AIIAS

ETHICS REVIEW APPLICATION

It is the policy of the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIIAS) that all necessary precautions must be taken when conducting research to ensure that no harm is done to participants in the study and that the interests of research participants are protected. The purpose of the Ethics Review Board (ERB) is to provide an independent check to ensure that these principles are observed by AIIAS faculty and students engaged in research. AIIAS requires its faculty and students to obtain ERB approval before embarking on data collection from human subjects.

It is not the purpose, nor is it the responsibility, of the ERB to provide guidance on ethical research procedures outside of those provided in this application form and the AIIAS Research Ethics Guidelines. The ERB will only approve studies that meet the required ethical standards; approval for research that does not meet these standards will be denied. Neither is it the purpose nor responsibility of the ERB to address issues of feasibility, methodology, or empirical soundness of research studies. That is the purview of the student's research committee and/or the departmental committee in the case of faculty researchers. The ERB will concern itself solely with the ethicality of proposed research studies, and ERB decisions should not be construed as an evaluation of the academic quality of the research design. Application guidelines and the required accompanying documentation to be submitted with the application are indicated on the following pages.

Applicant/Principal Researcher: _____

Title of Research: _____

Research Advisor: _____ **Methodologist:** _____

Application for *(Check appropriately)*:

Approval: _____ Exemption*: _____

*(***Note:** Study does not involve data collection from human subjects.)*

Permission to submit Ethics Review Application:
Research Advisor (signature)

_____ *Date* _____

Checklist for Submission

- ☐ *Summary of research*
- ☐ *Full proposal/project document*
- ☐ *Research instruments*
- ☐ *Consent forms*
- ☐ *Other materials (specify):* _____

FOR ERB USE ONLY

Research Approval/Exemption Granted _____ **Denied** _____

_____	_____	_____
ERB Chair	*ERB Action Number*	*Date*

ERB Application Guidelines:

I. The completed ethics review application form must reach the Chair of the ERB as early as possible AFTER proposal or project approval by the research committee. The ERB will meet biweekly, and only those applications received at least 7 days prior to the date of the meeting will be assured of processing. Applications submitted less than 7 days prior to the date of the meeting may be addressed at the discretion of the ERB committee members. However, the ERB is under no obligation to make exceptions to the 7-day rule.

II. ERB approval is only valid for the documentation that has been submitted and considered at the time a decision is reached. If changes are made to research methodology or research instruments – no matter how minor – ERB approval must be requested again. Prior ERB approval for earlier versions of documentation must not be construed to apply to the newer unreviewed version. For this reason, ERB approval should be sought as one of the final steps in preparing to undertake a research study.

III. If the researcher is a student, the application must be submitted through the advisor. The advisor will provide assurance that the student has followed relevant ethical procedures before submission and that ethical concerns raised by the ERB will be addressed.

IV. Chairs of dissertation/thesis committees will be responsible for ensuring that proposals and data collection instruments are forwarded at the appropriate time to the ERB for processing and approval.

V. The completed application form (in hard copy or electronic copy) must be accompanied by *electronic copies* of all the supporting documentation, including:
    1. A one-page summary of the research describing the basic premise of the study (an abstract will suffice), and how this research study specifically addresses the six criteria listed at the end of this application form upon which the ERB will base its decision.
    2. The full proposal or project document. This is requested only for the sake of cross-referencing in case something in the one-page summary is unclear, or if the applicant responded to the six criteria by referencing page numbers in the full document where each criterion is addressed.
    3. All research instruments to be used in the study, such as survey questionnaires or sample questions.
    4. Consent forms (if used), and any applicable translations.

VI. The ERB will only process ethics review applications related to theses, dissertations, projects, and papers for publication or presentation in academic or professional forums.

VII. ERB applications with incomplete or unclear information will be returned unprocessed and assigned a status of "Pending," rather than "Granted" or "Denied." The ERB committee will provide feedback as to which criteria were insufficiently addressed. Applications that are severely deficient in reference to the evaluation criteria will simply be assigned a "Denied" status with no further feedback from the ERB committee. Applications assigned a "Pending" status may be resubmitted for the next ERB meeting; additional meetings beyond the regular schedule will not be convened simply for the sake of reviewing a "Pending" application that has been updated.

VIII. If data collection is being done for the exclusive purpose of fulfilling class requirements, the professor/class instructor will be responsible for overseeing and enforcing adherence to ethical practices. However, the same principles and standards of acceptable practice will apply.

IX. ERB approval is required for all activities that include primary data collection involving human subjects. In addition, the following will also be subject to assessment and approval by the ERB:

1. Studies involving sensitive documentary sources (church, state, statutory bodies, etc.)
2. Studies involving personal information related to individuals, living or deceased, whose disclosure may adversely impact the safety/welfare of individuals or groups

The ERB will base its approval on evidence in the proposal, data collection instruments and other supporting documents that:

1. *Informed consent has been/will be secured before launching the study*

2. *Possible risk of physical or mental harm is minimal or completely avoided*

3. *Appropriate measures have been taken to ensure confidentiality*

4. *Data collected is related to the research questions and no data is collected that has no bearing on the research*

5. *Research participants are assured that they may withdraw at any time without prejudice or penalty*

6. *Results from the study will be reported in aggregate whenever possible; if not possible, measures will be taken to ensure that the anonymity of the source(s) is guaranteed.*