TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG/ILLAWARRA AREA HEALTH SERVICE HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Research Office use only

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UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG/ILLAWARRA AREA HEALTH SERVICE

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

INITIAL APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

(A separate application is required for each project)

Please answer questions in terms understandable to the layperson.

1. Descriptive Title of Project: The environmental context: student interviews

2. 7 line summary of project aims:

Students in STS300, "The environmental context," will learn interview skills by interviewing local community members about environmental issues.

3. Name Position/Appointment Institution Qualifications
Chief Investigator(s) (Academic or Professional)

Address for Correspondence (1st named investigator):

Professor Brian Martin

School of Social Sciences, Media and Communication

Faculty of Arts

University of Wollongong

Contact Phone Number: 3763 Fax: 5341 Email: bmartin@uow.edu.au

Other Participating Researchers: (names/address/contact details of other researchers working on this project)

n/a

4. Where will potential participants be approached by the researchers to seek their participation in the research and where will research activities involving participants be conducted:

Students will approach friends or neighbours, or people recommended by friends and neighbours, and undertake interviews at locations requested by the participants.

Purpose and Funding of Project

5.a This is student research (subject)

Course undertaken: STS300
Unit/ Faculty/Department: Arts Faculty
Subject coordinator: Brian Martin

5.b What is the source and amount of funding from all sources for this research? None

5.c Is there any affiliation or financial interest between the sponsor/funding body and the researcher(s) or supervisor associated with this research? n/a

5.d Are there any conditions placed on this research by the funding body? (please provide details) n/a

5.e Is a copy of the HREC approval to be forwarded to the Granting Body? n/a

6. Has this research project been reviewed by any other Institutional Ethics Committee? (for example multi-centre research) NO

7. Research Categories

Please mark the research categories relevant to this research proposal. See guidelines for descriptions of the categories. At least one category should be marked for each grouping. For "Other", please specify.

If your research only involves participants and research procedures from a-d under A Participants and B Research Procedures Used, it may be open to expedited review by the Chair of the HREC. In that case, submit only one copy of your application (please see guidelines regarding expedited review).

A Participants

a. Healthy members of the community

Students will be informed about at-risk categories and instructed to only approach potential interviewees who are in none of these categories.

Expected age(s) of participants Adults (> 18)

B Research procedures used

h. Interviews (semi-structured)

C Research areas

a. Qualitative research

8.a Does the project involve the use of drugs? NO
8.b Does the project involve the use of a surgical or other therapeutic device? (please detail) NO

9. Justify the design of your proposed research and describe what you want participants to do.
Please provide an explanation, in terms understandable by a non-expert reader.
For student researchers, please provide (in no more than 2 pages) the background to this project (Attach extra sheets if necessary)

For the final essay in STS300, "The environmental context," students are requested to "Write a fictional dialogue between two people (or possibly more) concerning an environmental principle and its application to an environmental issue." This fictional dialogue is footnoted

with (non-fictional) references on environmental principles, environmental issues and social theories. The students are also requested to interview one or more local community members (not staff or students of the university) and "refer to the findings from interviews directly in the dialogue and/or indirectly in footnotes." There are two main purposes in the interviews: to give students experience in interviewing and to give them some insight into community members' views on environmental issues.

10. Please provide a brief statement of the ethical considerations relevant to the proposed research; specifically in relation to the participants' welfare, rights, beliefs, perceptions, customs and cultural heritage both individual and collective. (Attach an extra sheet if necessary)

Students will be asking adult local community members, none of whom are in at-risk groups, about their views about environmental issues. Students will be instructed to ask only non-intrusive questions. Harm or threat seem quite unlikely.

11. Referring to the categories of participants to be involved in this project identified in question 7, above, What is the rationale for selecting participants from this/these group/s?

Students will gain experience in interviewing and will learn, in addition, that people's views are more idiosyncratic, complex and diverse than commonly portrayed in texts.

12. How will potential participants be approached initially and informed about the project? Please explain in detail and include copies of any letters, advertisements or other recruitment information. (e.g. direct approach to people on the street, mail-out to potential participants through an organisation, posters or newspaper advertisements, etc)

Students, working individually or in small teams, will approach friends or neighbours, or people recommended by friends and neighbours. This is a networking approach to recruitment.

13. How many participants in total do you anticipate will be involved in the project? If the research has several stages involving different participants, please provide the total number of participants expected as well as the number of participants involved in each stage.

67 students are currently enrolled in STS300. I anticipate about 150 interviews in total.

14. Participant Consent
Attach copies of any letters of invitation, information packages, consent forms, proxy/substitute consent forms, debriefing information, identification cards, contact detail cards, etc.

14 a. Is it anticipated that all participants will have the capacity to consent to their participation in the research? YES

14 b. For participants who have the capacity to consent, how does the process ensure that informed consent is freely obtained from the participant?

