Templates will not be appropriate for every imaginable study, as different types of studies require different details. Adapt them to fit your research. Feel free to cut and paste from any example in this document.

Language used in this form should be easily understood by participants. The REB recommends a grade 8 reading level in most cases.

The content of this form must be consistent with information presented in the REB application.

This template is for research on the scholarship of teaching and learning. Additional text has been added to the general consent form template. Follow the red text for additional guidance on how to develop a consent form for the scholarship of teaching and learning research, which is based on Dalhousie University's Guidelines on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and should be viewed alongside all other suggestions offered in this document.

CONSENT FORM
[Template #6: Traditional with Signature Page]

Project title: Insert Title of Project

Lead researcher: Name, institutional affiliation and contact information (email, phone number)

Other researchers
Names, institutional affiliations and contact information. Include student supervisor when applicable.

Funding provided by: If the study is funded, state name and description of the funder here

[Versioning: After receiving ethics approval, add the date of approval and the consent form version number in the footer. The first approved version is v1.0. If subsequent amendments to the consent form are requested and approved, the date of approval and version number (e.g. v2.0) must be updated.]

Introduction
State clearly that this is research and participation is voluntary. For example: "We invite you to take part in a research study being conducted by me, [study lead researcher or student name], a [student, postdoc, researcher] at Dalhousie University [as part of my xx degree program]. Choosing whether or not to take part in this research is entirely your choice. There will be no impact on [your studies/your employment/your performance evaluation/the services you receive] if you decide not to participate in the research. The information below tells you about what is involved in the research, what you will be asked to do and about any benefit, risk, inconvenience or discomfort that you might experience.

You should discuss any questions you have about this study with [name]. Please ask as many questions as you like. If you have questions later, please contact the lead researcher."

+ Clearly define that this study is for research purposes only. Consider briefly defining and explaining

what the scholarship of teaching and learning is and how your study will contribute to this knowledge.

+ You should emphasize that participation in this study is voluntary and will not have any impact on their grades or future academic experience.

Purpose and Outline of the Research Study
This section briefly explains the overall approach of the study in plain language, and what the researcher hopes to achieve. It should provide enough information so that the intent of the study is clear, without unduly influencing the reader toward participation. Include basic study design, and number of participants.

Avoid the use of coercive language (e.g., "the success of my project relies on your participation"). Research terms like "case-control study" "open-ended interview" "participant observation" should be avoided, unless they are explained carefully, as they may not be meaningful to participants. If there is to be deception or incomplete disclosure of the purpose of the study for any reason, participants should be told that they will be given additional information about the study after their participation is complete (i.e., a debriefing).

Who Can Take Part in the Research Study
This section should explain what characteristics the participant must have to be eligible for participation in the study, including any relevant personal history or attributes (the inclusion and exclusion criteria from the research ethics submission form). The language should be simple and direct (e.g., "You may participate in this study if you are...") . Any conditions (e.g., being above or below a certain age) that exclude a participant from participation must also be listed here. If any screening activities are planned, these should be described.

What You Will Be Asked to Do
The study procedures must be stated clearly and in sufficient detail that the participant can understand what will be expected of them. The location, frequency/number and length of visits, types of procedures (e.g., interviews) and the duration of the study must be included. This description should only include the activities that the participant will *experience*. When several groups of individuals will take part in different components of the research, or different procedures, it is wise to develop separate consent forms for each group to keep the descriptions simple and specific. If the study procedures involve multiple time points/visits it may be helpful to include a flow chart or a table. If the study procedures involve use of physical equipment/instruments by the participant (or attached to the participant) a photo of the experimental set-up may be helpful.

Tell participants what the time commitment will be.

If participants will be asked or invited to provide feedback on their contributions or research results (e.g. member-checking), ensure this process is described.

+ Clearly describe how the study will be conducted, how much time it will take and what students will and will not be asked to do. This should include justification for using class time if applicable.

+ Clearly distinguish between activities that are required as part of course requirements and those that are for research purposes.

+ Clearly describe any proposed linkages between research data collected by the research team and information held in data repositories (for example, student records (Banner)).

Possible Benefits, Risks and Discomforts

Describe any potential benefits that the participants may derive from their study participation. Where there are no anticipated direct personal benefits to participants, this should be explicitly stated. More altruistic benefits (e.g., contribution to knowledge) should be realistically assessed, not overstated. The text should not imply that these benefits are guaranteed. For example, "Participating in the study might not benefit you, but we might learn things that will benefit others."

