

*CFBSD 2018 Vancouver*

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# Ethics Review and Experiential Teaching

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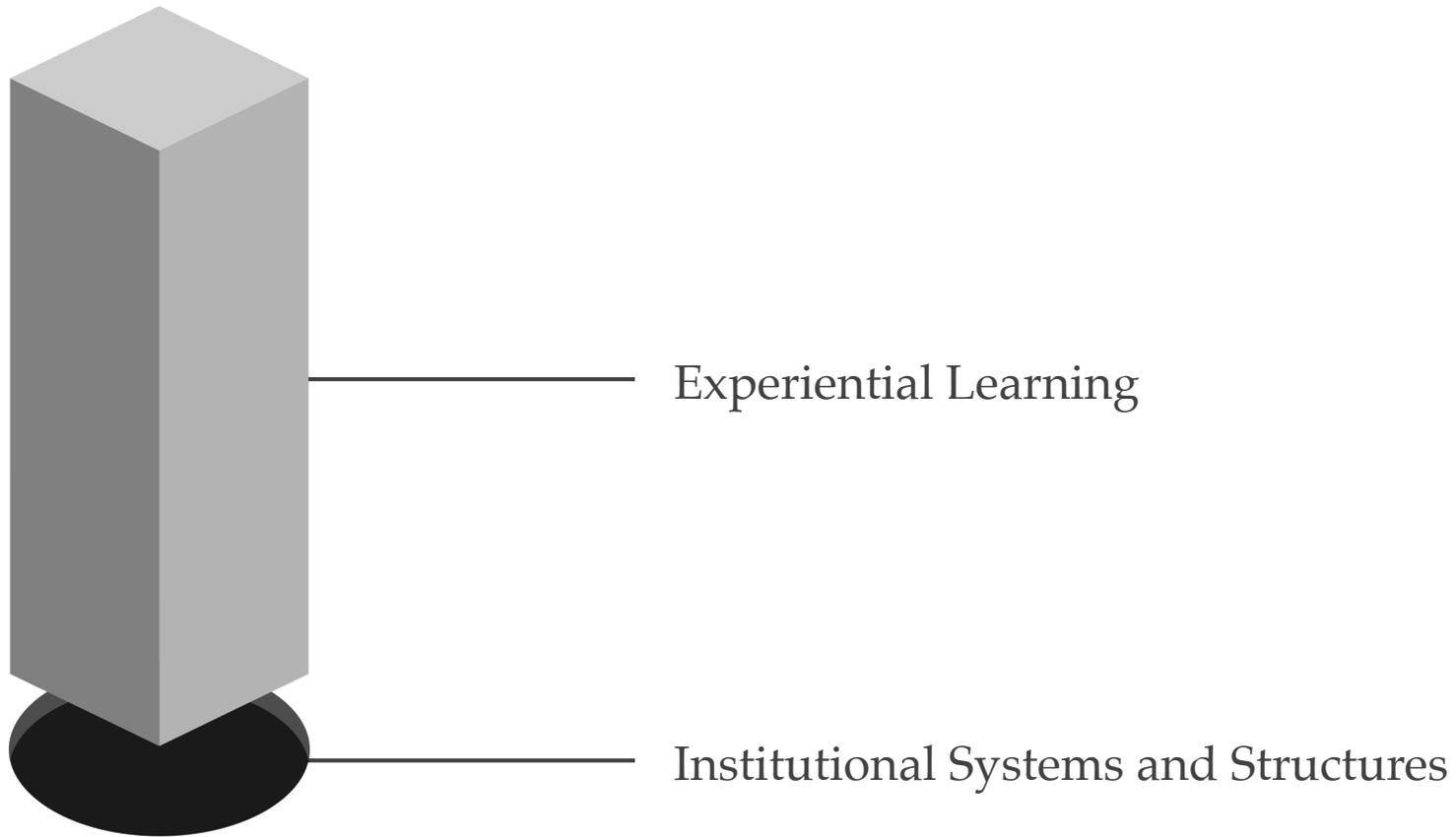
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# Today

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# Our Experience...

