



Laurentian University
Université **Laurentienne**

Annual Report 2013-2014

Laurentian University Research Ethics Board

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Introduction:

According to the Terms of Reference for the Research Ethics Board at Laurentian University, adopted by the University Board of Governors in April 2013, the Laurentian University Research Ethics Board is mandated to present an annual report to the Board of Governors. This report will be sent to Senate for information.

Background:

All Canadian Universities must comply with TCPS2 (2014) regulations for continuing eligibility to receive and administer research funds from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), or “the Agencies.” (see TCPS2 2014 section “Introduction”)

The Tri-Council Policy requires that Universities develop an Ethical Review Policy and a process which involved a single university structure, with optional departmental committees to evaluate the research of undergraduate students. The University-level Research Ethics Board is to be responsible for the administration of the ethics review process at the University in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy. The Laurentian University Research Ethics Board (LUREB) is responsible not only for review of cases, but also for ongoing education and professional development in the area of ethical conduct for research involving human participants.

1. Committee membership March 2013 – February 2014:

Laurentian University’s Research Ethics Board operates under the Tri-Council Policy of the three Federal Granting Councils (TCPS2 2014). According to the TCPS2 2014, at least two members of any REB should have the “relevant knowledge and expertise to understand the content area and methodology of the proposed or ongoing research, and to assess the risks and potential benefits that may be associated with the research.” (TCPS2 2014, p. 73) Researchers at Laurentian conduct their studies in a wide variety of disciplines using a wide variety of methods; therefore, it is important for us to have broad representation on the LUREB.

Member	Department	Area of expertise
Susan James (Chair)	Midwifery	Ethics, Qualitative methodologies
Rosanna Langer (Vice Chair)	Law and Justice	Law and legal issues, information privacy, program evaluation, vulnerable populations
Taima Moeke-Pickering	Native Human Services	Indigenous research methodologies
Maurice Grzeda (left REB Dec. 2013)	Commerce	Management; education
Michael Persinger	Psychology	General knowledge; validity of measurement
Nancy Lightfoot	School of Rural and Northern Health	Epidemiology Quantitative Methods Mixed Methods
Patricia Richards (Community Member)	Probation and parole officer District of Sudbury	Community safety issues
Erin Olsen-Schinke (Community Member)	Probation and Parole Officer, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, District of Sudbury	Law and legal studies; deviance, social and correctional policies and systems theories
Souhila Benabadji (Graduate Student)	Human Studies	English language teaching theories; socio-cultural theories
Amadeo Parrisenti	Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry; NOSM	Molecular Biologist, Translational Research, Clinical trials; Genomics; Molecular Pharmacology; Biomarker Assessment; Big data
Sadequl Islam	Economics	Quantitative Methods, Applied Econometrics, International Economics, and Macroeconomics.
Pauline Zanetti (Secretary)	Research, Development, and Creativity Office	Administrative support
Robin Craig (Administrator)	Research, Development, and Creativity Office	Administrative support

2. Meetings:

The REB met regularly on the first Friday of each month in 2013-2014. The total number of meetings held between March 1st 2013 and February 28th 2014 was 10. One sub-committee was formed to work on developing quality indicators for reporting on regular REB activities. No meeting this year was cancelled as result of the adoption of a qualitative quorum policy.

3. Activity during 2013-2014 period:

*Full activities of LU's REB between March 1st, 2013 and February 28th, 2014

Month	Expedited	Full	Modifications- Extension- Exemption	Total/month
March-13	15	3	8	26
April-13	10	3	5	18
May-13	14	3	17	34
June-13	5	2	8	15
July-13	14	0	7	21
August-13	6	0	1	7
September-13	5	3	8	16
October-13	7	2	7	16
November-13	12	4	5	21
December-13	20	2	6	28
January-14	16	1	4	21
February-14	7	1	1	9
Total	131	24	77	Total : 232

Table b) Percentage of all processes in 2013-2014

Expedited	Full	Modification/Extension/Exemption
56%	10%	34%

4. Comparison of yearly full REB activity between 2010-2014:

Table a: *Full REB annual activity from 2010-2014*

Year	Expedited	Full	Modifications- Extension- Exemption	Yearly total
2010-11	268	28	107	403
2011-12	229	33	113	375
2012-13	182	26	79	287
2013-14	131	24	77	232

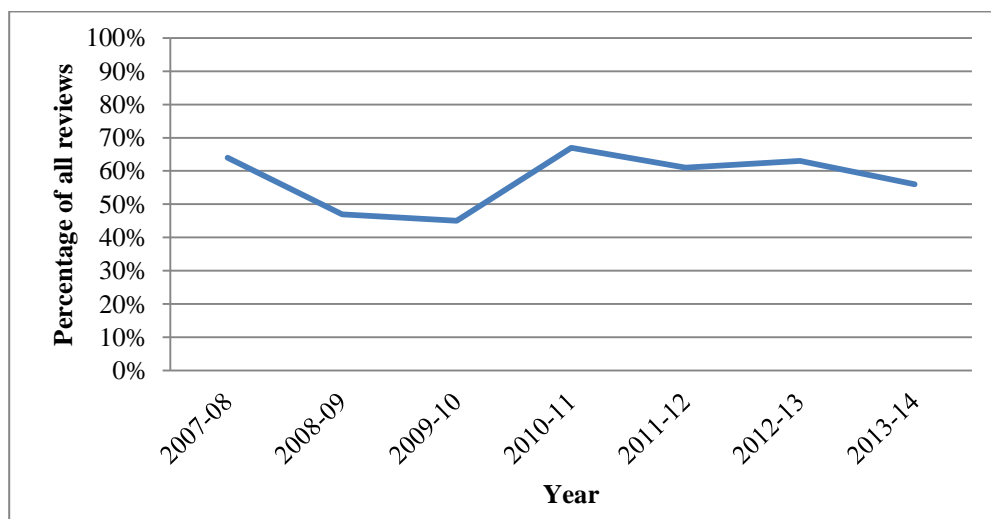
Discussion: While it appears that REB annual activity has diminished since 2010-11, it is uncertain how the 2010-11 figures were generated and these may reflect differing start and end reporting dates.

