

Memo

To: Associate Dean Research Council
From: AVP Jennifer Hyndman & Alison Collins-Mrakas
Date: October 1, 2021
Subject: Course-Related Research Guidance

This memo aims to clarify ethics approval requirements, given that some courses require students to conduct research with human participants. A question to the Office of Research Ethics (ORE) received from a Delegated Ethics Review committee asked: should the delegated committee be reviewing proposals for course based face-to-face research given additional compliance requirements associated with COVID and attendant longer timelines for review?

The Research Continuity Group (RCG), established last year when COVID-19 struck, recently considered this question and has put forward the following guidance:

Currently, all face-to-face (F2F), in-person research (including that in undergraduate and graduate course-related research) requires additional compliance *and* a Health and Safety Plan. These additional requirements add, on average, one to two weeks to the usual ethics review time (normally 2-3 weeks).

Given the short timelines for most courses, it is recommended that remote research options (i.e. online, web-based, or phone options) be utilized as much as possible. In-person research is still possible but requires a longer approval process.

Please note that all course related research – remote or F2F – *always* needs to be reviewed and approved by the relevant ethics review committee in compliance with Senate Ethics Policy and the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS).

Consistent with past practice, undergraduate theses, graduate Major Research Papers (MRPs, ABCs or equivalent) that involve face-to-face research also require the additional compliance measures ([Addendum Checklist](#); [Informed Consent form – Covid template](#); [Health & Safety Plan](#)).

We ask that you circulate this guidance to your respective faculty members, Course Directors and Delegated Ethics Review Committees. If you have any questions, please reach out to Alison Collins-Mrakas, Director, Office of Research Ethics (acollins@yorku.ca).

