Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems National Data and Statistical Center
STANDARDIZED OPERATING PROCEDURE 605

TBIMS Committees, Modules and Special Interest Groups, and Election Process for Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs

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<tr>
<th>Review Committee: Planning</th>
<th>Start Date: 9/14/2009</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addendum: TBIMS SIG Definitions</td>
<td>Last Revised Date: 12/5/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forms: None</td>
<td>Last Reviewed Date: 12/5/2019</td>
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Introduction:
There exists within the TBIMS, Committees, Modules and SIGs. Five standing committees exist with different functions: Data, Knowledge Translation, Planning, Research, and the Executive Committee. Committee chairs and co-chairs are elected during the first Project Directors Meeting following the beginning of a new TBIMS grant cycle, or as needed due to vacancy. A formal procedure has been implemented to ensure a fair election process. Modules are time limited peer reviewed studies involving more than one TBIMS. SIGs are groups of TBIMS investigators with common interests in specific topics related to TBI. The current SIGs are: Sleep-Wake-Fatigue, Disorders of Consciousness, Aging with TBI and TBI in the Elderly, VA Collaborative, Cultural Issues SIG, Analytic SIG, Health Services and Implementation Science SIG, Behavioral Health SIG, Geographic Indicators SIG, and the Caregiver and Family SIG (see addendum: TBIMS SIG Definitions).

Purpose:
To describe the purpose, formation and function of the TBIMS Committees, Modules, and SIGs. To establish a formal method to elect committee chairs and co-chairs of the Executive, Planning, Research, Knowledge Translation, and Data committees and any other committees created in the future.

Scope:
All TBIMS Centers, TBIMS Follow-up Centers and NDSC.

Responsibilities:
The TBIMS, TBIMS Follow-up Centers and NDSC will abide by this policy and procedure.

Committees Descriptions:
Executive Committee – The purpose of this committee is to provide guidance to NIDILRR and the TBIMS Project Directors regarding key issues facing the TBIMS and to establish regular communication with the director of NIDILRR. This committee consists of the chairs or co-chairs of each of the standing Committees (Planning, Research, Data, Knowledge Translation), the Director of the NDSC, a representative of the VA collaborative group, the NIDILRR TBIMS Program Manager, and the Executive Committee chair. The Executive Committee chair is elected by majority vote of the Project Directors from each TBIMS at the beginning of each grant cycle before the election of Committee chairs and co-chairs and serves for the 5 year grant cycle. The
chair does not have to be a Project Director, but must be in a leadership role within a currently NIDILRR funded TBIMS center. To achieve broad representation from the funded centers, no TBIMS Center will have more than one representative on the Executive Committee. If two or more of the chairs of the standing committees are from the same TBIMS Center, then the co-chair(s) from one or more of the standing committee(s) will serve on the Executive Committee. (It should be noted that the NDSC is funded separately from the TBIMS program. If the NDSC resides at a currently funded TBIMS Center a representative of that Center is permitted to serve on the Executive Committee along with the NDSC representative). The Executive Committee sets the agenda for the semi-annual Project Directors meetings. The chair of the Executive Committee chairs the semi-annual TBIMS Project Directors' Meetings. There is no co-chair for the Executive Committee. Committee support is provided by the NDSC.

**Strategic Planning Committee** – The purpose of this committee is to provide strategic, long-term planning for the TBIMS research endeavors, including collaboration with other programs and agencies outside and inside NIDILRR. This also entails assisting with the development and direction of Special Interest Groups among the TBIMS Centers. It leads the process of reviewing and recommending major revisions to the core National Database variables (adding and deleting variables) twice during a funding cycle. It is responsible for providing guidance on other significant issues related to the scope of the TBIMS such as National Database inclusion criteria, data quality targets, and oversight of the Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOP). The Planning Committee consists of the Project Director from each TBIMS Center or a designated person from that center if the Project Director is absent. Each center carries a single vote.

**Data Committee** – The purpose of this committee is to oversee all issues related to data collection, management and quality for the TBIMS National Database. This includes setting and reviewing data quality targets and reporting to the Project Directors on issues relating to enrollment, follow-up, and missing data. This committee also reports to the Project Directors on concerns from data collectors/managers/center staff regarding data quality and collection (burden, complexity, reliability, etc). In addition, the Data Committee assists the NDSC with data coding and training issues. A subgroup of "Databusters" assists in the resolution of variable data collection issues that cannot be resolved by the Data Committee or the NDSC. The committee also proposes coding clarifications/changes to the Project Directors, coordinates with the NDSC on the use and development of software for data entry and reports, reviews all existing and new data error checks, and oversees data collection certification activities (Form I, Form II, DRS, CT scan). Coordination of piloting proposed variables is another responsibility.

