



Women's and Gender Studies
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GUIDE FOR ETHICS COMMITTEE REVIEW OF HUMAN RESEARCH 2017-2020

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The principles and procedures described here have been developed on the basis of existing guidelines in the Departments of Sociology and Anthropology and Psychology. The Women's and Gender Studies Research Ethics Committee (WGS-REC) gratefully acknowledges that foundation. These guidelines conform to the ethical principles incorporated into the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (1998), or TCPS and the TCPS-2 (2010, updated 2014).

These procedures were first approved at a meeting of the WS-REC on April 16, 2004. They were approved by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board (UW-REB) on May 5, 2004. They have been revised several times since, each time being approved by the UW-REB for three-year terms (2011-2014; 2014-2017; 2017-2020). They apply to all research conducted by undergraduate students in Women's and Gender Studies courses. Decisions of the WGS-REC are in accordance with the [UW-REB](#) policies.

Any subsequent changes to these procedures must be approved by the Women's and Gender Studies Advisory Committee and by the UW-REB.

All quotations and references are from the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human (2014). The TCPS-2 is available at http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2-2014/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf.

All instructors who are supervising students to conduct research with human participants must complete the online TCPS2: CORE (2014) training. To complete the tutorial, please navigate to <http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/default.aspx>, navigate to the Course on Research Ethics (CORE), and create an account (if you haven't already done so). Anyone can create their own account on the log in page of CORE. Users are advised to correctly select their institution if their course completion needs to be verified and to use their institution-specific email (e.g. researcher@uwindsor.ca) and not hotmail, gmail, or other private accounts.



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Women's and Gender Studies REC Mandate

The mandate of the Women's and Gender Studies Research Ethics Committee is to protect human subjects while **facilitating** and **furthering** ethical research. As defined in the Tri-Council Policy Statement, research is "defined as an undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry or systematic investigation" (TCPS2 2014, Article 1.a). As undergraduates learn to do research, we must ensure they learn and follow ethical research practices.

Ethical practices in social research involving human participants are:

Respectful of the dignity and privacy of human participants;

Voluntary, informed, and consensual;

Non-exploitative and transparent in its process (i.e., free of unwarranted deception);

Responsive to the needs of research participants, especially needs that arise in or that relate to the process of research; and

Responsible and reflexive – acknowledging, taking into account, and taking measures to minimize any foreseeable risks.

Terms of Reference

Scope of Ethics Review: All research involving humans as research participants must be reviewed by either the University REB or the WGS-REC. What requires review is research by Women's and Gender Studies undergraduates that involves experimental, observational, or ethnographic methods, questionnaires, interviews, or secondary use of data that are not in the public domain. Creative acts or performances in public spaces that engage audience members as research participants may require ethics clearance. Please discuss the activity with the Chair prior to completing the application.(TCPS-2 2014, Article 2.1, 2.2, 6.12)



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The Women's and Gender Studies REC is comprised of three faculty members¹ from the Women's and Gender Studies Advisory Committee, including at least one person from a social science discipline. When possible, the committee will also have a WGS student member. The student member must have completed 53-301.

Selection of Members: Faculty members (and any necessary replacements) shall be nominated by the Women's and Gender Studies Advisory Committee and shall serve for staggered two-year terms. Student members shall be nominated by the WGS Students Association. Where possible, at least one member of the committee should continue to serve from one year to the next to ensure continuity. Terms are renewable. Membership shall be reported to the UW-REB.

Other responsibilities: The WGS-REC will ensure that sessional instructors have access to and are aware of these policies.

Undergraduate Research: The Women's and Gender Studies REC shall review research conducted by undergraduate students when:

- 1) it is conducted as part of an undergraduate course offered by Women's and Gender Studies, and
- 2) it is not part of a faculty member's research program already subject to review by any other Ethics Board (TCPS-2 2014, Article 6.12).