Risks: This should include all possible adverse events or side effects, along with the estimated probability of occurrence (if known) of any of the tasks or activities that participants will be involved in. This refers both to discomfort associated with physical procedures as well as the possibility of emotional or psychological distress caused by interviews or survey contributions. Where there is a possibility of economic repercussions, damage to relationships, risk to health, or loss of privacy, these should be described. The steps that will be taken by the researcher to minimize these risks should be stated. In some instances, risks may exist for communities associated with the study (stigmatization, community discord). These should be discussed.

Researchers should not categorically state that there is 'no risk' associated with a study. This suggests a guarantee that is not possible given the inherent uncertainty involved in research. Where the harms or discomforts are no greater than those that are related to common experiences of everyday life, they may be described as 'minimal'. For example: "The risks associated with this study are minimal, and there are no known risks for participating in this research beyond being bored or fatigued. However, you will be offered breaks between activities to reduce these risks."

+ Clearly identify and explain your dual-role as instructor and researcher and any implications this can have on students. You should explain how this dual-role may cause students to feel compelled to participate in the study. Explain the measures you have adopted to reduce the risk of undue influence but avoid any unnecessary jargon that the students may not understand. For example, "To minimize the risk of undue influence and ensure that you do not feel any pressure to participate I have hired a Research Assistant to facilitate all research activities. I will continue to prioritize the needs of the classroom while the research assistant takes on all research activities."

+ Explain any risks associated with longitudinal data collection and/or linkage to other data and the risk mitigation to protect participant privacy.

Incentives / Reimbursement

If participants are offered incentives to participate in the research, the full extent of these incentives and how they will be provided should be described. If the incentive is in the form of a lump sum or gift, this should be granted even for those who withdraw without completion. If incentives are to be pro-rated according to the number of study components someone engages in, this should be explained. If participants are to be reimbursed for expenses incurred in relation to study participation (e.g., parking, transportation costs) this should be stated. Upper limits of reimbursement per person should be clear, so as not to create inappropriate expectations. If participants are not being compensated this should be stated. For example: "To thank you for your time, we will give you a pre-paid credit card for $15 each time you engage in an assessment session."

+ You must clearly explain how students will not be significantly advantaged or disadvantaged by their choice to participate or not participate in this research study. Incentives offered by course instructors to encourage participation in the research project are discouraged.

How your information will be protected:
Privacy: if steps will be taken to ensure others do not know who participated in a study this should be explained. This would include such steps as collecting data where others will not see or hear the participant, ensuring third parties are not aware of who has been recruited, sending study communications without an identifiable return address, or without an email subject line that discloses study participation.

Anonymity: this means no one, including the researchers, will know who participants are. If participant anonymity is possible, indicate how it will be achieved. For example: "No one will know who you are. We will not collect your name, email address, phone number or the IP address that identifies your computer account."

Confidentiality: This means not disclosing information about participants, or who they were. Research participants should be informed how the data they provide will be treated (e.g., aggregated, coded) and stored (e.g., in the researcher's Dalhousie OneDrive), and who will have access to it. This should be described clearly and in terms that are easily understood. Use of ID numbers, pseudonyms, altering identifiable demographics and so on should be mentioned here. If files linking data with contact information are retained, their secure and separate storage should be described. Example: "The information that you provide to us will be kept confidential. Only the [research team at Dalhousie University] will have access to this information. Our research team has an obligation to keep all research information confidential. All your identifying information (such as your name and contact information) will be securely stored separately from your research information. We will use a participant number (not your name) in our written and computer records so that the research information we have about you contains no names. During the study, all electronic records will be kept secure in an encrypted file on the researcher's Dalhousie OneDrive. All paper records will be kept secure in a locked filing cabinet located in the researcher's office."

+ Clearly describe how you intend to distance yourself from the research to maintain confidentiality of student data (e.g. a research assistant who has no connections with the class will collect and de-identify data).

+ You should clearly state whether the data collected will be de-identified, who will de-identify data and when this data will be viewed and by whom.

+ You should clearly state that data will not be accessed until final grades are submitted. This will provide students with additional assurance that their data is confidential and will not impact their grades.