Participants will read and sign a consent form before interviews commence.

14 c. Will written consent from participants be obtained? YES

15. Are any participants in a dependant relationship with the researcher, the institution or the funding body (for example the researcher's clinical clients or students; employees of the institution; recipients of services provided by the funding body)? NO

16. How does the project address the participants' freedom to discontinue participation? They can discontinue at any time.

Will there be any adverse effects on participants if they withdraw their consent? No
Will they be able to withdraw data concerning themselves if they withdraw their consent? YES

17. Does the project involve withholding relevant information from participants or deceiving them about some aspect of the research? NO

18. Will participants be paid or offered any form of reward or benefit (monetary or otherwise) for participation in the research? NO

19. Confidentiality:
What measures will be taken to protect the privacy of individual subjects in terms of the test results and other confidential data obtained (both in recording the data and in its publication)?

The identity of the interviewees will be known only to the interviewers, the subject coordinator (marking the essays) and, in the case of appeals, a second marker.

20. Will information collected from data or interview be published? NO

21. Will any part of the research activities be placed on an audiotape, film, photograph or video-tape? NO

22. How will the data (including questionnaires, surveys, computer data, tapes, transcripts and specimens) be held securely, during and on completion of the project?

At the completion of the subject, students will be requested to give their interview notes to the subject coordinator, who will keep them in a locked cabinet.

Please confirm that original data will be held securely for a minimum of 5 years (15 years for clinical research). YES

If NO, please give reasons why it would be unethical to store the data for this period.

23. Does the project involve the use of invasive procedures (e.g. blood sampling) or the risk of physical harm or emotional distress? NO

24. Does this project involve obtaining information (e.g. data) of a private nature from any Commonwealth/State/Local Government Department or any other Agency, including health records from Area Health Services. NO

25. Does the research intend to determine whether illegal activity has occurred or anticipate that participants may reveal information about criminal activity? NO

26. Period of Research Clearance Requested (Please specify as near as possible 'start' and 'finish' dates for the conduct of research):

FROM: 1 May 2008 TO: 26 May 2008

27. Are statistical issues relevant to this project? NO

28. Does this project involve the collection or use of personal health information or information relating to the provision of a health service to an individual? NO

29. Comments. If you would like to make any comment about the application or the application process please do so.

In class, before undertaking interviews, students will practise interviewing techniques and be informed about ethical dimensions of interviewing.

DECLARATION BY CHIEF INVESTIGATOR

I, the undersigned, have read the current National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans:
http://www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/publications/synopses/e35syn.htm
and accept responsibility for the conduct of the research activities detailed in this application in accordance with the principles contained in the National Statement and any other conditions laid down by the University of Wollongong's Human Research Ethics Committee.

Chief Investigator's signature/s:

Date:

DECLARATION BY HEAD OF UNIT

As Head of Unit I have responsibility for ensuring that Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) issues surrounding research in the Unit are addressed.

(please tick all relevant boxes)

___ **I am satisfied that a general risk assessment for the research project addressed in this application has been completed adequately**
___ **I will ensure that a risk assessment specific to this application will be completed prior to commencing the activities described in this application**
___ **I will ensure that there exist appropriate mechanisms to address potential OHS issues that may arise and I have responsibility for implementing those mechanisms**
___ **I will ensure that mechanisms exist for ongoing assessment of the OHS issues related to this research**
___ **This research involves use of radiation, chemicals or biohazards. A Risk Assessment has been conducted and is attached to this application**

Head of Unit's Signature.....Date.....

NOTE: RESEARCH MUST NOT COMMENCE UNTIL APPLICATION HAS BEEN FULLY APPROVED.

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CHECKLIST

Applications should be sent to the Ethics Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Office of Research, University of Wollongong, Northfields Ave, Wollongong NSW 2522

_____**Original Ethics Application plus appropriate number of copies (See Guidelines)**

_____**Consent Form(s)**

_____**Participant Information Sheet/Package**

_____**Copies of Questionnaire(s)/Survey(s) or Interview Questions**

_____**Copies of all documents and other material used to inform potential participants about the research including advertisements and letters of invitation.**

_____**Evidence of permission to conduct research in locations not associated with the University of Wollongong**

_____**Evidence of approval/rejection by other HREC(s), including comments and requested alternations to the protocol**

_____**Any form requiring signature by the HREC (one copy)**

_____**For Clinical Trials : Application Form (original +14 copies), Patient Information Package (14 copies), Consent Forms (14 copies), Indemnity Form (14 copies), Protocols (14 copies), Advertisement (14 copies), Summary Sheet (14 copies), Budget (14 copies), Insurance information (if in Private Practice) (14 copies), Investigator's Brochure (5 copies), CTN or CTX Form (1 original copy)**

Form Revised Jan 2003