Parameters for Women's and Gender Studies Undergraduate Research Projects Involving Human Participants:

- 1) Consent will always be obtained explicitly, whether recorded verbally or in writing, unless a compelling case is made not to do so, and all requirements of the University REB will be fulfilled.
- 2) No human participants will be involved who are unable to give informed consent (e.g., children) or who are in a controlled institutional environment (e.g., mental health facility, correctional facility, non-students under 18, etc.).
- 3) Only minimal risk² projects will be permitted.

¹ Defined broadly as any person eligible to be a non-student member of the WGS Advisory Committee.

² "Minimal risk occurs when potential subjects can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participants in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the subject in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research." (<http://www1.uwindsor.ca/reb/review-process>)



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- 4) No participants will receive compensation, although a token of appreciation may be provided if appropriate.

Application and Decision-Making Procedures:

1. Applications

- A. For independent student projects and seminar courses, we encourage the undergraduate researcher to make the application, but the supervisor or course instructor must sign the final application.

Individual student applications will be cleared for the specific time period that is necessary to conduct the research as outlined in the application.

- B. For large generic³ class projects (for several students or a whole class), the instructor will prepare the application and instruct students about ethical principles and procedures early in the term. The research may not begin until the WGS-REC or the University REB (if the application has been referred there) has cleared the protocol.

Applications for generic course projects (e.g. methods courses) will normally be approved for three years barring any change in the course instructor(s) or significant changes to the original protocol. **A new course instructor or changes that would require submitting an addendum must take the form of a new application.** After three years, course applications must be resubmitted for evaluation. Instructors are responsible for tracking their REC clearance period and the need for reapplication.

2. Submission

Students or instructors will submit one electronic version of the WGS application form (found at <http://www.uwindsor.ca/wgst/ResearchEthics>) with attachments (scanned to ensure the files are virus free) to the Chair of the WGS-REC with an electronic copy to the Women's and Gender Studies email account (wgst@uwindsor.ca). In all cases this must be followed by one hard copy of the application signed by the course instructor or the faculty supervisor sent to the Women's and Gender Studies office (CHS 250). Applications should be sent to the Chair of the WGS-REC

³ By "generic" we mean a course project that is set by the instructor where the method to be used is identical (e.g., a semi-structured interview of one individual who is over the age of 18); however, the topic studied may or may not change according to the course content and the interests of the students with the approval of the instructor.

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as soon as possible at the start of each term and at least three weeks before the research is to be started. Please remember that revisions may be required and that this will delay the speed of clearance.

The Application for Ethical Review must describe:

- The purpose and duration of the study.
- How research participants will be recruited.
- The methods, including a copy of any written instruments to be used (e.g., survey questionnaires, interview schedules or guides).
- The process for obtaining consent, including a copy of any proposed information letter and consent form (see the simple sample consent form at the end of WGS application form at <http://www.uwindsor.ca/wgst/ResearchEthics>).
- How data and participants' identities will be kept confidential. If recordings of interviews will be made, please ensure that the procedures follow the requirements outlined on the WGS-REC application form under Confidentiality.
- Possible benefits of the study for research participants or the community.
- Possible risks and how they will be minimized.
- How the results will be disseminated (e.g., honours thesis, class presentation, class essay or report, undergraduate conferences or journals).
- Whether or how participants will be informed of research results.
- How students have learned about ethical issues in the research (e.g., having the student read and discuss the TCPS-2 2014 or other material relevant to ethical concerns in social research).

3. REB Decisions

Whenever possible, the committee shall make decisions in face-to-face meetings (TCPS-2 2014, Article 6.10). Approval requires at least two approving votes. However, it is anticipated that the REC will normally reach a consensus and, if necessary, will work with the applicant to improve the initial proposal.

If the REC is reviewing an application in which a Committee member has a personal interest, that member shall not be involved in the decision, as mandated in the TCPS-2 2014 (Article 7.3). The WGS Director or her Delegate will in these instances serve as a Proxy Member.



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4. Appeals

Every attempt shall be made to work with the applicant to reach agreement through discussion, revision, and reconsideration. When agreement cannot be reached, decisions of the Women's and Gender Studies REC may be appealed to the University REB, whose decision shall be final.

Reconsideration of these procedures: These procedures shall be reviewed no later than May 2020.

rev May 2017