Liminal Thealogical Seminary
IRB Application Process

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR STUDENT RESEARCHERS

It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the Dean-approved IRB application and all supporting materials are submitted to Dr. Deanne Quarrie at stagdancer@outlook.com. She will confirm receipt of IRB materials and a researcher may not begin recruiting participants or collecting data (including pilot data) until explicit IRB approval has been received from Dr. Quarrie. Data collection that is begun prior to IRB approval does not qualify for academic credit toward degree requirements. Further, students collecting data without IRB approval risk expulsion.

WHAT IS IRB APPROVAL?

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is responsible for ensuring that all Liminal Thealogical Seminary research complies with the university's ethical standards as well as U.S. federal regulations and any applicable international guidelines. IRB approval indicates the institution's official assessment that the potential risks of the study are outweighed by the potential benefits. When the IRB reviews your study, there two types of feedback: "approved as is" and "approved with revisions." The IRB reviewers strive to limit their methodological comments to only those that impact either the risk or benefit level of the study, thus affecting the welfare of participants and stakeholders. IRB approval lasts for 1 year and may be renewed. Outside of the explicit dates and terms of IRB approval, researchers are not entitled to any protections, recognition, funding, or other support provide by LTS or its affiliates.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

While every precaution is taken by Liminal Thealogical Seminary to ensure the safety and ethics of research conducted by students and faculty, LTS is not liable for the actual conduct of each student and the final outcome of each study. Students and faculty are required to remain rigorously aware of and continuously evaluate their research methods for potential harm and legal violations that may be the result of their study. By submitting an IRB application, students and faculty release LTS from liability and recognize they are solely responsible for their research.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS IRB APPLICATION FORM?

This application should be completed by all students and faculty members who are conducting research projects of any scope involving collection or analysis of data from living humans and non-humans (whether from surveys, interviews, observation, student work, records of any type, or behavioral/health-related interventions). The only categories of research that **do not need** to

be submitted for IRB approval are literature reviews, personal exploration, hypothetical research designs, and faculty or student projects that are completely independent of LTS affiliation, resources, participants, and funding. IRB approval for course-based research projects should be obtained by the faculty member who designs the course.

WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT MY IRB APPLICATION?

Questions about the IRB application and related materials may be submitted to Dr. Deanne Quarrie at any time. For doctoral and masters students, the IRB application itself will not be accepted until after the proposal has been approved by the committee and the academic reviewer unless prior permission is obtained from Dr. Quarrie. So it is expected that students will review IRB requirements as they are writing the proposal and will submit the IRB application immediately following the academic reviewer's approval of the proposal. Non-doctoral IRB applications will be reviewed as soon as the application is complete. The IRB will make every effort to help researchers move forward in a timely manner.

HOW LONG DOES IRB REVIEW TAKE?

Researchers should allow a minimum of 2 weeks for IRB review (2 weeks for minimal risk studies and up to 6 weeks for studies involving vulnerable populations [children, non-human animals, the disabled, criminal populations, and impoverished individuals). This form takes 1-2 hours to complete, depending on the risk level of the study. Feedback from Dr. Quarrie will be returned within 5 business days (amounting to a total of 15 business days). Low-risk studies involving non-vulnerable adults can be reviewed within 5-10 business days if this form and the supporting materials are completely and accurately submitted. Note that when a study is "approved with revisions" that the researcher should allow an additional 5-10 business days for those revisions to be reviewed and approved. If the revisions do not adequately address the ethical concerns, then an additional round of revisions and review might be necessary. The IRB members make every effort to make the required revisions as clear as possible.

Students should consult program guidelines and documents such as the dissertation guidebook in order to understand how long the proposal and IRB review steps will take and plan their study's timeline accordingly. Exceptions to approval procedures cannot be made in order to accommodate personal or external deadlines (e.g., academic calendars that limit access to participants).

CAN I CONTACT MY RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS BEFORE IRB APPROVAL?

