



Gullas College of *Medicine*  
**RESEARCH ETHICS  
 COMMITTEE**



**Ethos Universitas**  
 HONORARY COMPANION

|                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
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**SOP NO. 2 - DESIGNATION OF REC OFFICERS**

**Section 1. Policy Statement.**

The REC officers shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and a Member Secretary. Since this is still the first time that GCM will create a REC, officers will be screened, nominated, and appointed by the Vice-President. This will be a temporary policy until the Vicente Gullas Memorial Hospital, which is being renovated, opens and the term of the pioneer officers expires. An election will be performed after the Terms of the pioneer officers expire. The election will be conducted during a special meeting initially presided over by an outgoing officer.

These pioneer REC officers shall retain their positions for six (6) years to secure a smooth establishment of the new REC. The REC members may change the term of office when the REC is operational (See SOP 27 – Writing & Revising the SOP).

The decisions they make regarding the ethical impact of GCM research and their operations to conduct it shall be independent of the academic department, the Executive Committee, and the Management Committee.

The tenure of these REC officers is protected and safeguarded against termination unless there is just cause to do so. They also have the power to suspend or terminate any project or proposal after due process described in this SOP.

**Section 2. Objective.**

This SOP intends to ensure that the REC officers are qualified and are selected transparently and fairly in conformity with institutional and related policy and practice.

**Section 3. Scope.**

This SOP begins by selecting possible officers from the pioneer members. Subsequent officers will be elected by the REC Members after the expiration of the terms of the pioneer officers. The procedure of this SOP ends with the filing and archiving of the appointment documents of the officers.

The duties and responsibilities of the officers are described below.

## **Research Ethics Committee (REC) Chairperson**

The REC Chair occupies a college-related-teaching position serving the College as part of the REC of the GCM.

The REC Chair handles providing leadership for the REC. S / he advocates for the work of the REC (North, 2020). The REC Chair reports to the Vice President and coordinates with the REC Member Secretary and Administrative Secretary for REC activities and concerns.

### ● General Job Description

- Guide the REC in deciding a proposal's acute and / or chronic impact/effect to humans and/or animals.
- Manage the REC office.
- Supervise the research ethics review process.

### ● Duties and responsibilities (North, 2020) (PHREB, NATIONAL ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS, 2022):

- Participate in REC activities:
  - Preside over REC Meeting.
  - Oversee review of protocols.
  - Assign Primary Reviewers of protocols based on expertise and experience.
  - Supervise development and revisions of SOPs.
  - Prepare and submit the annual budget of the REC.
  - Prepare and submit annual report of the REC to the office of the Vice President and to PHREB.
  - Ensure initial and continuing research ethics training of members and Administrative Secretary.
- Submit on time properly filled out necessary Forms and documents to the REC.
- Advice / inform the Member Secretary about review-related concerns and suggest ways to address the same concern.
- Collaborate with colleagues and other stakeholders in promoting and improving good clinical and ethical

practices in the conduct of basic and clinical research.

### **Research Ethics Committee (REC) Vice-Chairperson**

The REC Vice-Chair occupies a college-related-teaching position serving the College as part of the REC.

The REC Vice-Chair handles helping the Chair of the REC. S / he advocates for the work of the REC (North, 2020). The REC Vice-Chair reports to the REC Chair and coordinates with the REC Member Secretary and REC Member Secretary for REC activities and concerns.

- General Job Description

- Performs duties assigned by the Chair.
- Performs the duties of the REC Chair in his / her absence.
- Assists in REC activities.

- Duties and responsibilities

- Participate in REC activities (PHREB, 2020 PHREB SOP, 2020), (North, 2020):
  - Perform tasks assigned by the Chair
  - Participate in the review of research proposals and other related reports when requested.
- Submit on time properly filled out necessary Forms and documents to the REC Admin Officer
- Advice / inform the rec Chair about review-related concerns and suggest ways to address the same concern.
- Collaborate with colleagues and other stakeholders in promoting and improving good clinical and ethical practices in the conduct of basic and clinical research.
- Perform other tasks prescribed by the REC Chair

### **Research Ethics Committee (REC) Member Secretary**

The REC Member Secretary occupies a college related-teaching position serving the College as part of the REC.

The REC Member Secretary is responsible for assisting the Chair, vice-Chair & members of the REC. S / he advocates for the work of the REC (North, 2020). The REC Member Secretary reports to the REC Chair and coordinates with the members for REC activities and concerns.

- General Job Description

- Assist the REC Chair
- Administer the REC office.

