UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Commerce Faculty Ethics in Research Policy

1. All research conducted in the Faculty of Commerce - that is, all research conducted by Commerce Faculty staff which appears in association with their UCT affiliation, and all research conducted for academic credit by Commerce Faculty students - must be approved by the Ethics in Research Committee if it involves the participation of human subjects.

2. Ongoing research that began prior to the implementation of this policy (June 11, 2002), but that had not been submitted for publication by that date, must be approved by the Committee prior to submission for publication in any form that bears association with UCT.

3. Any researcher seeking approval of a protocol will be required to submit a completed information form as attached, prior to the beginning of any phase of the project involving human subjects. The following rules on supporting documentation will apply:

    (i) Copies of all questionnaires and other material that will be shown to subjects must be attached to the form.

    (ii) In normal circumstances, a sample of the informed consent form for administration to subjects prior to their involvement in the research will be provided. This form must briefly describe the project and its purpose in straightforward, non-technical language, and indicate what the subject will be asked to do. It should then normally say, *"There are no known risks or dangers to you associated with this study. The researchers will not attempt to identify you with the responses to your questionnaire, or to name you as a participant in the study, nor will they facilitate anyone else's doing so."* A separate paragraph will then bear these words or similar:
    "I acknowledge that I am participating in this study of my own free will. I understand that I may refuse to participate or stop participating at any time without penalty. If I wish, I will be given a copy of this consent form."
    Under this paragraph will appear a line for the prospective subject's signature, and one for the date.

    (iii) In the event that wording departs from that of the sample above because risks to subjects are present, these risks must be fully specified and estimated on the consent form, and the need for them explained. All measures taken to control, limit or mitigate these risks should also appear.

    (iv) In the event that wording departs from that of the sample above because confidentiality of subjects' identities will not be protected, full indication will be given as to who will have access to the subject's

identity and roles and responses, and explanation as to why confidentiality will not be fully protected must be given.

(v) In the event that wording departs from that of the sample above because full description of the experimental rationale would block or corrupt scientifically relevant data, this shall be fully explained and justified for the Committee's benefit by the researcher.

(vi) The form shall be accompanied by a full description of the project, including its scientific purpose, place in the development of the relevant body of inquiry, methodology, reasons for requiring use of human subjects where this is not self-evident, and indication of intended channels of dissemination of results.

4. The Ethics in Research Committee will meet 4 times per year. Researchers are therefore expected, under normal circumstances, to submit protocols for approval at least two months prior to beginning procedures involving human subjects.

5. Where unusual circumstances create urgency that makes protocol submission two months in advance impossible, then the Chair of the Committee *may*, at his/her discretion, deem the protocol `routine' and grant it provisional approval, subject to ratification by the Committee. No protocol will be deemed routine if the informed consent form attached to it departs from the provisions of 2(ii) above.

6. A protocol that has been approved by a properly constituted Research Ethics Committee of a public institution shall normally be deemed `routine' if the researcher furnishes copies of all documentation associated with that approval. Clause (4) above, however, takes precedence.

7. Any substantial modification made to procedures involving human subjects, or relevant to the terms of the informed consent form, made by a researcher subsequent to Committee approval will entail submission and approval of a new protocol.

8. The schedule of Committee meeting dates will be announced in advance to the Faculty Board.

9. Records of all approved protocols will be kept and made available on request to any full-time, permanent staff member of UCT.

10. The Committee will include a community representative, who will not be a researcher or affiliated professionally with UCT. However, the presence of this member will not be required for quorum.

11. The Chair shall communicate approvals, recommendations, and changes to procedures and documents required for approval, to researchers in writing.

12. Conduct of research in the Commerce Faculty (as per this policy) that has not been approved by the Research in Ethics Committee will be action constituting a breach of policy.