**Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey (CCWS)**

Ethics Application Template for Institutions Participating in the Student Survey

Note: Highlighted text should be edited as needed to make the content applicable to your institution.

|  |
| --- |
| Minimal Risk **Does your application fall under minimal risk?**  Yes. Low participant vulnerability and low research risk.  **Provide explanations for the assessments of research risk and participant vulnerability reported above.**  All participants are post-secondary students responding to questions in nine sections related to student health and wellbeing: mental health assets, student experience, mental health deficits, health service utilization/help seeking, physical health/health behaviours, academic achievement, substance use, food security, and sexual health behaviours. The level of risk for taking part in this study is similar to what they would encounter when completing other student surveys regularly administered by their respective institutions (e.g., National College Health Assessment, Undergraduate Experience Survey). The questions in the survey are from well-established surveys often used in Canadian populations. However, there is a potential that some questions focused on mental health may spark uncomfortable feelings. Participants will be reminded that they are not required to answer any question that makes them feel uncomfortable. There are two questions related to suicide risk within the last year (ideation and planning). A ‘yes’ response to planning does not indicate if the participant is presently at risk of self-harm. The immediacy of risk is not certain. However, the survey will include a termination page that lists the institution’s referral resources for all students who complete the survey (irrespective of how they responded to the suicidal planning question), and we have also embedded links to these campus-specific resources immediately following the suicide questions to ensure all participants (including those who start but do not complete the survey) will have access to these resources (see Survey termination page and survey link). This protocol ensures that all students will be provided with local mental health support information.  Study Summary  **Provide a short summary of the project written in lay language suitable for non-scientific REB members.**  Canadian colleges and universities are committed to fostering student health and wellness through programming and services. However, such initiatives require surveillance tools that support planning, monitoring and evaluation. In the absence of a Canadian system for collecting health data, colleges and universities have been subscribing to U.S.-based tools, which do not adequately address institutional health priorities, or allow tailored analyses. The Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey (CCWS) represents a Canadian system for information sharing and analysis of institutional-level policies, practices and strategies relevant to student mental and physical health. This project involves the administration of the CCWS to post-secondary students at [institution].  **Summarize the research proposal:**  1) Purpose:  The purpose of this project is to administer the Canadian Campus Wellbeing survey that examines mental health and health behaviours among post-secondary students.  2) Rationale:  With over 2 million young adults attending post-secondary institutions in Canada, an opportunity exists to gather information and intervene on the mental health and wellbeing of this demographic. Such interventions, however, require measurement tools that support intervention planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Population-level health and wellbeing data collection tools are invaluable, and significantly contribute towards the capacity to link research with policy and practice.  In the absence of a local equivalent, many Canadian post-secondary institutions have participated in the US-based National College Health Assessment (NCHA), a health behaviour survey administered by the American College Health Association. As an American-centric surveillance tool, there are significant limitations to the NCHA, including: length, validity, reliability, and appropriateness to the Canadian context (e.g. questions about seatbelt use, or related to US nutrition and physical activity guidelines).  The Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey (CCWS) is a common surveillance tool that provides a necessary basis for assessing the mental health and wellbeing of students, identifying priorities for intervention, and assessing future interventions targeting the health and wellbeing of young adults both at an institutional level and as an outcome of natural experiments.A consensus framework for the CCWS was developed in consultation with a panel of 19 health service providers or mental health experts (May 2018) and further refined by a panel of 8 measurement experts (September 2018). The final framework consisted of the following ten core areas: mental health assets, student experience, mental health deficits, health service utilization/help seeking, physical health/health behaviours, academic achievement, substance use, food security, and sexual health behaviours, and demographics. Drawing from existing population studies, measurement experts identified specific validated scales and items to assess each core area within a 20-minute survey. The CCWS underwent pilot and reliability testing (January – March 2019) amongst a sub-sample of post-secondary students to ensure the tool was understandable and acceptable. The purpose of the current project is to administer the survey to post-secondary students at [institution].  