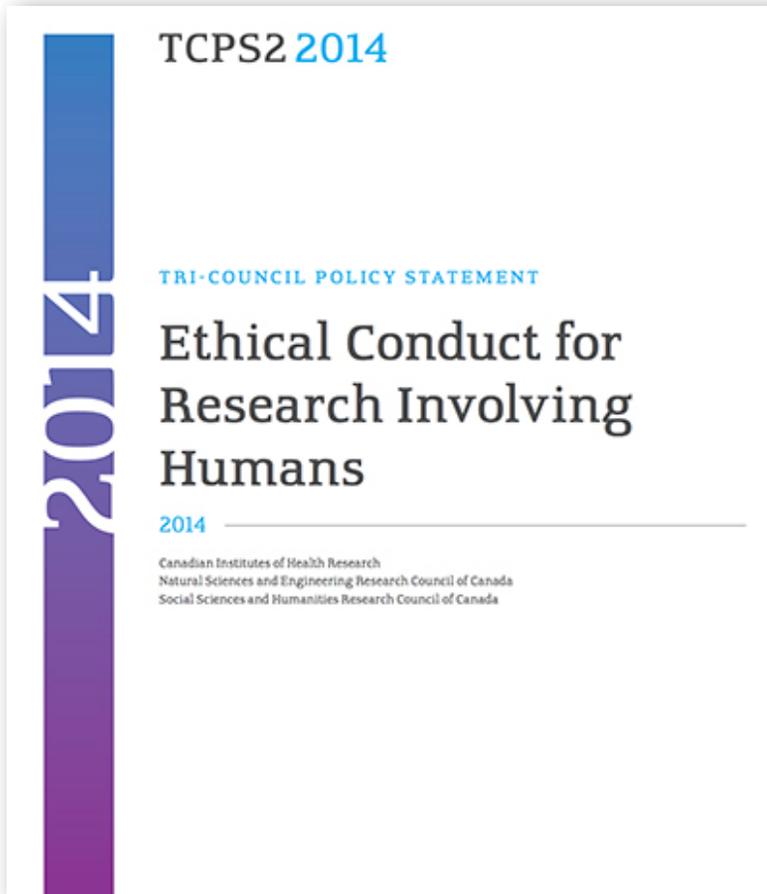
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- ▶ **Expanded scope** of ethics review proposed...

Broadened interpretation of REB scope would have subjected to “course based research” review most projects that involve **information gathering** with **anyone outside of the class**



# What is “Research”?



*“Research’ is defined as an undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry and/or systematic investigation... ‘disciplined inquiry’ refers to an inquiry that is conducted with the expectation that the method, results, and conclusions will be able to withstand the scrutiny of the relevant research community.”*

TCPS2 2014, ‘SCOPE OF RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW’



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# “Research”?

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- ▶ **“Consulting” type exercises**

Student teams deliver reports to firms, clubs or nonprofits

- ▶ **Industry interviews**

Students meet a practitioner in an industry to learn more about their role

- ▶ **Market potential exercises**

Students use surveys to measure interest in a hypothetical or real product



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# “Research”?

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- ▶ **‘Reflected best self’ exercises**

Students build leadership profiles based on stories contributed by those in their personal and professional networks

- ▶ **Startup exercises**

Students conduct primary research to develop or refine an entrepreneurial idea

- ▶ **Sustainability audits**

Students carry out and report on a review of a firm’s sustainability practices



Q:

*When and how are experiential teaching exercises subjected to ethics review (REB or delegated) at other Canadian institutions?*



A:

*There's no one answer. What research is exempted, and how non-exempt research is reviewed, varies hugely between institutions...*



A:

*... Though universities, driven principally by REBs, are standardizing around a common policy template*



# What Projects are Exempted from Review?



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# Exemption Strategies

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- ▶ Exemptions related to the **subjects**, e.g.:
  - ▶ *When “the **individuals themselves are not the focus of the ‘research’ in which students are engaging... are not being observed in their work setting... [or] being asked for their personal opinions ”***



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# Exemption Strategies

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- ▶ Exemptions related to the **purpose and context**, e.g.:
  - ▶ When the intent is **advice for a client**, to develop **‘standard practice’ skills** for a profession, when the information gathering is part of a **normal relationship** between student and participants
  - ▶ “Information gathering procedures and practices **exclusively for pedagogic purposes**... not conducted within the context of, or embedded within, a research framework [are exempt]. For example, professional faculties have students conduct interviews as part of **skill development or individual knowledge acquisition**. Information gathering projects within these situations are not subject to REB review requirements, however they must align with the appropriate professional standards...”



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# Exemption Strategies

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- ▶ Exemptions related to the **program type**, e.g.:
  - ▶ *"Our ethics review board only covers "research". Specifically for students, this means doctoral students and masters research students (writing a thesis). **Undergrad students and students in our MBA program or other 'professional' programs where they do a consulting project, survey, or interviews with business people would be exempted.** In those cases, it would be up to the professor to instruct their students on how to behave ethically."*



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# Exemption Strategies

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- ▶ Exemptions related to the **definition of research**, e.g.:
  - ▶ *Based on the TCPS definition of 'research', "...we concluded that **if the activity is not primarily intended for knowledge discovery**, then it does not require ethics approval. We try to encourage discussion with the chair if [instructors] are uncertain."*



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# Exemption Strategies

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- ▶ Exemptions related to the **publication intent**, e.g.:
  - ▶ *"We clearly separate **data for publication (needs REB approval) and data for class learning (does not)**. As long as no student projects plan to publish they do not need REB. But sometimes an MSc team (for example) may decide they would like to have the option to publish later and so they do get REB with the faculty member as PI. Very rare."*



# How Are Non-Exempted Projects Reviewed?



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# Review Approaches

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- ▶ **REB review under a separate procedure**
  - ▶ Faculty send **course outline, handouts, and any recruitment material/consent forms** to the REB under a separate process. Ethics review of student projects is then delegated to the instructor, who is "responsible for ensuring that students are informed of, and agree to abide by, the criteria for their student course-based research assignments".