**Research Committee** – The purpose of this committee is to foster research utilizing TBIMS data by facilitating collaboration and cooperation among TBIMS Centers and between external researchers and TBIMS Centers. With NIDILRR’s input, the committee is responsible for developing SOP 602f - Access to the TBIMS National Database for those utilizing the national database, and for updating the policy as needed. The committee is responsible for reviewing requests by external investigators or organizations to use TBIMS data, as well as reviewing and providing feedback on
module studies that are initiated by TBIMS Centers during the funding cycle, but have not undergone external peer review. Such module proposals will be reviewed by the research committee and then forwarded on to NIDILRR staff for review. The Research Committee will also be responsible for overseeing solicitation of manuscripts eligible for the Rosenthal Research Award, and for reviewing and choosing papers for this award. Finally, the research committee will oversee discussion of variables recommended for pilot testing for addition to the national database as well as overseeing discussion of modification of existing variables to address research questions, with the goal of ensuring the scientific integrity of the data.

Knowledge Translation Committee – The purpose of this committee is to expand upon past dissemination activities by reaching out to a broader community including consumers, local/state/national and international societies and interest groups involved in the treatment and care of individuals with TBI. It is the primary conduit to the Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center. It pursues and coordinates the development of special TBIMS-focused issues of relevant journals and TBIMS presentations at relevant conferences. It reviews and makes recommendations for revisions of the TBIMS slide show, and other TBIMS related products (e.g., fact sheets, brochures, etc.).

Committee Formation and Function:
The Executive and Planning Committees are formed as described above. For the Data, Research, and Knowledge Translation Committees, each funded center has the option of appointing someone to the committee; the members need not be Project Directors, and representation can vary from one meeting to the next. However, each center is encouraged to designate one person to represent that center at committee meetings. Meetings are open and anyone can contribute to the discussion and recommend agenda items. Access to the committee listserv is open. However, each center represented on the committee has only one vote, which is also the case in web-voting. At the beginning of a new TBIMS grant cycle, each committee must appoint a chair and co-chair by majority vote of committee members. All committee chairs and co-chairs must be from a currently funded TBIMS Center. The committee chairs develop their meeting agendas (teleconference or in-person) and lead those meetings. The co-chairs take meeting minutes and function as the chair in the absence of the chair. The committees meet in-person at the semi-annual TBIMS Project Directors’ Meetings and via teleconference at other times as needed. Other committee work is completed via committee listserves. Minutes from all meetings are posted on the NDSC website (www.tbindsc.org).

Procedural steps for Committee Election of Chairs and Co-Chairs:
All committee chairs and co-chairs will be elected during the first Project Directors (PD) Meeting following the beginning of a new TBIMS grant cycle or at any time there is a chair or co-chair vacancy. The nomination and election process is outlined in the following steps:
1. See above committee descriptions and committee form and function section for descriptions of who is eligible to serve as chairs and co-chairs.
2. The NDSC will request that each Center email their named member of each standing committee (Data, KT, Research, Planning – is automatically the Project Director of their TBIMS), and any staff eligible to be nominated for Chair of the Executive Committee.
3. The NDSC will update all Committee listserves with new standing committee membership.
4. One month prior to the PD Meeting, the NDSC will post an email to all TBIMS Committee listserves, requesting confidential nominations including self-nominations for Chair of the Executive Committee and chair and co-chair for each of the four standing committee with the list of those eligible for each position, and a deadline for submitting nominations. An individual can be nominated for more than one position if they are eligible.
5. The NDSC will contact all nominees to determine their interest in serving in the nominated position(s).
6. The NDSC will notify each TBIMS Project Director of any nominations from their Center.
7. The NDSC will create and post the final ballot for each position to all TBIMS Committee listserves and include it in the meeting electronic binder.
8. The Executive Committee chair will be elected during the Planning Committee meeting at the PD Meeting and all other committee chairs and co-chairs will be elected during their committee meetings at the PD Meeting.
9. When electing the chair of the Executive Committee, each Project Director will have one vote. When electing Committee chairs and co-chairs, each Center represented at the Committee meeting will have one vote.
10. Votes will be cast by secret ballot using the Hare System. See addendum The Hare System of Proportional Representation.
11. Votes will be tallied by a member of the NDSC to assure confidentiality.
12. For committees, once the chair has been elected a new round of voting will be conducted to elect the co-chair using the same procedures as used for the chair.
13. The newly elected Chairs and Co-chairs will assume their role immediately following the December Project Directors meeting.