Note that researchers may **NOT** begin recruiting participants (i.e., getting consent form signatures) prior to IRB approval. The only documents that may be signed before IRB approval are Data Use Agreements or Letters of Cooperation from community partner organizations and Confidentiality Agreements that are signed by transcribers, statisticians, and research assistants who might have access to the raw data. If you have questions about who should sign what, please email Dr. Quarrie for help.

WHAT IF I NEED TO CHANGE MY RESEARCH PROCEDURES AFTER IRB APPROVAL?

Researchers must resubmit any IRB materials relevant to the change for approval.

OVERVIEW OF REQUIREMENTS OF THE IRB APPLICATION

General Description of the Proposed Research

- Translate your research question(s) into lay language. The purpose of your research and the data you plan on collecting *must* be readily understood by your participants. The IRB process checks to ensure that what you are doing and what you are asking (including survey or interview questions) are readily understood by participants

- Provide specific descriptions of the tasks the participants will be asked to complete.

Data Collection Tools

All documents and authorizations related to data collection including: surveys; interview questions; copyright holder's written permission to use the instrument, permission to reproduce the instrument in the dissertation, or confirmation that the tool is public domain (as applicable) are to be submitted upon completion of the IRB application. Support material is to be emailed to Dr. Deanne Quarrie.

Description of the Research Participants

- Describe the study population, particularly inclusion and exclusion criteria is to be provided on your IRB application.

- If applicable, complete extra sections relevant to working with children, facility residents, or other protected populations.

Community Research Stakeholders and Partners

- Submit a signed Letter of Cooperation from any organization who will be involved in identifying potential participants or collecting data. This agreement is to be obtained *before* participant data collection or solicitation of data collection may happen.

- Submit an unsigned Data Use Agreement from any organization that will be providing records to the researcher.

- Describe your plan for sharing your research results with relevant stakeholders. *Stakeholders* are defined as those individuals who stand to benefit or are financially invested in your research. If you are working with stakeholders, please contact Dr. Quarrie for additional forms to ensure ethical issues around conflict of interests and multiple relationships are addressed.

Potential Risks and Benefits

- Describe anticipated risks and benefits of study participation. *Risks* are any areas of *potential* harm. Harm is defined as the potential for negative outcomes within physical, psychological, economic, or social areas. Researchers are required to anticipate, disclose, and minimize to the best of their ability any sources of harm. *Benefits* are identified as positive outcomes that produce physical, psychological, social, or economic benefits at the local (individual) and community (population, region, group) level.

- Make provisions to minimize risks to research participants and document those procedures in this online application. Researchers are required to delineate methods they plan on taking to reduce risks.

Data Confidentiality

- Describe procedures to maintain confidentiality.

- If data includes personal identifiers, submit signed certificates of confidentiality for everyone who has access to the data (except faculty members). For research that includes multiple researchers or external individuals accessing information (statisticians, etc). Please contact Dr. Quarrie for information on this.

- If applicable, complete extra sections relevant to protected health information, including the specific consent form that will be utilized for this process.

Potential Conflicts of Interest and Multiple Releationships

Disclose and manage potential conflicts of interest. *Conflict of Interests* means that you have a personal vested interest (materially, psychologically, vocationally) in the outcome of the research AND/OR you are a member of the group you plan on researching.

Informed Consent

- Make provisions to obtain and document informed consent from all study participants and the appropriate parents, guardians, or caregivers.

- Submit unsigned copies of any relevant consent documents for review.

DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

The following items are to be emailed as supporting documents to Dr. Deanne Quarrie to complete your IRB Process.

1. Prospectus of your Dissertation Topic (see your Dissertation Handbook)
2. Participant Consent form
3. Letter of Cooperation consent (if applicable)
4. Data Use Agreement (if applicable)
5. PHI Authorization (if applicable)
6. Permission releases for currently published/copyrighted surveys/tests (if you need a formal release form from Ocean Seminary, please contact Dr. MacDowell)
7. Survey, Interview, Test, etc. questions to be utilized to collect data