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# Review Approaches

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- ▶ **Delegated review by faculty committee or Chair**
  - ▶ All undergraduate and graduate data collection projects that are designed to develop professional skills are reviewed by the **Chair of the School of Business Research Ethics Committee**. Your application will be reviewed to assess whether the data collection poses more than minimal risk and ensure that the recruitment process and consent forms comply with the appropriate professional codes of ethics.”



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# Review Approaches

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- ▶ **“Be very, very quiet...”**

*“We don’t have a policy. This is frequently asked and the answers have been different so far. It's something that's being looked at.”*



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# Review Approaches

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- ▶ **'Paper Tiger' policies**

*"I don't think we've gotten into a lot of discussion about when these approvals are required. My sense is that most research-oriented faculty... do indeed submit and receive ethics approval and follow these guidelines. However, there are a lot of less research-oriented faculty who may not even be aware that interview-based student projects and the like may require ethics approval. **I think it's a little bit of a 'wild west' situation to be honest."***



# How Are These Approaches Starting to Converge?



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# Policy Diffusion

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- ▶ Practice being shaped by **'copy-and-paste' policy**:  
**One document, with minor changes** now used at many universities (McMaster, UVic, USask, UGuelph, UAlberta) and colleges (e.g. Algonquin, Mohawk, Red Deer College)
- ▶ **Recently proposed** (with minor edits) for use at UManitoba after pushback on original wider scope of REB review
- ▶ **Reactive** — and concerning with regard to **overreach**



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# ... With Risks

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- ▶ **REB review not designed for 'PQ' or sessional instructors**

Process is designed by and for academic researchers

- ▶ Who can apply as “investigator”?
- ▶ CORE training requirements
- ▶ Language unfamiliar to non-researchers

- ▶ **Discouraging experiential teaching**

A bureaucratic barrier to experiential, hands-on applied pedagogy — discourages use of experiential education, especially when the activities are ‘unscripted’



# What Next?



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# 2016-17 TCPS2 Review

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94 **CHAPTER 2**

95 **Article 2.5A**

96 Course-based research activities intended solely for pedagogical purposes do not constitute research for  
97 the purposes of this Policy, and are not subject to REB review.

98 **Application**

99 Course-based research activities may be required of students (at all levels) with the objective of providing  
100 them with exposure to research methods in their field of study. Such activities are assigned to students for  
101 the purpose of teaching them how to conduct research in a structured educational context. This includes,  
102 for example, asking students to interview fellow students, family members, or members of the general  
103 public for the purpose of collecting data to be used in a course assignment. To the extent that the sole  
104 purpose of the activity is pedagogical with no expectation to disseminate outside the requirements of the  
105 course or for any subsequent use of data, REB review is not required. Such pedagogical research activities  
106 may raise ethical issues. Institutions may decide to review such activities through mechanisms other than  
107 the REB, for example, at the department or faculty level.



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# 2016-17 TCPS2 Review

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- ▶ **72 comments received**
  - ▶ **None from business schools**
  - ▶ *Few* specifically supportive of more clearly exempting teaching (except Laval and UBC's ORE)
  - ▶ *Many* suggesting that REBs should retain or expand its review role in purely pedagogical activities
    - ▶ **Groups:** ARC, Fonds de Recherche du Quebec, Health Canada, Nanaandawewigamig
    - ▶ **Individual institutions' REBs:** Bishops, Carleton, U Montreal, Humber, Langara, McGill MUHC, MSVU, Niagara College, Sherbrooke, Alberta, UBC BREB, Toronto, Victoria, Windsor, UOttawa, Waterloo, Laurier



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# Action Needed!

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- ▶ **CFBSD needs to:**

- ▶ **Remain apprised** of TCPS guideline revisions and **actively comment** on future revisions or drafts of the guidelines that may constrain experiential learning
- ▶ Work together to develop **sample language and processes** individual deans can use to establish **policy locally** for clarifying exemption and review



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# Your Thoughts?

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- ▶ Ideas?
- ▶ Solutions?
- ▶ Comments?
- ▶ Observations?



# Thank you!

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