Draft 02-22-12

**Student Plan for Protecting Research Participants**

***Required attachments:***

* **Information for Participants to inform their consent**
* **Data-collection instrument (questionnaire, interview protocol, test, description of procedure, observational coding sheet, etc.)**

***Additional attachments*** *(check and attach all that apply)****:***

* Recruitment text, if separate from Information for Participants *(see #11)*
* Authorization to Contact Prospective Participants form, signed by appropriate individual *(see #12)*
* Written consent form *(see #14)*

1. **What are the main research questions you are seeking to answer in conducting this investigation?**

**2. Whom will you be recruiting to participate in this project?** *Check all that apply, and provide a brief description of the individuals from whom you will be collecting data.*

* Students enrolled at your institution
* Students at other colleges or universities
* Faculty or staff at your institution
* Community members who belong to a voluntary organization (e.g., a faith community, a political organization, a social club)
* Employees or clients of an organization outside your institution
* Students in elementary or secondary school
* Other individuals not affiliated with my institution (please describe):

*Description of the group you will be studying:*

1. **How many people do you hope will agree to participate in your investigation?**
2. **Is your project focused on studying any of the following types of participants?** *Check all that apply:*

* Minors (persons under age 18)
* Individuals who may be economically or educationally disadvantaged (e.g., recent immigrants, low-income persons, persons of color)
* Residents of health care or long-term care facilities
* Individuals in correctional institutions
* Persons with physical conditions that may make some types of project procedures riskier for them (e.g., pregnant women, persons with food allergies)
* Not applicable

1. **How will you gather information from these individuals?** *Check all that apply, and attach a copy of the instrument (questionnaire, interview questions, test, etc.) you will use to gather information:*

* Written questionnaire with anonymous responses
* Written questionnaire with identifiable responses
* Interview (in person or via telephone)
* Focus group
* Observation of behavior
* Administration of psychological test
* Measurement of physical characteristics or administration of physical test
* Collection of physical samples
* Analysis of information that was previously gathered by someone else, requiring no additional interaction with the subjects

1. **What risks, if any, could your method(s) of gathering information pose to your participants?**  *Think carefully about the individuals who will be participating in your project, since different people may respond in different ways to the same question, test, or other procedure. Then check all that apply and explain below:*

* Psychological risks – *Your method(s) of gathering information may cause participants to experience more stress, anxiety, depression, or feelings of guilt or shame than they would ordinarily experience in daily life. Psychological risks are posed by procedures such as:*
  + *Questions about traumatic events*
  + *Offensive or threatening questions*
  + *Exposure to offensive, degrading, or frightening material*
  + *Manipulation of the participants’ environment – isolation, negative messages, etc.*
  + *Deception that causes distress once the subjects are debriefed*
* Legal or social risks – *The information you are gathering is not anonymous, and the findings, if disclosed, could put a participant at risk of civil or criminal liability, or damage his or her financial standing, academic standing, employability, or reputation. Legal or social risks are posed by procedures that gather identifiable information about:*
* Illegal activities
* Activities that violate institutional policies
* Activities that violate social norms
* Activities or beliefs that could invite retaliation or other repercussions from others
* Circumstances that could harm a participant’s employability, such as a previous job loss or a health problem
* Behaviors that could harm a participant’s reputation, such as alcohol use or sexual behaviors
* [Some reference to opinions or beliefs that, in some countries or cultures, could put a participant at risk?]
* Physical risks – *Your method(s) of gathering information may cause injury or physical discomfort beyond what would be experienced in normal daily activities.*

*Please explain the risks you have checked above:*

1. **If you checked any of the above types of risks, please explain the steps you have taken, or will take, to make these risks as small as possible.** *Check all that apply:*

* I have worked with my project supervisor to revise or eliminate any potentially risky questions, experimental conditions, test items, or other aspects of my data collection that are not essential to accomplishing the purposes of my project
* I am asking my participants to provide their information anonymously, so I can’t accidentally disclose anything that would harm them legally or socially
* Although the information I am gathering will not be anonymous, I will separate the identifying information (such as names, student ID numbers, or detailed demographic information) from the other information, and I will keep all the information secure
* The project information statement I will provide participants to inform their consent to participate describes the possible risks; assures them that they are free not to participate; and provides information and resources in case they experience negative consequences from participation.
* Other steps taken to minimize risks *(please describe)*:

