** Letter of information and consent form**

[Date]

Greetings,

My name is [researcher name]. I am a Research Associate at the University of Guelph. I am working with Dr. [Principal Investigator] and [faculty co-investigator] to study the impact of Dr. PI’s course design and teaching practice on your learning in UNIV\*XXXX. We are especially curious about how this course has helped you develop the knowledge, skills, and values important for [outcome].

I am writing to invite you to participate in this research. We want to ensure that students in UNIV\*XXXX have had the opportunity to learn the kinds of things that will be of use to them in their [outcome] opportunities in the Program and beyond. To make sure we are effectively teaching this knowledge and these skills and to improve the quality of instruction, we need to hear from you—the students.

We are inviting all students enrolled in UNIV\*XXXX to participate in this research.

Your participation in this research can include any combination of the following:

* Granting us access to your demonstration opportunities (reflections, personal value proposition, personal learning outcomes, personal learning proposal), and/or
* Completing a survey on what you learned in the course (similar to end-of-semester student evaluations), and/or
* Taking part in a 1-hour focus group on the last day of class, and/or
* Reviewing or participating in the analysis and validation of the findings resulting from this research

The survey will focus on your experiences in UNIV\*XXXX. The focus group will be a group conversation about your experiences in UNIV\*XXXX. We will ask questions related to what we’ve learned from existing research, and about your experiences in the class, and with completing the demonstration opportunities.

The goal of this project is to better understand how teachers can prepare students for [outcome] opportunities through a foundation level course, such as UNIV\*XXXX.  We will publish academic articles and make presentations based on our findings. We may use the information we collect during this project as part of larger project to assess the quality of the Program. In this case, your data will continue to be included in the research unless you contact us and ask us to have it removed. If we invite you participate in another piece of research related to the Certificate (for example, if we conduct a similar focus group during UNIV\*XXXX), we will ask you to affirm that you are ok with having your data from this course linked with your data from that course.

There is no external funding associated with this study. [Faculty Co-Investigator] salary and my salary are being paid for by Dr. PI’s research funds.

There are benefits and risks of participating in this research. The potential benefits of this research include:

* Improving the quality of instruction in the other core courses in the program, i.e. UNIV\*XXXX and UNIV\*XXXX, and therefore your experience in those courses;
* Improving the quality of the Program for future cohorts;
* Contributing to a body of knowledge about how best to teach this kind of course and how to organize this kind of program.

Participants in this research risk:

* Having the course instructor gain access to comments made during the focus group or feedback given via the survey before the final grades have been submitted for the course.  However, the research team will take every effort to avoid this possibility.  The risk is no greater than that undertaken in end-of-semester student evaluations.
* Embarrassment or disappointment if the research findings quote you as an example of someone who did not learn as much as other students. You will not be identifiable to others, but you may be able to identify yourself. To help minimize this risk, you have the option of participating in a review and validation of the findings, at which point you can make suggestions and/or remove your consent to participate.

[RA] will tape record the focus group. At the end of the focus group, she will transfer the recordings to a secure electronic environment and delete the recordings from the recorder. We will transcribe the discussion from the tapes and destroy the sound recording. The recording (until it is deleted) and the transcript will be stored on a personal computer that is encrypted, so that even if the computer is stolen, the data will be un-readable. Dr. PI will not have access to these recordings or any transcripts of these recordings until the final grades for the course have been submitted to the Office of the Registrar. A printed copy of the transcript will be stored in a locked cabinet in a locked office in the main office of the Department of [Department]. Only members of the research team will have access to the recording and the transcript: [PI], [Faculty Co-Investigator], and [RA]. We are all committed to keeping your identity confidential.

You do not have to participate in this research. You are free to withdraw at any time, with no consequences. If you withdraw we will not use your coursework or survey results for the study. However, if you withdraw from the focus group, the comments you have made up to that point will be included in the study because they will be part of a group recording. You will still receive the final results of the research if you provide your contact information below.

If you choose to give us your email address, you are agreeing to be contacted by us via email, and you understand that others may find and read the email messages because email can be forwarded or intercepted (accessed by someone through internet servers).

If you have any questions about this study, you are welcome to contact the [RA] at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or name@uoguelph.ca.

If you have questions regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant in this study (REB#.....), please contact: Director, Research Ethics; University of Guelph; reb@uoguelph.ca; (519) 824-4120 (ext. 56606)

This project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Board for compliance with federal guidelines for research involving human participants

*Please keep the information above for your records. Return this piece to the researcher.*

I have read the information that explains this research project, or someone has read it to me. I have had the opportunity to discuss the research and ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I know whom to contact if I have questions that arise during my participation.

I hereby consent to:

🞎 Granting the research team access to the work I have submitted as part of participation in UNIV\*XXXX, including (check all that apply):

🞎 My first day responses to three questions

🞎 My seminar reflections

🞎 My personal value proposition

🞎 My personal learning outcomes

🞎 My personal learning plan

🞎 Completing a survey on my experience in UNIV\*XXXX

🞎 Participating in a focus group on student learning in UNIV\*XXXX

🞎 My data being used in this and future studies related to X

By consenting to participate in this research, I understand that:

🞎 My participation in the focus group will be recorded as part of a group

🞎 I cannot withdraw my data from the focus group after it has been recorded

🞎 At any time, I can withdraw my consent for all components of the project besides the focus group by contacting [RA] or [PI]

I know that if I provide my contact information below, I am consenting to you contacting me by email, and accept the risks associated with electronic communications.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this piece to the researcher.*

Analysis and final results

Circle (Yes) and provide your email address, or leave this section BLANK.

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| Yes | I would like to be contacted to review the findings and analysis before any results are published. Please contact me by email\* at: |
| Yes | I would like to receive a copy of the final report. Please send or email\* it to me at:  |

\*If you have more than one email address, please provide us with the address that you are most comfortable receiving information to.