

Master's Project Permission Form - Template

Put the name of your study at the top of the page with "Consent Form" below it. Below that, put INVESTIGATOR: and your name. For the rest, see below (adapted from the IRB guidelines):

Introduction: *Two or three sentences describing what you are doing...e.g. "You are being asked to participate in a study I am completing for a graduate class at Northwestern University. The program director is Dr. Sophie Haroutunian Gordon, who may be contacted by phone at (847) 467-1999. I am conducting my study because I want to understand more about _____ . You are being asked to participate because _____ . The purpose of my study is to _____ .*

Procedures: *How you will conduct your research and specifically what are you asking them to do...e.g. "The research I plan will include interviews, a focus group and surveys of teachers who are in their first year of teaching in urban schools. As a participant in this study you will be asked to participate in a discussion about _____ . I would like your permission to audiotape (videotape?) and to transcribe the discussion so that I may study the discussion as part of my research class. The discussion will last approximately _____ (how long) and will be conducted in a place chosen by the discussion group.*

Risks: *Explain any potential risks here....e.g. "You are unlikely to experience any physical, psychological, or social risks. If you feel, however, that you become uncomfortable or experience any problems due to participation in this project, you may withdraw at any time and I will understand ."*

Benefits: *Explain any potential benefits here- in this case probably: "There may be no direct benefit to you by your participation in this project." Describe also any benefits that might accrue to others from your study (e.g. your future students might benefit from the insights you gain, your company may benefit from your increased knowledge base).*

Alternatives: *Use this language.: "You have the alternative to choose not to participate in this research study. You are free to withdraw your participation at any time."*

Confidentiality: *Explain, making sure that all you say is true...e.g. "Participation in this study is confidential and all information will be written in such a manner that you will not be identified. Both your first and last name will be replaced by a pseudonym in the transcription, all notes and the final report. All research material will be kept under the control of the researcher. Procedures to protect your identity will be followed in transcription and in all reports associated with this project. Information derived from this study will be used for research purposes within the context of my graduate research courses. Your identity will be kept confidential and any videotapes / audiotapes will be destroyed once the transcription is complete. Although I do not expect this to come up , I need to*

make you aware that the only exception to this promise of confidentiality is that I am legally obligated to report any evidence of illegal activities, abuse or neglect."

Financial Information: *Probably:* ... "You will not incur any costs, nor will you receive any reimbursements for your participation in this study."

Subjects' Rights: *Use this language:* "Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. Participation or withdrawal will not affect any rights to which you are entitled."

Contact Persons: *Include your name and phone number and an offer to answer any questions about the research study. Include assurance that you may be reached evenings or weekends. Also include: "You may also call my graduate instructor, Dr. Lois Trautvetter at: 847. 491.3901 or Dr. Miriam Sherin at: 847.467.3990, if you have additional questions."*

Consent: *Use this language:* "I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have been answered to my satisfaction. If I have additional questions, I have been told who to contact. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it." *Be sure you give each individual a copy of the signed form.*

Subject

Date

Investigator

Date

Note: Please make a copy of your blank form and keep it and copies of all signed forms in your research binder. Are the individuals all from the same school or organization, or are they meeting informally as independent professionals? If the former, you should also let the principal know about what you are doing, make sure there are no additional school-based permission procedures you need to follow, and provide her/him with a copy of the blank consent form as a courtesy.