

The University Of North Carolina At Asheville (UNCA)
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY
SPRING 2008

Project title: Understanding Student Learning in a UNCA ILS Cluster (Food For Thought)

The following information describes the research study in which you are being asked to participate. Please read the information carefully. At the end, you will be asked to sign if you agree to participate.

Investigators

Dr. Karin Peterson (Associate Professor of Sociology), Sally Wasileski (Assistant Professor of Chemistry), Amy Lanou (Assistant Professor of Health and Wellness) and Leah Mathews (Associate Professor of Economics), David Clarke (Associate Professor of Biology) all of whom are UNCA faculty members, will conduct this research project.

Purpose of Study

We are interested in learning more about how students learn in UNCA's ILS Cluster program, and especially in how that learning happens in courses that cross disciplines in both the social and natural sciences. In addition, we are interested in what knowledge, experiences, and tools students transfer from one course to another. Finally, we are interested in how students perceive and account for their learning both within the context of a given course and across time. To address these questions, we are studying students enrolled in courses included in the new *Food for Thought Cluster*. We plan to continue our study across several semesters.

What Will Happen During This Study

You have been selected to participate in our study because you are enrolled in at least one *Food for Thought Cluster* course this semester. We will include you in our study whether or not you choose to declare *Food For Thought* to fulfill your ILS Cluster requirement.

This semester, our study consists of a survey administered at the beginning and end the semester. In the survey (which takes about 10 minutes), we will ask to report on your perceptions of your own learning in social science and natural science courses. The survey, called the SENCER-SALG inventory (*Science Education for New Civic Engagements and Responsibilities –Student Assessment of Learning Gains*) is used by college faculty across the country to assess student learning gains in the areas of science and civic engagement. The inventory was created by the National Center for Science and Civic Engagement.

Possible Risks or Discomforts

It is possible that taking a survey will raise issues for you about how you learn. All data from the SENCER-SALG inventory will be anonymous and available to your instructor only after the semester is finished. If you volunteer to participate, you still have the right to skip any questions that make you uncomfortable, and you are also welcome to stop at any time.

Possible Benefits

Some students find it helpful to be made aware of their own learning through surveys. Your participation will help all of the faculty teaching in the *Food for Thought Cluster* become more aware of how students learn in their own classes and how students learn across the cluster. The researchers will also be writing papers and presenting at conferences where others will hear about our study and benefit from the understanding students in our study provide about their own learning

Privacy

We will make every effort to protect your privacy.

For the SENCER-SALG survey, we will ask you to register for the survey using your student I.D. number (so that we can compare your responses from the beginning and end of the semester). To protect your anonymity, your instructor will not have access to the survey results until after the end of the semester. In addition, the results will be scored by aggregating responses from everyone in your class. No individuals will be identified in the reporting of the survey results.

Your Rights

The decision to participate in this study is completely up to you. You will not be treated any differently if you decide not to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study, you have the right to stop being in the study at any time, or to exclude yourself from any portion of the study.

Contact Information

Dr. Karin Peterson (828-232-5021, kpeterso@unca.edu), Dr. Sally Wasileski (828-232-5169, swasiles@unca.edu), Dr. Amy Lanou (828-250-2317, alanou@unca.edu), or Dr. Leah Mathews (828-251-6551, lmathews@unca.edu), Dr. David Clarke(828-232-5151, dclarke@unca.edu) will gladly answer any questions you may have concerning the purpose, procedures, and outcome of this project. You may also contact the Chair of UNCA's Institutional Review Board (IRB), Dr. Bryan Schaffer (828/251-6849, bschaffe@unca.edu) to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about the rights of study participants. (The IRB is a college committee concerned with the protection of human subjects in research.)

SUMMARY

I have read the information in this consent form and agree to participate in the study which consists of the Survey (SENCER-SALG) to be administered at the beginning and end of the semester.

I have had the chance to ask any questions I have about this study, and they have been answered for me.

Although the investigators will make every effort to maintain confidentiality, I understand that research records must be made available to UNCA's IRB, if they are requested. I will receive a copy of this form after it has been read and signed.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date