**Modules:**

Modules are time limited studies involving more than one TBIMS Center and are generally observational in nature focused on a specific aspect of TBI. These studies generally start at the beginning of each new TBIMS grant cycle and are intended to conclude prior to the end of the same grant cycle. For the 2017-2022 grant cycle, each TBIMS proposed a module study as part of their TBIMS application, then a voting process led by NIDILRR staff was used to decide which modules would be chosen for implementation with the lead center being the one that had proposed the module. Each TBIMS Center was required to participate in at least one module study. Modules can also be implemented during the grant cycle. Please see SOP 700g - Module Project Peer Review Procedures for further detail on the internal module peer review process. Module data collection can be supported by the NDSC. Each module has its own listserv.

**Special Interest Groups:**

SIGs can be formed at any time and focus on topics of interest to TBIMS investigators. New SIGs will be allotted meeting slots at two consecutive Project Directors Meetings,
after which time SIGs must have regularly scheduled conference calls (with documented minutes) to ensure continual progress outside of the Project Directors Meetings. The allocation of continued meeting time at semiannual meetings will be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

**Training requirements:**
None

**Compliance:**
All TBIMS Centers, TBIMS Follow-up Centers and NDSC will comply with this policy and its procedures.

**References:**
None

**History:**

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<tr>
<td>9/14/2009</td>
<td>SOP drafted</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/9/2013</td>
<td>On page 3 under “Formation and Function” a sentence was added to clarify that committee chairs and co-chairs must be from a currently funded TBIMS Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/10/2013</td>
<td>The title of the “Dissemination Committee” was changed to “Knowledge Translation Committee.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/13/2013</td>
<td>An addendum that provides a description of each SIG was added to the SOP</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/13/2013</td>
<td>On page 2 it was noted that if the NDSC resides at a currently funded TBIMS Center a representative of that Center is permitted to serve on the Executive Committee along with the NDSC representative</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/12/2015</td>
<td>Updated NIDRR to NIDILRR</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/17/2016</td>
<td>Clarified policy to state EC chair can only be from a NIDILRR funded TBIMS. Added a representative from the VA collaborative group to the EC committee. Added the Caregiver and Family SIG.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/5/2019</td>
<td>Moved SOP 609 - Nomination Process for Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs and instructions into this SOP. Five Year review completed with minor revisions/updates.</td>
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**Review schedule:**
Every 5 years
Addendum

TBI Model Systems

Special Interest Group Definitions

Sleep-Wake-Fatigue SIG

The focus of the Sleep-Wake-Fatigue SIG is to facilitate collaborative projects in this domain. Currently two areas of focus include diagnosis and management of acute and post-acute sleep, wake, and fatigue disorders. Currently, members are participating in developing research proposals and data analysis from TBIMS associated projects. Dissemination to providers and consumers and addressing compliance with treatment are also areas of interest. Finally, members share methodologies and other research challenges with advancing the science in this arena with TBI survivors.

Disorders of Consciousness SIG

The DOC SIG was established to promote collaborative research on prognosis, assessment, and treatment of individuals with disorders of consciousness and to facilitate translation of this research into policy and practice. The TBIMS DOC SIG works in collaboration with the DOC Task Force of the Brain Injury Special Interest Group of the ACRM, on shared missions, and also pursues TBIMS-specific missions individually.

Objectives:
1) To support the conduct of new research and synthesis of existing research to enhance the evidence base on which prognostic, assessment, and treatment decisions for this population can be made.
2) To engage in advocacy for appropriate rehabilitation services for individuals with DOC, based on emerging evidence.
3) To serve as expert consultants and resources to other researchers, clinicians, and policy makers dealing with the DOC population.

