



Research Ethics Board Annual Report 2015-2016

Submitted: August 29, 2016

As Chair of the Research Ethics Board (REB), I am pleased to provide this annual report. Over the 2015-2016 academic year, the REB met ten times.

2015: September 25, October 24, November 27

2016: January 15, February 19, March 18, April 15, May 27, June 24, August 26

During 2015-2016, the REB membership consisted of Arleigh Reichl (Chair; Psychology), Maureen Buchholz (Community), Kevin Hamilton (Psychology), Karen Harrison (Community), Nathalie Gagnon (Criminology), Constanza Rojas-Primus (Language & Cultures), Lisa Kitt (Criminology), and Julia Murphy (Anthropology). This year saw a transition in the Chair position as Kyle Matsuba completed his term in August, 2015, and Arleigh Reichl took on the role in September. The diversity of disciplines represented on the REB was reflective of the majority of applications we received. On one application, we included an ad hoc REB member external to KPU to help us with our review.

Sixty-three new REB applications were reviewed by the committee, the vast majority of these being minimal risk. This represents an increase of 15% over the number of applications submitted in the previous year. Of these, 14 were applications for course-based research. Two of the standard applications came from institutions other than KPU, and these were also reviewed by the board. There were an additional 22 REB applications from current and previous years that were revised and resubmitted by researchers. The applications received over the year represented a broad diversity of areas, topics, and methods, and presented the board with a number of new ethical issues. The board also received two clinical applications which, as a behavioural REB, we are not trained to review. One of these projects was revised and no longer required review, whereas the other was sent to another institution for review by its clinical REB.

As Chair, I reviewed all minimal risk applications (as REB delegate). Most minimal risk applications were also reviewed by one or more REB members based on their research expertise. Applications that were assessed as beyond minimal risk underwent full board review. All applications were presented to the full board at its monthly meetings, where they were discussed as necessary, and all decisions documented. Twenty-two progress and completion reports were also received and processed.

On the administrative side, Cathy Parlee provided outstanding support as our Research Ethics Coordinator. She has been extraordinarily helpful in managing and processing REB applications for review, particularly with respect to the management of applications through ROMEQ, handling inquiries, providing weekly reports to the chair, and preparing necessary materials for monthly REB meetings. Cathy is on a temporary appointment to this position, and a search is ongoing for a permanent coordinator.

Research ethics education remains an important part of our REB. As part of our professional development, members attended research ethics conferences organized by PRIM&R (Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research) in Boston and CAREB (Canadian Association of Research Ethics Boards) in Toronto, as well as the Multi-Institutional Research Ethics Retreat hosted by SFU. These educational opportunities continue to be critical in keeping the REB informed about changes to research ethics regionally, nationally, and internationally. On the other side, the REB continues to be available for education and guidance to researchers at KPU. As Chair I gave class presentations, attended a research committee meeting, and presented a workshop at the Arts AGM. I have also answered numerous inquiries, and provided advice to many researchers outside of the review process. In May, 2016, the REB held a strategic planning retreat for the purposes of clarifying the roles and expectations of the Chair and board members, examining efficiency in board meetings, identifying and prioritizing issues facing the board, and strategizing about ways to improve our understanding of the review process from the researchers' perspective. The retreat was led by Karen Harrison, our community member and an experienced facilitator, and proved to be an extremely valuable exercise.

Through our work as REB members, there are a number of "emerging" ethical issues. First, the growing use of technology to gather data continues to receive increased attention with regards to data security and participant anonymity. Second, we continue to see an increase in the number of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) applications. Third, we are encountering an increasing number of applications involving multijurisdictional research. This led to our first inter-institutional agreement to recognize the REB approval from another institution, rather than duplicating their efforts. Finally, although it is too early to tell if this is a growing trend, there is a challenge posed by clinical applications. Whereas more established institutions have separate clinical REBs to review clinical applications, KPU has only one REB and we are not trained to review clinical applications. We are working to learn more about the ethical issues in each of these areas.

As Chair, I wish to thank Dr. Arthur Fallick and the Office of Research and Scholarship for their continued support of the REB. I also wish to thank the current REB members for their dedication to their job, their collegiality towards each other, and their unwavering support of me. It has been a tremendous pleasure to work with such an outstanding group of people.

With the start of the new academic year, two board members, Kevin Hamilton and Constanza Rojas-Primus, will have completed their terms. We extend our deepest gratitude to them for all their valuable service. At the same time, we are extremely pleased to welcome three new board members: Farhad Dastur (Psychology), Lisa Freeman (Criminology), and Katie Warfield (Journalism). I know I speak for the entire board when I say we look forward to the coming year and continuing to promote ethical research at KPU.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arleigh Reichl', with a stylized, cursive script.

Arleigh Reichl
Chair
Research Ethics Board