- Duties and responsibilities

- Attend GCM-sponsored accreditation seminars about biosafety, ethical research procedures and practices, good clinical practices, basic research methods, animal care, and/or other research-related topics.
- Assist the REC Chair assign proposals to reviewers.
- Be assigned to study and review any GCM research proposal.
- Perform tasks to aid the Chairperson complete the review process.
- Participate in REC activities (North, 2020) (PHREB, 2020 PHREB SOP, 2020):
  - Receipt of protocol documents
  - Preparation of protocol files and folders
  - Preparation of draft of communications
  - Preparation of draft Agenda and Minutes
  - Updating of records
  -
- Submit on time properly filled out necessary Forms and documents to the REC.
- Advice / inform the REC Chair about review-related concerns and suggest ways to address the same concern.
- Collaborate with colleagues and other stakeholders in promoting and improving good clinical and ethical practices in the conduct of basic and clinical research.
- Perform other tasks prescribed by the Chair.

## **Administrative Secretary (AS)**

The Administrative Secretary occupies an administrative position serving

The College as part of a Research Ethics Committee (REC).

An administrative secretary provides high-level organizational and clerical support to keep the REC office running efficiently. S/he assists the Member Secretary and reports directly to the Member Secretary.

### ● General Job Description

- Supports primary health research unit functions
- Prepare, maintain, and update HRU materials
- Attend seminars, meetings and HRU related activities as necessary
- Contribute in many ways to the HRU activities
- Reports to the HRU Director
- Acts as GCMs Data Privacy Officer

### ● Duties and Responsibilities

- The AS manages general office duties, such as typing documents, filing documents, setting appointments with stakeholders, entering data and other miscellaneous activities and concerns of the REC.
- The AS also answers questions about the research processes, requirements and documents.
- S/he also maintains and archives records. S/he coordinates with the REC members and clients and/or clients of the REC.

## **Ethics Reviewer**

The Ethics Reviewer(s) occupies a college-related-teaching position serving the College as part of a Research Ethics Committee (REC) member.

Reviewers will oversee the ethical integrity of any GCM research. They will be assigned to a proposal based on their specialization(s) and the guidelines and policies of the REC. The assignments will be determined by the REC Chairperson. Reviewers will be under the direct supervision of the Chairperson of the REC.

- General Job Description
  - Decide the acute and/or chronic ethical risks, impact, and/or effect on humans and/or animals of a proposal.
  
- Duties and responsibilities (PHREB, 2020 PHREB SOP, 2020):
  - Attend GCM-sponsored accreditation seminars about biosafety, ethical research procedures and practices, good clinical practices, basic research methods, animal care, and/or other research-related topics.
  - Attend REC meetings consistently.
  - Participate in the ethical review of research proposals and other related reports. The non-scientific member shall give special attention to the Informed Consent Form and process to ensure that these are comprehensible by ordinary persons and are considerate of community values.
  - Participate in the after-review activities, e.g., continuing review, site visits, etc.
  - Declare any conflict of interest (COI) in the review of research proposals.
  - Maintain confidentiality of the documents and deliberations of the REC meetings.
  - Attend continuing ethics education and other related activities
  - Perform other tasks prescribed by the REC Chair

**Section 4. Workflow.**

| <b>ACTIVITY</b>   | <b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>  | <b>TIMELINE</b> |
|---|--|-----------------|
| <b>Step 1: Convocation of the Organizational and Nominating Meeting</b> | CHRI Adviser, Vice President<br><br>Subsequent meetings: REC Chair | 1 day           |
| <b>Step 2: Screening and Nomination</b>                                 | CHRI Adviser, Vice   | 2 weeks         |

|   |   |                |
|---|---|----------------|
| <b>Criteria for Executive Positions</b>                           | President<br>Subsequent officers: REC member  |                |
| <b>Step 3: Credential Review and Election Procedures</b>          | CHRI Adviser, Vice President for pioneers<br>REC members for subsequent officers          | 1 day          |
| <b>Step 4: Executive Endorsement for Appointment</b>              | CHRI Adviser for pioneers<br>Subsequent officers: REC Chair, Members                      | 1 day          |
| <b>Step 5: Official Executive Appointment</b>                     | Vice President & Officer<br>Subsequent officers: Member Secretary & President             | 4 days         |
| <b>Step 6: Archiving, Document Control, and Database Tracking</b> | Member secretary for pioneer officers<br>Administrative Secretary for subsequent officers | 1 day          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |   | <b>22 DAYS</b> |

## Section 5. Description of Procedures.

### Step 1: Convocation of the Organizational and Nominating Meeting.

Because initial pioneer committee members lack established working relationships, an objective, data-driven approach is required to organize leadership. The Center for Health Research and Innovation (CHRI) Adviser shall retrieve and review the Curriculum Vitae (CV) and professional credentials of all pioneer Research Ethics Committee (REC) members. This preliminary review aims to evaluate each member's institutional qualifications, demonstrated commitment, and capacity for administrative responsibility. Once evaluated, the CHRI Adviser will call an initial organizational meeting.