Aging with TBI and TBI in the Elderly SIG

The Aging SIG is looking at research opportunities regarding aging with brain injury and TBI among the elderly regarding representativeness, database variables, research needs, and uses of our longitudinal database to answer questions.
VA Collaborative SIG

The Department of Veterans Affairs Collaborative SIG was established to explore opportunities for collaborative research between the NIDILRR and VA PRC TBI Model Systems. The SIG facilitates discussion and collaboration around topics of mutual interest between the NIDILRR TBIMS and VA TBIMS. VA Collaborative SIG members propose, execute, and review research projects between NIDILRR and VA PRC TBIMS centers. This review has allowed for sharing best practices for overcoming barriers to collaboration such as data security requirements, formation of collaborators, and funding rules on VA-funded grants.

Cultural Issues SIG

Objectives:
1) To facilitate development of prospective collaborative research projects that address cultural issues involved in rehabilitation and outcomes research for persons with TBI.

2) To serve as a resource to the TBIMS data collectors and investigators on conducting research in a culturally humble way.

Analytic SIG

The main purpose of the Analytic SIG is to serve. Specifically we are motivated to provide both current and advanced statistical and psychometric support to researchers and clinicians alike within the TBIMS. The main focus of the support will be general education which will be used as a conduit for dissemination of contemporary methodologies designed to enhance research in rehabilitation at all levels.

Objectives:
1) Inform TBIMS researchers about the latest advances in data analysis and measurement methods through regular presentations at TBIMS meetings
2) Provide a forum for in depth discussion of data analysis and measurement methods with the TBIMS
3) Inform TBIMS researchers about educational opportunities including current publications relevant to understanding the latest advances in data analysis and measurement methods
4) Identify and prioritize topics on analysis and measurement methods for knowledge dissemination within the TBIMS
5) Share knowledge gained through the SIG outside of the TBIMS through presentation at other meetings and publication
Caregiver and Family SIG

**Purpose:** To explore research opportunities, variables, methodology, and collaborative projects that address caregiver and family issues related to TBI.

**Mission:** The Caregiver and Family SIG will develop retrospective data analyses and prospective studies to further advance the knowledge of the impact of TBI on caregivers and the relationship of caregiver functioning to outcomes in persons with TBI, including both military and civilian populations. The SIG will also focus on developing treatment protocols targeted at reducing distress and improving functioning for caregivers in both military and civilian populations.

Health Services and Implementation Science SIG

**Purpose:** The purpose of this SIG is to engage TBIMS researchers in projects that fall into the realm of Health Services Research and/or Implementation Science.

**Mission:** To increase the engagement of the TBIMS in research that can have a more immediate impact on healthcare services, and to study how to best implement findings from TBIMS research.

**Rationale:** Health Services Research... "is the multidisciplinary field of scientific investigation that studies how social factors, financing systems, organizational structures and processes, health technologies, and personal behaviors affect access to health care, the quality and cost of health care, and ultimately our health and well-being. Its research domains are individuals, families, organizations, institutions, communities, and populations" (Academy for Health Services Research and Health Policy, 2000). Implementation Science is the “the scientific study of methods to promote the systematic uptake of research findings and other evidence-based practices into routine practice, and, hence, to improve the quality and effectiveness of health services” (Eccles, 2006). We will educate ourselves about the focus and design of projects that fall in these areas, with the eventual goal of designing collaborative study proposals.

Behavioral Health SIG

The overarching mission of the Behavioral Health SIG is to promote health and community integration in persons with TBI through advances in research, clinical care, and advocacy for behavioral health issues. Behavioral health in this context refers to topics including health behaviors, mental health, substance use, resilience, and well-being.

The Behavioral Health SIG will facilitate collaborative efforts to improve understanding of
these topics. As such, SIG activities will include, but will not be limited to, the following:

1) Forming collaborative projects utilizing existing NIDILRR and VA TBIMS national database behavioral health variables.
2) Identifying and promoting new behavioral health variables within the NIDILRR and VA TBIMS national databases.
3) Organizing efforts for grant funding focused on behavioral health within TBI populations
4) Advocating for behavioral health best practices within rehabilitation settings. Consulting and collaborating with other researchers, care providers, professional organizations, and research groups to address behavioral health topics.

Geographic Indicators Special Interest Group (GeoSIG)

**Purpose:** To explore research opportunities, methods, and collaborative projects that incorporate geographic indicators into studies of TBI outcomes.