Institutions will receive a dataset of survey responses for their own institution, as well as a means comparison against aggregate results from participating comparative institutions. Results will help [institution] staff to plan programs, prioritize campus needs, allocate resources, design strategies for intervention, identify protective and risk factors associated with student wellbeing, and measure progress on health and wellness goals.  As part of a coordinated system, collected data across all institutions will allow post-secondary institutions to explore differences between geographic regions, and provide a basis for making comparisons of prevalence and progress to national and provincial norms. In sharing a common surveillance tool such as the CCWS, it becomes possible to pinpoint promising policies or strategies associated with such change, which can then be disseminated. To complement the use of the data at individual institutions to inform institutional planning and practice, the data are available to researchers to pursue investigator-initiated research through a data registry. The data registry is solely under the custodianship of the Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey (Principal Investigator: Dr. Guy Faulkner, 604-822-2990) at the University of British Columbia (Ethics # H19-01907). The current ethics application is seeking ethics approval for administering the CCWS at [institution].  No hypotheses are associated with this project, as it is primarily a quality assurance mechanism for institutions.  3) Methods  The CCWS will be administered online to post-secondary students at [institution] via the University of British Columbia (UBC) Survey Tool, a cloud-based service provisioned by Qualtrics. |
| Inclusion Criteria  **Describe the participants being selected for this study, and list the criteria for their inclusion.**  Eligible participants will be undergraduate and postgraduate students currently enrolled at [institution]. |
| Exclusion Criteria  **Describe which participants will be excluded from participation, if any, and list the criteria for their exclusion.**  No exclusions (unless otherwise dictated by individual institutions). |
| Recruitment  **Provide a detailed description of the method of recruitment. For example, describe who will contact prospective participants and by what means this will be done. Ensure that any letters of initial contact or other recruitment materials are attached to this submission.**  Students will be recruited by email. Specifically, a [*choose one*: proxy or self-managed] mail-out administration will be used. Email invitations to each student will have a randomly assigned ID number embedded in the URL, which links to the survey. The email invitations will describe the survey (see email template in appendix). |
| Summary of Procedures *Note: see CCWS Technical Document for more information – we recommend that you consult with your IT department to select a mail-out option.*  [Institution] will use the following survey mail-out protocol:  *\*Choose one of the following:\**  **Option 1: Proxy Emails**  [Institution] will provide the CCWS analysts with proxy emails to administer the survey on our behalf. Alias emails will be used to invite participants.  [Institution] will not need to share student names, student emails, or student numbers with the CCWS analysts, yet the survey data can still be tied to our administrative data via the unique, random ID assigned to each respondent, and the unique survey link that each student receives.  Additionally, [institution] will not need to send the email invitation and email reminders to the students, as the CCWS analysts will do this on our behalf.  **Option 2: Self-Managed Mail-Out**  [Institution] will self-manage our survey mail-out, using a unique survey link for each student generated by the CCWS analysts. [Institution] will not need to share student names, student emails, or student numbers with the CCWS analysts, yet the survey data can still be tied to our administrative data via the unique, random ID assigned to each respondent, and the unique survey link that each student receives.  [Institution] will be responsible for the email invitations and email reminders during the data collection period. We will provide a list of student random IDs with survey completion status, unique survey links, and a send reminder flag one day before the scheduled reminder date, and will send out reminders. It will need to ensure that each student receives the correct unique survey link, and merge with data from the list the CCWS provided to remove students who have completed or unsubscribed from the survey before sending each email reminder.  Before the CCWS returns case-level data to [institution], data are checked to make sure that there are no small cell identifiers (i.e. are there at least 5 respondents for each student attribute in the cohort file and in the survey demographic section. If there are small cell identifiers, data are obscured (renamed/regrouped to “SANITIZED”), i.e., age will be changed to “SANITIZED” and ranges applied instead of specific years of birth, for instance, 56 to “SANITIZED”, and “Over 35” applied). Institution ID is used to append information about the institution (range of size, type of institution). Data by institution is only available to the institution itself, and is not shared with others naming or otherwise identifying an individual institution, with a small cell of 3 in this case (e.g. cluster of at least 3 institutions to be used for comparisons, with ranges applied to maintain institutional anonymity). |