5. Expedited reviews:

Table a) *Percentage of expedited reviews between 2007-2014*

Year	Expedited
2007-08	64%
2008-09	47%
2009-10	45%
2010-11	67%
2011-12	61%
2012-13	63%
2013-14	56%

Graph a) *Percentage of expedited reviews between 2007-2014*



6. Departmental REBs:

All Undergraduate Research Ethics Boards (UGREB) are considered as delegated REBS. Their obligations are managed through the policy that follows:

In conformity with the Tri-Council Policy Statement, the Laurentian University REB is ultimately responsible for the ethical review of research involving human subjects conducted by its personnel. The REB delegates this authority to Departmental Ethics REBs in the case of the review of undergraduate students' course-related activities. There are two exceptions to this delegation:

1) Research conducted by undergraduate students which is part of a faculty member's own research program must be reviewed by the University REB.

2) If a project is deemed GREATER THAN MINIMAL RISK by the departmental REB, it must be reviewed by the University REB.

If a Departmental REB is doubtful about the risk involved in a proposal, it will consult the Chair of the University's Central REB.

Officially, there are 12 UG REB (including Huntington, Thorneloe, The University of Sudbury, l'Université de Hearst, and NOSM) at Laurentian University. Some schools/departments no longer have a research component in their undergraduate curriculum and therefore have no review activity to report this year.

7. Summary of reported cases of UGREBs

Departments:	Cases reported (as of May 16, 2014):
Human Kinetics	17
Psychology/Psychologie	28
School of Education /École des Sciences de l'Éducation	Nothing to report
Comité d'éthique de la recherche de l'Université de Sudbury	5
Sociology / Sociologie	6
Social Work / Service Social	Nothing to report
Études françaises	1
Orthophonie	3
Commerce and Administration/Commerce et Administration	9
School of Indigenous Relations	Nothing to report
School of Rural and Northern Health	Nothing to report
School of Architecture	Nothing to report
History / Histoire	Nothing to report
History / Anthropology (special project)	1
The School of Nursing	Nothing to report
Université de Hearst	13
NOSM	Report outstanding
Total:	83

8. Summary of achievements, challenges and works in progress:

a. Website presence

The REB now has a presence on Laurentian's website hosted under the Research Office. Ethics application forms, meeting dates and deadlines, an FAQ, and a copy of the TCPS2 are now available on the webpage, making it easier for researchers to access these frequently used documents. Going forward, the REB will continue to add additional educational materials and links to ethics-related topics on the website.

b. Recruitment of new members and planning for multiple transitions

The REB was successful in recruiting 3 new members, community member, Erin Olsen-Schinke, Dr Amadeo Parrisenti, Dr Sadequl Islam. The addition of these new members has broadened the breadth of the board's research and methodological expertise. The additional of these new members also coincides with the departure of 3 long-standing members, whose mandates have come to an end, including the Chair. The Research Ethics Officer will also be on maternity leave for 8 months between June 2014 and February 2015.

c. Meeting with individual researchers and departments

The Chair and Research Activities Manager have also routinely met with individual researchers, faculty members and students regarding their ethics applications or to address emerging ethics in their current research projects. The department presentations as well as the individual face-to-face meeting are always greatly appreciated and reflect the LUREB's proactive and participatory approach to facilitating ethically-robust human participant research at Laurentian.

d. The election of a new Chair and Vice-Chair

During the May 2014 board meeting, Dr. Rosanna Langer was elected as Chair of the REB. Her mandate will commence July 1, 2014. The current REB Chair, Dr. Susan James, will assist Dr. Langer during the summer months to ensure a smooth transition into her new role as Chair. Dr. Nancy Lightfoot was elected to the position of Vice-Chair of the REB during the May 2014 board meeting. Her mandate will commence July 1st, 2014.

e. Professional development for the REB members

During the April 2014 board meeting, Dr. Nancy Young of the School of Rural and Northern Health gave a presentation about REDCap, web application for building and managing online surveys and databases. While REDCap can be used to collect virtually any type of data, it is specifically geared to support data capture for research studies. Laurentian researchers have access to REDCap via the Desmarais Library website, and as REDCap data is stored on local campus servers, it may offer a more secure alternative to commonly used survey tools, such as FluidSurvey and Survey Monkey.

In April 2013, The REB Chair, Vice-Chair and student member, Souhila Benabadji were sponsored by the Research, Development and Creativity Office to attend the annual conference of the Canadian Association of Research Ethics Boards (CAREB) in Calgary Alberta. This national conference brings together administrators, Board members and experts in research ethics to attend sessions on emergent issues in research ethics and the work of REBs. It is an invaluable opportunity for learning, professional development and networking which strengthens the professionalization of institutional REBs.

f. Remuneration policy development

The REB Chair, Susan James, and Vice-President of Research Patrice Sawyer have participated in extended discussions and policy formulation with Awards Administrators for NSERC/SSHRC and the Laurentian University Office of Financial Services regarding assuring the confidentiality of research participants receiving small incentive payments from research funds. Once an agreement in principal has been reached, an internal university policy will be drafted to reflect approved reporting practices.