**Activities:**
1. Provide a forum for interested TBIMS researchers to enhance their knowledge of geographic indicators and use in research.
2. Serve as a vehicle to share opportunities for collaborative projects.
3. Propose and maintain an indicator of neighborhood socioeconomic status that can be incorporated into the TBIMS National Database.
4. Identify indices of the social determinants of health that could be utilized by TBIMS researchers.
5. Provide training opportunities for TBIMS researchers who are not members of the GeoSIG to understand how geographic indicators could be incorporated into their research.
Addendum

The Hare System of Proportional Representation

PURPOSE
The Hare System is intended to secure the representation of every shade of the electorate’s opinion in direct proportion to its numerical strength.

WHAT IT SEEKS TO RECTIFY
Under the usual form of voting for a list of people for a committee or representative body where several are to be chosen, a bare majority of the votes or even a plurality is sufficient to elect. The outstanding example of this system is the method used in this country for presidential electors. Equally glaring is the inequality where but one person is chosen to office in a representative assembly. The following example of a congressional election in Indiana indicates this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Votes</th>
<th>Representatives Elected</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>291,288</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>166,698</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressives</td>
<td>127,041</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>55,807</td>
<td>0</td>
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In this instance, while 349,546 voters, a majority, went without representation, a minority elected all the representatives. This occurs with considerable frequency in American legislative elections.

THE MECHANICS OF THE HARE SYSTEM

Nominations
Nominations are made by a petition signed by a stated number of voters. Candidates for the Council of the University Senate are placed in nomination by three or more members of the Senate. Any number of nominations may be made regardless of the number to be elected.

The Ballot and Method of Voting
A sample ballot is as follows: Sample Ballot
Directions to Voters

Put the figure 1 in front of the name of your first choice. If you want to express additional choices, do so by putting the figure 2 in front of the name of your second choice, the figure 3 in front of the name of your third choice, and so on. You may express as many choices as you please, without regard to the number to be elected.

Your ballot will be counted for your first choice if it can help him or her. If it cannot help your first choice, it will be transferred to the first of your remaining choices whom it can help. You cannot hurt any of your favorites by marking lower choices for others. The more choices you express, the surer you are to have your ballot count for one of them. But do not feel obliged to express choices that you do not really have.

A ballot is spoiled if the figure 1 is put opposite more than one name or if checks are used instead of numerals to indicate choices. See the following example:
2 Jones Smith
1 Brown
5 Black
3 Green Grey
The voter in the above case has voted for five candidates in the order of his or her preference. The voter has said, in effect, “Brown is my first choice, but if she is not chosen, or if he already has enough votes to elect, I desire that you count my second choice, Jones, and so on down the list.”

The Counting of the Ballots: The Quota.

The first step in counting the ballots is to ascertain the number of first choices necessary to elect a candidate. This is obtained by the following formula:

\[
\text{the number of votes cast divided by (the number to be elected + 1)} + 1 = \text{quota}
\]

For example, in an election in which there were 425 votes cast in balloting to elect 17 members on one ballot, the quota would be:

\[
\frac{425}{17 + 1} + 1 = 24
\]

Remaining fractions are always discarded. The quota of 24 represents the least number of first choices a candidate may receive and still be declared elected. The extra “1” is added (after the division) because, without it, the quota would be 23, making it possible for 18 candidates each to receive 23 votes, when only 17 are to be elected.

The Counting of the Ballots: The Transfer of Votes.

The ballots are divided into piles according to the first choices indicated. It will then be found, we may suppose, that 27 have marked Jones as the first choice, that 25 have marked Brown as first choice, etc. In tabular fashion, the results might be as follows, according to the first choices marked:

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Wood</td>
</tr>
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Jones and Brown, having secured the quota of 24, are declared elected.

Jones has 3 more votes than needed for election. As these three ballots can no longer help Jones to be elected, they are transferred to help elect other candidates. Thus, the three ballots are transferred to the second choices indicated on each. If any of these second choices are for Brown, who also has already been elected, the third choice is given the ballot instead.

Brown’s extra votes (i.e., those in excess of 24), are then distributed according to second choice, etc.

If there are vacancies and if there are no surpluses, all the votes of the candidates securing the lowest numbers are taken from them, there being little chance of their election, and they are distributed according to their second or third or fourth choices, and so on.