Participants should be told what measures will ensure that they will not be identifiable in reports or publications. Example: "We will describe and share our findings in [thesis, presentations, public media, journal articles, etc.]. We will only report group results and not individual results. This means that you will not be identified in any way in our reports."

Limits to confidentiality should be stated clearly. For example, in focus groups researchers may keep

data confidential but participants should be informed there is no guarantee that other participants will maintain confidentiality.

Where there are limits to confidentiality that are imposed on researchers due to **legal obligations** (i.e., duty to disclose suspected child abuse or neglect, or the abuse or neglect of an adult in need of protection) this must be stated. A simple description of what the researcher will do in such a situation should be provided. This is advisable for research that may, inadvertently, cause such disclosures to be made, and it is imperative for research that specifically deals with issues of sexual or child abuse, domestic violence or elder abuse. Researchers should address duties to disclose that apply to all citizens as well as any that may apply for members of specific professions. For example: "We will not disclose any information about your child's participation in this research to anyone unless compelled to do so by law. That is, in the unlikely event that we witness child abuse, or suspect it, we are required to contact authorities."

If researchers have **professional ethical obligations based on a professional designation/license (doctors, nurses, other health-care professionals for example)** in addition to legal obligations that could foreseeably impose limits on confidentiality, these should be stated but should be distinguished from legal obligations. Example: "We will not disclose any information about your participation except as required by law or our professional obligations. If you inform us about abuse or neglect of a child [an adult in need of protection] we are required by law to contact authorities. If we notice that you are at an immediate risk of harming yourself or other people, we are required by our professional code of ethics as [specific professional] to seek assistance." Note: this wording is an example only. You must limit disclosures to only those circumstances described by your professional college or regulating body.

Data retention: Discuss plans for the data after data collection and analysis are complete. If data will be stripped of any identifiers prior to storage for future potential use, this should be described here. If data will be retained for any length of time, discuss confidential storage, and whether/when data will be destroyed. Some journals require retention of raw data for specified periods of time, and most disciplines have norms regarding data retention. What matters ethically is that participants know your plans. For example: Once the study is over your data will be [describe plans for data de-identification/anonymization, retention, long-term storage, further use and/or destruction]."

Data repositories: If the researcher might or will submit research data to a data repository, information about that should be provided. Example: With your permission, information you provide in this research project may be shared publicly (most likely in digital form via the internet / in a biobank) for other uses in the future. The information will be deposited in a public research database called [name of repository]. Your information might be used by others anywhere in the world. These people may not have to follow the same ethical research standards we have in Canada. To protect your identity, I will remove or replace personal information that could identify you [state what this might be in the context of this research] in an effort to ensure that no one will be able to identify you. Despite these measures I cannot guarantee your anonymity or predict how those who access the data will use them. Even if you don't want your information put into [the data repository/biobank] you can still participate in this research.

If the researcher is keeping the data indefinitely but not putting the data in a repository, the following template wording could be used: With your permission, the information you provide in this research project will be kept by the researchers for other uses in the future by the research team or other researchers outside of this team [describe what these might be]. To protect your identity, I will remove

or replace personal information that could identify you such as your [state what this might be in the context of this research] in an effort that anyone who might use your information could not identify you. Even if you don't want your information to be kept for future use you can still participate in this study.

If You Decide to Stop Participating

People have the right to withdraw from voluntary participation. Describe how this is possible. They might end an interview, choose not to return for a second data collection point, or decide after data is collected that they want to withdraw their data. Possibilities need to be explicitly stated. If there is a point after which removal of someone's study data becomes very difficult, or impossible, indicate when this is. If it will not be possible to remove data after it is collected (because it is anonymous/anonymized) state this. For example: "You are free to leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating at any point in the study, you can also decide whether you want any of the information that you have contributed up to that point to be removed or if you will allow us to use that information. You can also decide for up to [months/years] if you want us to remove your data. After that time, it will become impossible for us to remove it because it will already be [published/ analyzed/ anonymized]."

+ Provide mechanism that allows students to opt-out via third party.

How to Obtain Results

If study results will be made available to participants, describe what and how. For example: "We will provide you with a short description of group results when the study is finished. No individual results will be provided. You can obtain these results by [including your contact information at the end of the signature page/visiting website address in approximately X months/ accessing other location]."