1. **How much time will your project require from the participating individuals? Are there any other costs they will incur from participation?**
2. **In what ways, if any, might participants benefit from participation in your project?**
3. **Review the information you provided above about the risks (if any), costs, and potential benefits of participation in your project, as you have described them above. Explain briefly why it is appropriate to ask others to participate in your project in view of the potential consequences for them (both positive and negative).**
4. **How will you recruit participants?** *Check all that apply and explain briefly below:*

* I will put up posters or flyers in public spaces with information about the project and contact information for me, and interested people will initiate contact with me
* A third party (someone other than I) will provide prospective participants with information about the project and contact information for me, either orally or in writing, and interested people will initiate contact with me
* I will send information about the project directly to the individuals I am hoping to recruit, using email, campus mail, US mail, telephone, text, or some other means of direct contact
* Other (please explain below)

*Please elaborate, including the text of the poster/flyer/email/verbal announcement you or your third-party contact will use to invite people to participate:*

1. **If you are contacting individuals directly with an invitation to participate, through email, campus mail, telephone, or some other means of direct communication, what steps have you taken to make sure you are not violating their privacy in the method you are using to contact them?**In other words, what are you doing so that prospective participants don’t wonder how you got their email address or telephone number? *Check one:*

* Not applicable, because prospective participants will be contacting me first on the basis of information they obtained from a poster, flyer, or a third party; I will not initiate contact with them.
* I am using contact information that is publicly available (a telephone book or dexknows.com, a list of individuals and contact information on a publicly-available website, etc.)
* I am using contact information that is not publicly-available but that I have been given appropriate permission to use (for example, a course instructor has given permission to contact students in her course and has supplied a course email alias, or a non-profit organization staff member has collected names and telephone numbers from interested clients of the organization and, with their permission, has provided them to you). *Please describe the information you will use to identify and contact prospective subjects, identify the individual(s) from whom you have obtained permission to use this information, explain why this individual is an appropriate authority for this purpose, and attach an Authorization to Contact Prospective Research Participants form signed by the individual(s).*

1. **In order to make an informed decision about whether to participate in your project, potential participants must receive specific details about various aspects of the project, provided in language they can understand, before they agree to participate. You must prepare either a written “Information for Participants” document to be provided to the participants, or a script for providing the same information orally, following the instructions in the Informing Consent policy. How will you provide this required information to your prospective participants?** *Please check all that apply and attach copies of the information you will provide for each item you check.*

* I will provide the information orally to prospective participants [please attach the script; only permissible for projects with minimal or no risk as indicated in #6 above]
* I will include the Information for Participants document as part of the recruitment message/invitation to participate
* I will provide the Information for Participants document separately from the recruitment message but before participants begin participating (answering questions, taking tests, etc.)

**14. How will you document the consent of your subjects to participate?**  *Please check the appropriate box and attach a copy of any form(s) or applicable text.*

* Implicit consent: Subjects who answer questions or provide information after receiving project information are assumed to have consented (appropriate for projects involving no greater than minimal risk and requiring no consent from legally-authorized representatives).
* Oral consent (also understood as Waiver of Consent): Consent will be provided orally and will not be documented.
* Electronic consent: Subjects are required to indicate their informed consent to participate electronically before they can access the questions on an electronic survey (attach text of consent statement).
* Paper consent: Subjects or their legally-authorized representatives indicate their consent in writing (attach text of consent statement).

