RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD (REB)
Terms of Reference

PURPOSE

The Research Ethics Board has both a review and an educational mandate. The general purpose of the REB is to familiarize itself with and adhere to the College’s (as well as national and international) research guidelines, and to evaluate all research activities involving human subjects according to the Proportionate Ethics Review process (described in Policy 7.2) by conducting independent, multidisciplinary reviews. The REB will ensure that:

- Ethical standards are applied
- Appropriate scholarly reviews are undertaken, and
- Ongoing research activities are monitored through accountability reporting processes; and decide whether research activities will be permitted to start or to continue.

The REB is also to serve the College research community as a consultative body and thus contribute to the community’s education in research ethics.

GUIDELINES

A. Membership

The College of the Rockies Research Ethics Board (REB) will consist of at least five members, including both men and women, appointed by the Vice President Education. The College may exceed the stipulated minimum requirements whenever necessary to ensure competent ethics reviews.

- At least one member will be knowledgeable in ethics
- At least one member will have no affiliation with the College but will be recruited from the College’s local community
- For biomedical research, at least one member will be knowledgeable in the relevant laws. Knowledge of relevant laws is advisable, but not mandatory, for other areas of research. (wider consultation may be employed)
- At least two members will have broad expertise in the methods of, and/or in the areas of, research areas commonly covered by the REB.

B. Terms of Appointment

The terms of REB appointments will be two years and may be renewable. Every attempt will be made to maintain continuity and ensure diversity of opinion and the opportunity to spread knowledge and experience gained from REB membership throughout the College and community.

C. REB Chair

The REB Chair, who is appointed by the Vice President Education, is responsible for providing leadership to the REB and ensuring its functionality. The REB Chair will:

- Chair REB meetings
• Review all applications for ethical review, determine whether expedited or full review is required, conduct expedited reviews, and report all expedited reviews to the REB
• Be available to advise Deans who are responsible for the Department Level Review.
• Be available to advise the College community on ethical standards and applicable policies.
• Prepare an annual report for the Vice President Education
• Identify and notify the Vice President Education of emerging issues.

D. Conflicts of Interest
Researchers and REB members must disclose real or perceived conflicts of interest to the Chair of the REB. In the cases where a member of the REB has a conflict with the research under review, that person should not be present when the REB is discussing or making decisions on that research.

E. Meetings
REB members will have scheduled monthly meetings in order to discharge their responsibilities. The REB may hold non-review meetings for such purposes as orientation, education, discussion of issues, and development of the REB. Regular attendance at meetings is important. Frequent unexplained absences will be construed as a notice of resignation.

To expedite and facilitate the review process, members of the REB and researchers may request informal meetings with each other prior to the formal review process. Such informal meetings, however, substitute for the formal review process.

F. Quorum
When there is less than full attendance, decisions requiring full review will be adopted only if the members attending the meeting possess the range of background and expertise required to conduct the review. For biomedical research, at least one member in attendance must be knowledgeable in the relevant laws.

G. Record Keeping
When the REB conducts a full review, minutes must be correctly prepared and maintained. The minutes will clearly document the REB’s decisions, any dissents, and the reasons for them. The minutes must be accessible to authorized persons—who may include but are not limited to representatives of the College, researchers, and funding agencies—in order to assist in internal and external audits, research monitoring, and/or to facilitate reconsideration or appeals of REB decisions. Excluded administrative support will be provided by the college.

H. Decision-making Authority
The College of the Rockies authorizes its REB to consider and accept reviews of other institution’s REBs.
A researcher may appeal a decision of the REB (as per Policy 7.2) but the College may not override a negative decision reached on the grounds of ethics.