If individual results will be offered to participants, describe what results these will be, provide information about how the research team will support interpretation of results, when results can be expected, and how results will be provided. Example: "We will provide you with results from [measure]. A member of the research team will be available to go over the results with you and answer your questions. We plan to send results by [date] and they will be sent through a secure OneDrive link to your email address."

Questions

Participants must be provided with a means of having their questions about the study addressed. Ideally, a local telephone contact and electronic mail address should be available. In addition, participants should be assured that they will be provided with any new information which might affect their decision to participate in the study. For example: "We are happy to talk with you about any questions or concerns you may have about your participation in this research study. Please contact Researcher Name (at 902 494-****, researcher.name@dal.ca) [or Supervisor Name (at 902 494-****, supervisor name@dal.ca)] at any time with questions, comments, or concerns about the research study (if you are calling long distance, please call collect). We will also tell you if any new information comes up that could affect your decision to participate."

+ Offer contact information for a third-party who is not in a dual role for questions about the research project if participants would prefer not to contact the lead researcher.

Participants may also wish to voice concern about the research to the university. Contact information for Research Ethics must be provided. For example: "If you have any ethical concerns about your participation in this research, you may also contact Research Ethics, Dalhousie University at (902) 494-

3423, or email: ethics@dal.ca (and reference REB file # 20XX- XXXX)."

Other
See TCPS2 Article 3.2 for additional suggested consent form items that may need to be addressed for your particular study, such as conflict of interest, commercialization, and not waiving legal rights.

Signature
Not all informed consent processes require a signature. TCPS simply requires researchers to document consent (Article 3.12). This could mean orally confirming consent, and recording that at the beginning of an interview. For some research (e.g., online surveys) it is inappropriate to get a signature, because signed consent eliminates what would otherwise be anonymity. Completion of an online survey itself is taken as implied consent. Completion of a paper survey can indicate consent, if the consent information is presented at the beginning of the survey.

If a signature is obtained, it should be on a separate page and not on the back side of the study information. This allows researchers to collect the signature pages but leave the detailed study information, and contact information, with participants.

Signature Page

Project Title: [Insert study title]

Lead Researcher: [Name, affiliation, contact information]

+ Also offer contact information for a third-party who is not in a dual role for questions about the research project if participants would prefer not to contact the lead researcher.

The signature page should be signed and dated by the research participant or by the person authorized to sign on behalf of the research participant (e.g., a parent or caregiver). In the latter instance, the participant's name must also be clearly indicated. The signature consenting to study participation should indicate anything that is *required* for participation, and any limits on withdrawal. For example: "I have read the explanation about this study. I have been given the opportunity to discuss it and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I have been asked to take part in [two interviews that will occur at a location acceptable to me, and that those interviews will be recorded. I understand direct quotes of things I say may be used without identifying me]. I agree to take part in this study. My participation is voluntary, and I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, until ** months after my [second interview] is completed.

Name	Signature	Date

It should be clear from the format of the page that "I" refers to the research participant.

If some things are optional for participants, consent for those should be sought separately from overall study participation. Do not provide places for consent to specific items if they are not in fact optional. If, for example, in order to participate people must consent to being recorded and to the use of their quotes, that would be explained as above, with consent granted when the person consents to study participation. In contrast, if someone could participate but refuse recording or the use of quotations (the researcher would take notes), those items should be removed from the signature statement above and included as separate consent items. For example: "The following items are optional for participation. You do not have to agree to these, and you can still participate in the study. If you have questions about these items, please ask [name of person to whom questions can be directed]."

I agree that my interview may be audio-recorded	☐Yes ☐No
I agree that direct quotes from my interview may be used without identifying me	☐Yes ☐No
I agree to have my data included in a public research database/biobank	☐Yes ☐No
I agree to have my data saved for future research	☐Yes ☐No

Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Separate consent should be obtained for waivers of confidentiality, and for asking permission to re-contact participants for future research (which should be described as explicitly as possible). Also, depending on research sensitivity it is often best practice to confirm permission for the use of quotations after an interview is completed so that individuals will have a clearer understanding of what might be contained in quotations. This can be documented by having a second signature line that can be signed *after* data collection.

I confirm I have completed the interview and agree that direct quotes without my name may be used.

Signature _____ Date _____

Note: The signature of a researcher or a witness is **not** required. Getting participants to sign two copies is **not** required, and in fact may compromise privacy if the participant copy is not stored securely.