



RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD

Consent Form

Title of Research Project: Promoting social connection and combating loneliness in the aftermath of COVID

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jocelyn Lymburner (KPU, Department of Psychology)

Co-investigator: Kari Walton (Research Assistant)

Application # REB 2021-25

This study has been approved by the KPU Research Ethics Board. This study is open to all current KPU students and involves providing some basic demographic information as well as answering questions about facilitating social connection. **Participants must be a current KPU student to participate in this study.**

Voluntary participation: Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time. You may withdraw from the study by informing the co-investigator that you would like to leave the focus group, or by simply closing your Zoom application during the interview. *Please note that your data will not be able to be deleted/withdrawn if you choose to leave partway through the interview. However, while individual data cannot be deleted, no identifying information will be associated with your data.

As a student, if you choose not to participate in this study, or withdraw for any reason, you will still receive the same quality of classroom instruction and have retained the opportunity to receive course credit as determined by your individual instructor. You may ask the co-investigator listed below any questions that you may have about this research study, including questions you may have in the future. By participating in this study, you have not waived your right to legal recourse in the event of research related harm.

This consent form explains the research study you are being asked to join. Please review this form carefully and ask any questions about the study before you agree to take part in the focus group interview. You may also ask questions at any time after joining the study. See below for persons to contact.

Purpose of Research Project: The purpose of this study is to examine KPU students' ideas about how to promote social connection among students on campus. This information will then

be used to help design and create social infrastructure on KPU's Surrey campus, which will promote social connection.

Procedures: Participants will engage in a focus group interview containing 5-8 student members. The interview will take place via the application Zoom and will inquire into participants' experiences with social connection and ideas about how to foster social connection among students. Participants may choose not to answer any question/prompt. It is expected that the focus group interview will take approximately 40-50 minutes to complete. The focus group interview will be audio recorded.

Risks of harm/Discomforts/Inconvenience: Minimal Risk. If at any time you feel uncomfortable, you may withdraw from the study.

Benefits [including compensation if any]: Participating individuals will benefit from having the opportunity to help shape social infrastructure within their school, which will foster peer connections and potentially reduce feelings of loneliness. Students who take part in focus groups for this study will be provided with compensation for their participation (a \$10 e-gift card to Starbucks, which you will receive via email, and an approximately 1 in 30 chance to win an iPad – the winner of the iPad draw will be contacted via email approximately one week after data collection has ceased). Participants who withdraw from the study will retain their opportunity to take part in the iPad draw and receive a gift card. KPU participants may receive 1% bonus credit for their eligible psychology courses as approved by their instructor. Eligible participants who withdraw from the study will still be granted bonus credit through the SONA system by the co-investigator. Should you not wish to participate in this study but still obtain bonus credit, you may participate in alternatives as determined by your course instructor.

Confidentiality/Anonymity: Due to the nature of both Doodle and SONA's sign-up systems, your name and email address will be visible to the researchers and Sona administration.

Due to the nature of focus group interviews (i.e., that they are reliant upon the discretion of group members), we cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. **There is an expectation that anything discussed during the focus group interview will NOT be shared outside of the group. By agreeing to take part in this study, you are agreeing to maintain confidentiality regarding all information discussed during the group interview.** All participants must take part in the interview via Zoom while in a private, quiet space, which will prevent non-participants from observing or hearing information discussed in the focus group interviews. All data collected (i.e., audio recordings and transcriptions of the interview) will be kept confidential by the principal investigator and research assistant. All audio recordings will be destroyed immediately after the interviews have been transcribed.

The information collected from this study will be stored on password encrypted, personal computers or USB drive in password encrypted files that only the principal investigator and co-investigator can access. Your data will be destroyed via permanent file deletion after 5 years. Results from this study will be used to inform the design and creation of social infrastructure (i.e., an on-campus intervention) that aims to promote social connection among KPU students.

Data may be presented at research conferences or submitted to a peer-reviewed journal, in which you would not be individually identified.

Persons to Contact:

If you have questions or concerns about this study, please contact the principal investigator, Dr. Jocelyn Lymburner, at jocelyn.lymburner@kpu.ca, or the research assistant, Kari Walton, at kariwalton74@gmail.com. If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the KPU Research Ethics Board at reb@kpu.ca or 604-599-3163.