

## **INFORMED CONSENT**

### **The University of South Dakota**

**TITLE:**

*Test Anxiety in Context*

**PROJECT DIRECTOR:**

*Christopher R. Berghoff, PhD.*

**PHONE #:**

605-677-5180

**DEPARTMENT:**

*Psychology*

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?**

You are invited to participate in a research study about the effects of test format and behavioral variables on students' test anxiety. You were selected as a possible participant because you are taking PSYC 101: General Psychology, are 18 years of age or older, self-report an 8<sup>th</sup> grade English competency, and have access to a laptop computer and are willing to bring the computer to a laboratory research session and your third in-class exam.

The purpose of this research study is to clarify the effect of in-class testing methods on test anxiety and the relation of other psychological/behavioral variables and test anxiety. We expect to gain an understanding of the effect of test format, along with other variables, on test anxiety. This information may inform the development of ways to minimize the effects of test anxiety.

**HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?**

Up to 450 students will take part in this study. Participants will be recruited from the PSYC 101: General Psychology course held at the University of South Dakota campus in Vermillion, SD.

**HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?**

Your participation in the study will occur in two phases. Phase 1 will take place in an on-campus research laboratory and will take approximately 1 hour to complete. Phase 2 will be conducted in the PSYC 101: General Psychology classroom and will take approximately five minutes to complete, before and after the third in-class exam.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY?**

This study has two phases. Phase 1 includes four steps, all of which occur in a laboratory located at the University of South Dakota main campus. First, you will be asked to review the Informed Consent document (this form) and provide your consent to participate in the study. Second, if you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to verify your eligibility by answering several questions on a computer. Third, you will create a personal identification link known only to you. Fourth, you will be asked to complete an online survey that asks questions related to your personal characteristics (e.g., age; relationship status), mental/behavioral health symptoms (e.g., anxiety; depression), and various behavioral processes (e.g., emotion regulation skills). You may

refuse to answer any question you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. After completion of the survey portion, you will download, install, and receive training in the use of a lockdown browser on your personal laptop computer. Phase 1 will require approximately one hour to complete.

Phase 2 will occur during the normally scheduled PSYC 101: General Psychology third in-class exam. You will receive an email the day before your third in-class exam informing you of the test format you will use to take your test (computer or paper-and-pencil). If assigned to the computer-based format, you will need to bring your fully charged personal laptop computer to your exam. Once you arrive to the classroom, you will be asked to complete a brief survey before beginning your exam, which should take no more than five minutes to complete. You will then complete your exam using either your computer or paper-and-pencil. After completing the exam, you will again fill out the survey and turn in both surveys as you leave the classroom. This marks the end of your participation.

### **WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE STUDY?**

There may be some risk from participating in this study. You may experience frustration that is often experienced when completing surveys. Some questions may be of a sensitive nature, and therefore, you may become upset as a result. There could be the possibility of collected information being disclosed, which could result in negative social consequences. However, these risks are not viewed as being in excess of “minimal risk”.

Nonetheless, if you become upset by answering the questions, you may stop at any time or choose not to answer a question. If you would like to talk to someone about your feelings regarding this study, you are encouraged to contact The University of South Dakota’s Student Counseling Center at 605-677-5777, which provides counseling services to students at no charge, or another service if appropriate.

There could be the possibility of collected information being disclosed. To minimize this risk, online surveys will be conducted using secure communication channels, you will be reminded to close the internet browser windows when finished, and a research assistant will assure all browser windows have been closed at the end of each research session. For surveys completed during Phase 2, participants will use a unique study identification number instead of their name, thus minimizing risk of disclosure.

### **WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?**

You may not benefit personally from being in this study. However, we hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because of discoveries of methods that may minimize test anxiety.

### **WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?**

You may choose to not participate in this study. If you choose not to participate in this study, you may earn course credit through alternate ways, including participating in other research projects. The class syllabus addresses the alternate options for receiving class credit if you wish to not participate in this or other studies, including attending specified lectures, participating in research, completing special assignments, or writing reaction papers to movies or television programs.

### **WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?**

You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

### **WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?**

You will not be paid for being in this research study. However, you will receive SONA credit at the completion of each phase. You will earn eight SONA credits for participation in Phase 1. You will earn one SONA credit for completion of Phase 2. Thus, you can earn up to nine SONA credits by completing all phases of the study.

### **ARE MY RECORDS CONFIDENTIAL?**

The records of this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. In any report about this study that might be published, you will not be identified. Your study record may be reviewed by government agencies, Office of Human Subjects Protection and The University of South Dakota- Institutional Review Boards.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by several means. First, survey responses are collected through a fully secure, encrypted system on the study website and are stored in a password protected database accessible only to Dr. Christopher R. Berghoff. Second, personal information collected for the purposes of awarding SONA credit and sending the informational emails will be stored separately from your other data and will be destroyed immediately following the awarding of all SONA credit. Third, only you will know the personalized link that is used to connect your survey responses collected during the different phases. This also means that your PSYC 101: General Psychology professor will not be able to connect your survey responses to your exam scores. Fourth, study data will be password protected, stored on secure servers provided by The University of South Dakota, and accessible by Dr. Christopher R. Berghoff and his personnel only.

If a report or article about this study is written, the study results will be summarized in a manner so that you cannot be identified.

### **IS THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?**

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate, or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with The University of South Dakota. Furthermore, your decision in participating in the research project will in no way affect your relationship with your course professor. Other options to receive credit for the class are listed on the syllabus.

### **WHOM MAY I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?**

You may ask any questions you have now or later.

The researchers conducting this study are:

Christopher R. Berghoff, Ph.D.  
605-677-5180 during the day

- You may call this number if you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the research.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, you may contact The University of South Dakota- Office of Human Subjects Protection at **(605) 677-6184**.

- You may also call this number about any problems, complaints, or concerns you have about this research study.
- You may also call this number if you cannot reach research staff, or you wish to talk with someone who is independent of the research team.

**\*By selecting "Yes" below, you indicate that you have read the information provided above, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You may download a copy of this form at the study website, [www.MyMindfulDays.com/pdf/CENPconsent.pdf](http://www.MyMindfulDays.com/pdf/CENPconsent.pdf).**

- Yes, I agree to participate in this research study
- No, I do not want to participate in this research study