# Participant Information and Consent Process

|  |
| --- |
| Time to Participate  **How much time will a participant be asked to dedicate to the project?**  Responding to the survey usually takes 15 to 20 minutes. Although not suggested, the respondent may also fill out part of the survey, log off the web, and then return online to complete the survey at a later time. |
| Risks  **Describe what is known about the risks of the proposed research for participants.**  There is a small possibility that students may become upset when considering questions about depression/anxiety. There are also two questions related to suicide risk within the last year. Immediately following these questions, we will embed links to campus-specific mental health resources and provide a link to a help hotline - "If you need support, you can reach out to Crisis Services Canada (http://www.crisisservicescanada.ca) and connect with someone Toll-Free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-833-456-4566". We will also include a termination page that lists the institution’s referral resources for all students who complete the survey. |
| Benefits  **Describe any potential benefits to the participant that could arise from his or her participation in the proposed research.**  Benefits will come from aggregated data that will improve our understanding of students’ health issues at [institution] and to improve health and wellness programming. There are no known benefits to individual participants. |
| Reimbursement  **Describe any reimbursement for expenses (e.g., meals, parking, medications) or payments/gifts-in-kind (e.g., honoraria, gifts, prizes, credits) to be offered to the participants. Provide full details of the amounts, payment schedules, and value of gifts-in-kind.**  *\*Choose one of the following:*\*  **Option 1:**  N/A  **Option 2:**  All students in the sample will be eligible for [include information about incentives if institution is offering]. |
| Obtaining Consent  **Specify how potential participants will be invited to take part in the study.  Include details of where the consent will be obtained and documented, and under what circumstances.**  The email invitation that is either sent by [*Choose one:* UBC via proxy emails or self-managed by [institution]] will describe the survey, indicating that taking the survey is voluntary and indicating informed consent through linking to the survey (see appendix).  The first page of the survey will outline the following consent to collect data, consistent with the collection of anonymized responses maintained in the research registry:  By completing this survey you are giving your informed consent to the collection of the information in the Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey. Your data will be anonymously stored in a data registry (H19-01907). The data registry is solely under the custodianship of the CCWS analysts and may only be accessed through case-level datasets prepared by CCWS analysts for approved researchers and third-parties for research purposes.  The CCWS is administered via the UBC Survey Tool, a cloud-based service provisioned by Qualtrics. It complies with the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) as the data are kept secure and are stored and backed up on Canadian servers. Information collected using the Survey Tool is kept secure using measures including data encryption.  If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598. |
| Time to Decide  **How long after being provided with detailed information about the study will the participant have to decide whether or not to participate?  Provide your rationale for the amount of time given.**  There will be [1-5] e-mail reminders over the [two to eight] weeks, sent in [number] day intervals.  There will be an option available for students to ‘Unsubscribe’ from the survey (click ‘Unsubscribe’ link in email invitation or reply to invitation with ‘Unsubscribe’ as the subject line) OR students can contact the institution directly and request to be unsubscribed (institution must forward unsubscribe requests to [survey@ccws-becc.ca](mailto:survey@ccws-becc.ca) if using proxy mail-out OR students can directly contact [survey@ccws-becc.ca](mailto:survey@ccws-becc.ca) and request to be removed from future email reminders). |
| Capacity to Consent  **Will every participant have the capacity to give fully informed consent on his/her own behalf?**  Yes |