Upon the expiration of the pioneer officers' terms, the responsibility shifts to the incumbent REC Chair, who shall be responsible for officially calling a special meeting dedicated exclusively to the nomination and election of a new set of officers.

### Step 2: Screening and Nomination Criteria for Executive Positions

The selection of candidates for officer positions—applicable to both pioneer and subsequent iterations of committee leadership—must be objectively justified based on the following verified criteria in their CVs:

1. Leadership Experience: Proven track record in previous or current management and administrative positions.
2. Exclusivity of Service: Absence of active concurrent membership in external Research Ethics Committees outside of the Gullas College of Medicine (GCM) to prevent conflicts of interest.
3. Academic Qualifications: Attainment of the highest relevant educational achievement or postgraduate degrees.
4. Research Productivity: Evidence of research publications in peer-reviewed journals within the last five (5) years preceding the selection or nomination.

Executive Search Implementation in nominating/electing officers:

- For Pioneer Officers: The CHRI Adviser will evaluate the pioneer membership pool against the above criteria to independently select the primary candidates for the foundational officer positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, and Member Secretary).
- For Subsequent Officers: The nomination process for future vacancies shall be presided over by the incumbent REC Chair. If the incumbent Chair is being re-nominated, a neutral, designated REC member shall preside over the floor. Once a new Chair is successfully determined, they will immediately assume leadership of the meeting to preside over the nominations for the Vice-Chair and Member Secretary. To ensure institutional continuity, candidates for subsequent officer positions must have served as active members of the REC for a minimum of one (1) year.

### **Step 3: Credential Review and Election Procedures**

**Pioneer Officer Selection:** The CHRI Adviser will conduct a rigorous final review of the credentials of the selected pioneer members and formally nominate them to their designated executive roles.

**Subsequent Officer Elections:** Elections for new leadership will take place immediately upon the expiration of the preceding officers' terms. The REC Chair is responsible for calling the electoral assembly. The Administrative Secretary shall distribute a formal **Notice of Meeting** to all active REC members, with a copy furnished to the CHRI Adviser, explicitly stating that an election will be conducted.

The election of subsequent officers must be executed via secret ballot to ensure fairness and confidentiality. Winning candidates are determined by a simple majority vote of the members present (provided a quorum is met). In the event of an exact tie, the deadlock shall be settled immediately via a transparent "toss-coin" procedure or an alternative randomized process mutually agreed upon by the body.

### **Step 4: Executive Endorsement for Appointment**

Following the final selection or election of officers, their names must be officially endorsed to institutional leadership:

- **For Pioneer Officers:** The CHRI Adviser will finalize the shortlist of the selected foundational candidates, complete **Form 2.1 (Endorsement Note)**, and formally route the document to the Vice President.
- **For Subsequent Officers:** Upon the successful conclusion of a general election, the outgoing or re-elected REC Chair shall officially endorse the newly elected officers by completing **Form 21.2 (Endorsement Note)** and forwarding it to the Vice President for executive action.

### **Step 5: Official Executive Appointment**

Upon receipt and verification of the Endorsement Note, the Vice President retains the final authority to sign and issue the official appointment papers. This executive action confirms the placement of the qualified candidates into their respective roles as REC Chair, Vice-Chair, and Member Secretary.

The Vice president will sign the appointment documents of the pioneer and subsequent officers who met the above criteria as Chair, Vice Chair, and Member Secretary.

### **Step 6: Archiving, Document Control, and Database Tracking**

To maintain institutional accountability, data compliance, and robust record-keeping, the appointment documentation must be systematically processed:

- **Physical File Management:** The Member Secretary (for pioneer officers) or the Administrative Secretary (for subsequent officer terms) will take possession of the signed appointment documents and archive them securely in accordance with **SOP 23: Management of Active Files**.
- **Administrative Logging:** The responsible secretary will complete **Form 4.7A (Filing Form Log)** to catalog the physical entry. Each reviewer will be allotted 1 separate independent folder.

**Digital Tracking:** The digital record of the newly appointed officers must be updated on **Form 1.9 (Administrative Research Tracking System - ARTS)** to maintain accurate, real-time metrics on committee leadership.

## **Section 6. Forms**

Form 2.1 - Endorsement Note  
Form 2.2 - Appointment letter for REC Officer  
Form 21.2 - Active File Mgt.

## Section 7. History of SOP

| <i>Version No.</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Authors</i>        | <i>Main Change</i>                          |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------------|---|
| 1                  | 10.2.23     | Nino Ismael s. Pastor | 1st draft                                   |
| 2                  | 09.16.24    | Nino Ismael s. Pastor | 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft: Form label, Workflow |
| 3                  | 06.04.26    | Nino Ismael s. Pastor | 3 <sup>rd</sup> draft: Few contents         |

## Section 8. References

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