**15. In order to protect the privacy of your participants, you need to ensure that no one other than you, your co-investigators (if any), and your instructor or supervisor will have access to the raw data (survey or interview responses, test results, etc.) as you are gathering it. How will you keep the data you are gathering secure, so that others who are not conducting or supervising this project will not have access to it?** *Please check all that apply.*

* Paper records (e.g., handwritten notes from interviews) will be kept in a locked file or office
* Electronic records will be kept in a locked office (e.g., personal server)
* Electronic records will be maintained on a network with restricted access (e.g., a shared drive or personal drive)
* Electronic records will be maintained on a protected portable electronic device or storage device (e.g., laptop computer, PDA, flash or zip drive, CD or DVD, external hard drive)
* Other (*please explain):*

**16. You also need to keep the data secure after you have completed your project or report. What will you do with the raw data at the conclusion of your project?**

* I will shred or delete the raw data as soon as I have turned in my project.
* I will shred or delete the raw data at the end of the academic year; in the meantime, I will keep the data secure as described in the preceding item.
* I will shred or delete the raw data when I graduate; in the meantime, I will keep the data secure as described in the preceding item.
* The data will not be destroyed, but will be archived in a secure location *[explain]*:
* Other *[explain]*:

**17. In what form and with whom will project results be shared?** *Check all that apply and provide a brief narrative description of the dissemination plan.*

* + Oral presentation
  + Written paper or report
  + Poster presentation
  + Posting to a website with restricted access
  + Posting to a website that can be accessed by anyone
  + Results will be shared only with my instructor
  + Results will be shared only with my instructor and my classmates
  + Results will be shared with an organization outside my institution that contributed in some way to the project
  + Results will be presented on campus to an audience that may include members of the general public
  + I hope to share results beyond my institution at a conference or in a scholarly paper
  + I hope to share results with the general public
  + Other

*Please describe:*

**18. What agreement are you making with your participants about whether others will be able to identify them in your reports about the results of your project?** *Review your document for informing your participants’ consent and check one of the following:*

* My participants have agreed to **permit their information to be identifiable** (so others may be able to identify them in any reports I disseminate), and I have secured their written consent to this identifiability
* My participants have agreed to **provide their information anonymously**, so I will be unable to tell whose information is whose when I analyze and report the data, and I will be unable to provide identifiable information in any reports I disseminate
* My participants have agreed to **provide their information confidentially**, so that even though I may be able to tell whose information is whose, I will not share that information with others; and I have agreed to protect their identities in any reports that I disseminate
* Some of my participants have agreed to identifiability and others have requested confidentiality, and each participant’s preference is recorded in their written consent document

**19. What steps are you taking to carry out the agreement you are making with your participants about whether others will be able to identify them in your reports?** *Check all that apply:*

* I am only using identifiable information from participants who have agreed in writing to identifiability.
* I designed my data-collection procedure so that results are anonymous, so I will be unable to provide identifiable information in any reports I disseminate.
* In analyzing the data, I will keep identifying information separate from the other information I gather from the participants
* I will not report any individual-level data (such as direct quotes or test results from individuals); all data will be reported in aggregated (grouped) form
* I will remove potentially-identifying information (e.g., demographic descriptors) from aggregated (grouped) data (particularly important for small and distinctive groups)
* I will remove potentially-identifying information (names, demographic descriptors, direct quotes that may reveal a participant’s identity) from any individual-level data I report
* I will ask my instructor to read a draft of my report or my presentation outline before sharing it with anyone else, to make sure that my report respects the agreement I made with my participants about the identifiability of their information.
* I will take the following additional steps *[please describe]*:

**20. How will you thank your participants for their participation?** *Check all that apply:*

* I will include a note of thanks at the end of my written data-collection instrument (survey, test, etc.)
* I will thank them orally at the conclusion of my oral data collection (interview, focus group, etc.)
* I will send a written thank-you note at the conclusion of my data-gathering to everyone who was invited to participate (since I won’t know who participated and who didn’t)
* I will send a written thank-you note at the conclusion of my data-gathering to all those who participated
* I will invite participants to a public presentation of the results or send a link to an on-line posting of results
* I will invite participants to contact me for a copy of my report
* Other *(please describe)*:

*Notes on this draft:*

* *This draft does not make provision for projects with minors or others who may require a legally-authorized representative to consent on their behalf*
* *This draft needs to be clearer about when Information for Participants must be provided in writing and when it is ok to provide it orally*
* *This draft needs to be clearer about when written consent must be obtained*

