**HSB Course Based Research**

**Critical Ethics Issues and Possible Wording for Research Projects**

**Information for Assisting Students**

**Informed Consent**

When collecting information from human subjects for projects in courses (course-based research) students must be aware of an pay attention to informed consent. This applies for undergraduate as well as graduate courses. This would be for work that is for a project where there is no expectation of publication. Directed studies and case development work may or may not fall into this category depending on the objective of the project and data collection.

As students are learning about their topics and need to contact people, they need to inform the potential respondent the following information: their name, course, instructor name, Haskayne School of Business and University of Calgary affiliation, and the reason for requesting participation in the research. The respondent also needs to know they are free to withdraw at any time, their information with be either anonymous or confidential, how it will be used and when it will be destroyed.

This may sound appear to be a great deal of information. However, an example of how this might appear in a telephone interview script is as follows:

Hello, my name is XXXXX. I am a student at the Haskayne School of Business and I would like to make an appointment with your to discuss XXXXXXX. The reason I am contacting you is that I am collecting information on XXXXXXX for my MXXX 999 course. My professor is XXXXXXX should you wish to verify any information about this project. Your assistance would be appreciated but you are free to withdraw from this study at any time or not answer any question. Any information you give me with be confidential as the results will only be reported in aggregate. The information will be used for a major project report and class presentation. The data will be destroyed at the completion of the course.

Would you be prepared to participate?

Should the students wish to record an interview or a focus group, they will need to request permission to do so. When interviewing anyone who may be from a vulnerable population (children under 18), permission to include them in a study requires special permissions.

This can be adapted, of course, for surveys (on-line, in-person or hardcopy) as follows:

Welcome to our survey. This research study is for a course project at the Haskayne School of Business for MXXX 999 under the supervision of XXXXXXX who can be contacted at [xxxx.xxxx@haskayne.ucalgary.ca](mailto:xxxx.xxxx@haskayne.ucalgary.ca). This questionnaire should take no more than XX minutes to complete. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time or not answer a question. Any information you provide with be confidential (anonymous because all cookies have been turned off) as the results will only be reported in aggregate. The information will be used for a major project report and class presentation. The data will be destroyed at the completion of the course.

Should the students be using an online survey package, they must be aware of where the data is stored. When using Survey Monkey or Qualtrics©, the data is stored on a server in the U.S. and the following statement or one similar needs to be included at the beginning of the survey:

The online survey is being administered by Qualtrics©, an American software company. As such, your responses are subject to U.S. laws, including the USA Patriot Act, which means the data may be subpoenaed by the United States Government.

**Anonymity vs Confidentiality**

Students need to understand the difference between anonymous and confidential reporting. There have been situations where a ‘client’ has requested a confidentiality agreement between a student group and themselves which should not cause any problems. As a matter of course, if students are working with a company, it might be prudent to have a confidentiality template form prepared for them.

**Code of Behaviour**

Students in the Haskayne School of Business are already expected to act respectfully. They may need a reminder that they are collecting information from people and must treat the process respectfully and keep confidential information, confidential.

**Disclaimer**

Should reports be given to a company or ‘client’, you may wish to request a disclaimer at the beginning of project report. An example of a disclaimer is:

This report is submitted in accordance with the formal requirements for the course XXXX 999 in the Haskayne School of Business at the University of Calgary. This report has been prepared as part of an academic exercise under the guidance of XXXXXX and contains information only and not advice. Please note that this report was prepared by students and any recommendations are implemented at the responsibility of the owner of the report. Neither the authors, the professor, not the University of Calgary assume responsibility for the results obtained in this implementation.