| Provisions for Consent  **What provisions are planned for participants, or those consenting on a participant's behalf, to have special assistance, if needed, during the consent process (e.g., consent forms in Braille, or in languages other than English).**  N/A |
| Restrictions on Disclosure  **Describe any restrictions regarding the disclosure of information to research participants (during or at the end of the study) that the funder/sponsor has placed on investigators, including those related to the publication of results.**  None known. |
| Number of Participants  **How many participants will take part in the entire study (i.e., the entire study, world-wide)?**  As outlined on page X of the Technical Document (see appendix), the number of participants is dependent on the size of the institution. With a population of [enter student enrolment number], [Institution] requires a minimum of [enter corresponding n from Technical document] students to complete the CCWS. |
| Researcher Qualifications  **Who will actually conduct the study and what are their qualifications to conduct this kind of research? (e.g., describe relevant training, experience, degrees, and/or courses).**  [Enter qualifications of PI at your institution]  The Canadian Campus Wellbeing Survey is a collaborative partnership between post-secondary stakeholders, research experts and government. A consensus framework for the CCWS was developed in consultation with a panel of 19 health service providers or mental health experts (May 2018) and further refined by a panel of 8 measurement experts (September 2018). The final framework consisted of the following nine core areas: mental health assets, student experience, mental health deficits, health service utilization/help seeking, physical health/health behaviours, academic achievement, substance use, food security, and sexual health behaviours. Drawing from existing population studies, measurement experts identified specific validated scales and items to assess each core area within a 20-minute survey. The CCWS underwent pilot and reliability testing (January – March 2019) amongst a sub-sample of post-secondary students to ensure the tool was understandable and acceptable. It was conducted by Guy Faulkner, Ph.D., CIHR-PHAC Chair in Applied Public Health. |

# Security of Data and Protection of Personal Information

|  |
| --- |
| Security of Data During the Course of the Study  **How will data be stored? (E.g., computerized files, hard copy, videotape, audio recordings, personal electronic communications device, other.)  How will security of the data be maintained? (For example, study documents must be kept in a secure locked location and computer files should be password protected and encrypted, data should not be stored or downloaded onto an unsecured computer, back up files should be stored appropriately.)  If any data or images are to be kept on the Web, what precautions have been taken to prevent them being copied?**  The CCWS will be administered via the UBC Survey Tool, a cloud-based service provisioned by Qualtrics. It complies with the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) as the data are kept secure and is stored and backed in Toronto, Ontario and Montreal, Quebec. The Survey Tool has completed UBC’s Privacy Impact Assessment process, which assesses the privacy and security of UBC systems. Information collected using the Survey Tool is kept secure using measures including data encryption.  CCWS data analysts will send the case-level dataset to [institution] using UBC’s Microsoft OneDrive. Microsoft OneDrive is stored securely and hosted in Canada. Content in MS OneDrive is encrypted at rest.  Once [institution] receives the de-identified dataset, it will be stored on highly secured servers at [enter details]. |
| Access to Data  **Who will have access to the data (e.g., co-investigators, students or translators)?  How will all of those who have access to the data be made aware of their responsibilities concerning privacy and confidentiality issues?**  The CCWS analysts will be the custodians of the data. CCWS analysts are only allowed to archive and maintain, in confidence, versions of the dataset that can only be used in the context of executing CCWS data collection. The CCWS team has completed the TCPS2 and is committed to executing the presented services in compliance with data privacy, scientific rigour and integrity, as well as ethical conduct in data collection and processing. To this end, it shall adhere to all ethics and privacy rules set forth in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement[[1]](#footnote-1)* as well as those stated by the participating institutions, so as to protect the confidentiality of institutions and students participating in the survey and/or prevent disclosure about the current state of programs in a given institution. The CCWS team shall undertake all necessary steps to assure that privacy, scientific rigour and integrity are adhered to by all staff and students involved in the present survey, for every professional service provided.  At [institution], the Principal Investigator and Co-investigators will have access to [institution’s] data in an X file. All [institution] investigators have TCPS training.  