in a timely fashion.
- Researchers who only conduct studies using human tissue or bodily fluids, or use anonymous data, strictly for the purposes of secondary analysis (provided there is no involvement of human participants) will be encouraged, but not required, to complete the entire CORE tutorial. However, at minimum, modules 1 (core principles), 2 (defining research), and 5 (privacy and confidentiality) must be completed before submitting a research ethics application or request for Secondary Use of Data.

**Ethics Education Training Monitoring**

- University of Winnipeg researchers/reviewers who have not completed the CORE tutorial by their specified milestone date will be notified.
- Non-completion will result in all future applications being returned to the principal investigator or faculty supervisor (for student research) until the tutorial has been completed.
- The UHREB and DECs will monitor completion of the CORE Tutorial by requiring researchers to attach copies of CORE certificates to the ethics application. In addition, the UHREB will monitor completion

through random, periodic audits on the completion of the CORE Tutorial via a report generated by the CORE website.

**HOW TO ACCESS THE CORE TUTORIAL:**

<http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/>

On first access to CORE, log in with your University of Winnipeg email address. Read the instructions carefully. Be sure to identify yourself as a member of The University of Winnipeg. You must await receipt of a return email to formally register you as a new CORE user.

There are eight modules in CORE. The Modules are interactive and interesting with the total on-line tutorial requiring about 3-4 hours to complete. You can go in and out of the tutorial at your own pace.

**IMPORTANT:** There is a certificate given to you at the end of the CORE program. Please provide a copy of the certificate with your ethics application to document that you have completed the tutorial.