The data collected by CCWS are governed by the CCWS Data Access Policy and may be made available to researchers for research related purposes. The core principle is ensuring both individual and institutional anonymity in analyses and any output. Accordingly, a Data Access Committee (DAC) will monitor and approve requests to ensure this anonymity. Starting summer 2020, the DAC will review requests, on a rolling basis, for accessing pooled data where institutional data is combined and compared in some way (e.g., at a national or provincial level; institutions of similar types or sizes) or for access to student-level data. Individual institutions may grant approval to share their own institutional CCWS data with researchers and are subject to institutional REB approval for secondary data analysis. Approval of the DAC is not required in such circumstances. DAC approval is required for accessing aggregated data. For more information, see the CCWS Data Access Policy (appendix). |
| Protection of Personal Information  **Describe how the identity of research participants will be protected both during and after the research study, including how participants will be identified on data collection forms.**  To ensure confidentiality of participants the following method will be used:  *\*Choose one of the following two options:\**  **Option #1: Proxy emails (CCWS analysts send out email invitations and reminders to students)**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Owner** | **Action** | | PSI | Convert existing dataset of all students selected to participate in the survey into an *aliased* format. For example, John Smith ([jsmith@ubc.ca](mailto:jsmith@ubc.ca)) becomes [24cf8f1eb@ubc.ca](mailto:24cf8f1eb@ubc.ca). This is the master dataset. | | PSI | IT department adds *aliased* email addresses to email system (e.g. as aliases in Exchange), so that emails sent to [*24cf8f1eb*@ubc.ca](mailto:24cf8f1eb@ubc.ca%20) are delivered to [jsmith@ubc.ca](mailto:jsmith@ubc.ca).  *Note for IT departments: The suggested proxy (alias) email address format is a random HEX code longer than 9 characters, for instance* [*78CD93F0B2195F404B21A52A8728B9B2@xxxxx.ca*](mailto:78CD93F0B2195F404B21A52A8728B9B2@xxxxx.ca)*. Formats that are NOT suggested include* [*aztl52v@xxxx.ca*](mailto:aztl52v@xxxx.ca)*,* [*ccws\_aztl52v@xxxx.ca*](mailto:ccws_aztl52v@xxxx.ca)*, and Student1234@xxxx.ca.* Please contact [survey@ccws-becc.ca](mailto:survey@ccws-becc.ca) if you have any questions. | | PSI | Separate the aliased e-mails from the master dataset and forward to CCWS analysts. | | CCWS | Provides PSI with Qualtrics IP range information so their IT department can add to their server’s whitelist. This will help avoid any potential delivery issues as it makes sure e-mails coming from Qualtrics servers are, for the entire duration of this survey, not blocked or considered SPAM. | | PSI | PSI IT creates DNS entry and adds DKIM value to PSI’s domain and informs the CCWS analyst when this is completed. | | CCWS | Upload contact list (aliased emails) to Qualtrics mail module. | | CCWS | Create e-mail invitation/reminder templates and send to uploaded aliased dataset. Invite aliased students to participate. | | CCWS | Qualtrics sends emails on PSI’s behalf to participants via their alias email addresses. Emails go to PSI servers. | | PSI | If IP Whitelisting has been done as recommended, PSI servers will accept CCWS invitation emails without blocking or throttling. | | PSI | PSI servers convert aliased addresses to actual student addresses and forward a survey invitation to each student eligible to participate. | | CCWS | Collects response data generated from e-mail invitations. Anyone who has completed their survey or clicked the “unsubscribe” link at the bottom of their e-mail invitation is automatically excluded from getting any more messages about the survey. | | CCWS | Creates template for 1st reminder and sends reminder to anyone who has not yet completed their survey or clicked on the unsubscribe link in the original email. | | PSI | Servers convert aliased addresses to actual student addresses and forwards  Reminder #1 to each student eligible to participate. | | CCWS | Continue to collect response data generated from e-mail campaigns. Completes and unsubscribes are automatically excluded from future e-mails. | | CCWS | Create e-mail template for Reminder #2 and send reminder to remaining students who have not yet completed or unsubscribed. | | PSI | Ensure that PSI servers continue to accept CCWS Reminder #2 emails without blocking. | | ETC. | This process will repeat according to the number of reminders chosen by the institution. |   **Prize distribution for prizes offered by PSI**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | CCWS | At survey close, aggregate responses from each PSI. For responses from each PSI, use a random number generator to select the appropriate number of prize winners. | | CCWS | Forward the alias email address of each winner to the PSI. | | PSI | Using master dataset, identify the winners by matching the alias email address to students’ names. | | PSI | Contact each winner and award prize. |   **Option #2: Self-managed mail out (PSI sends out email invitations and reminders to students)**   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Owner** | | **Action** | | PSI | Send CCWS cohort file with unique identifier for each student randomly selected to receive the email invitations and reminders. | | | CCWS | Send PSI an adequate number of unique survey links to meet the requirement  that each student selected to participate in the survey has a unique survey link | | | PSI | Create a master dataset of students eligible to participate along with their unique survey link. Create a copy of dataset for emailing; this is the “*email dataset*.” Store master dataset. | | | CCWS | Distribute suggested text for survey invitations and reminders to PSIs (see Technical Documentation – these should be the same templates that were submitted to your REB) | | | PSI | Using the “email dataset,” merge survey invite text with student name and  unique survey link | | | PSI | Email each eligible student and invite them to participate. | | | CCWS | One day before Reminder #1 to be sent out, prepare a survey completion status dataset. The dataset includes fields for unique student identifier, survey completion status, unique survey link, and send reminder flag. | | | CCWS | Forward the survey completion status dataset to the PSI | | | PSI | Create Reminder #1 list of recipients by using the survey completion status dataset: filter out the students who have not started/finished the survey by “send reminder flag = yes”. At the same time purge email dataset of responders as well as anyone who requested they be unsubscribed to avoid sending them any more messages about the survey. | | | PSI | Merge text of Reminder #1 with Reminder #1 dataset. Send Reminder #1 to the recipients. | | | ETC. | This process will repeat according to the number of reminders chosen by the institution to be sent. | |   **Prize distribution for prizes offered by PSI**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | CCWS | At survey close, aggregate responses from each PSI. For responses from each  PSI, use a random number generator to select the appropriate number of prize winners. | | CCWS | Forward the unique survey link of each winner to the PSI. | | PSI | Using master dataset, identify the winners by matching the unique IDs to students’ names. | | PSI | Contact each winner and award prize. |   Transfer of Data  **Will any data that identify individuals be transferred (available) to persons or agencies outside of the University?**  No. Portions of the CCWS data will be accessible for academic research and appropriate third-party agencies (i.e., Mental Health Commission of Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada) upon approval by the Data Access Committee, so long as their purpose is in keeping with the aim to increase capacity for linking research with policy and practice at Canadian post-secondary institutions. The Data Access Committee will review proposals and ensure institutions and individuals are not identifiable in the dataset. |
| Retention and Destruction of Data  **If you intend to destroy the data at the end of the storage period describe how this will be done to ensure confidentiality (e.g., tapes should be demagnetized, paper copies shredded). Please note that the responsibility for the security of the data rests with the Principal Investigator.**  The data set and institutional report will be sent to [institution] and stored for [*choose one*: indefinitely or minimum number of years required by institution]. Frequency data including appropriate summary statistics for [institution] will be presented along with the same information from the large merged data set so comparisons may be made. |
| Future Use of Data  **Are there any plans for future use of either data or audio/video recordings?  Provide details, including who will have access and for what purposes, below.**  The PIs plan to offer summary reports and analyses to [include institution-specific plans for using the data].  The CCWS will provide a coordinated system for collecting health-related data on Canadian post-secondary students. Portions of the CCWS data will be accessible for academic research and appropriate third-party agencies (i.e. Mental Health Commission of Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada) upon approval by the Data Access Committee, so long as their purpose is in keeping with the aim to increase capacity for linking research with policy and practice at Canadian post-secondary institutions.  [Institution] summary data for CCWS may be compared with results from future administrations of the CCWS for program improvement. [Institution] data may be compared with results from other Canadian colleges and universities.    Administrations of CCWS will provide important direction for health and wellness programming. |
| Feedback to Participants   **Are there any plans for feedback on the findings or results of the research to the participant? Provide details below.**  *\*Choose one of following:\**  **Option 1:** N/A  **Option 2:** The PI’s plan to offer summary reports and analyses to [institution] students [include information about sharing of results]. |

1. CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC (2014). *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.* Ottawa: Government of Canada. http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2-2014/TCPS\_2\_FINAL\_Web.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)