**Regional Attitudes towards Climate Change**

**Conceptualizing Our Regional Environment (gCORE)**

**Term Project, FALL 2011**

**HSR Six Questions**

1. How would you summarize, in the form of an **abstract**, the **nature** and **purpose** of your research project?

gCORE term project will focus on climate change attitudes – both nationally and locally. As a program and individuals, we will research public attitudes about climate change (nationally) and learn about likely climate change[[1]](#footnote-1) impacts to the Pacific Northwest (specifically Washington State).

1. What are the **procedures** to which humans will be subjected, i.e., questionnaires, interviews, audio or video recordings, etc.? When, where, and how will these procedures be carried out? **In the case of questionnaires or interviews, please attach a copy of the questions you will be asking.**

Human subjects will be subjected to a one- to two- hour interview (length determined by the desire of the subject to focus crisply on the questions or to discuss issues in more detail with the students). Interview will consist of approximately 15 minutes of completing a survey, followed by a series of open-ended questions. Interviews will be conducted at a time convenient to the subject (between 8am and 8pm), in a public place. in certain well understood circumstances, the student might interview the subjectin his or her home. Students will be trained by faculty in interview techniques, and each interview will be conducted by one student, with another student observer. Questions substantially similar to those asked are included (\*d) in the attached Term Project Syllabus.

1. How will the **recruitment of human subjects** for your proposed project be carried out? Include your recruitment criteria and procedures.

Program faculty are working with a variety local organizations and leaders to identify potential subjects. Each subject will be screened by our collaborators and faculty to assure student safety. While we hope to have a cross section of subjects, we do not need nor are we seeking a random sample of Olympia residents.

1. What are the possible **risks to the human subjects**? Specify possible kinds and degrees of risks, e.g., minimal, emotional risk in the form of distress or embarrassment. Outline the precautions that will be taken to minimize these risks, including methods of ensuring confidentiality or obtaining a release to use collected material and information. **NOTE:** The concept of risk goes beyond obvious physical risk. It could include risk to the subject’s dignity and self-respect, as well as emotional, psychological, and behavioral risk. Risk could also include the potential for jeopardizing one’s employment or standing in an academic program, organization or workplace, community, or other group.

Possible risks to subjects include embarrassment at relating to a (possibly younger and possibly better educated) student their attitudes, beliefs, and actions, and their activities relating to climate change. Every effort (lectures, case studies of other researchers conducting similar interviews, role playing, practice) will be made to sensitize students to this risk.

Confidentiality of subjects will be assured to the best of our ability: students, faculty, and our collaborators will sign a pledge not to divulge the list of subjects. All personal information about the subjects’ name, address, telephone number, etc., will be destroyed at the end of the study (by December 15). no personal information about the subjects will be retained in the study archives or published. We will publish general information about the makeup of the subjects, but those statements will be cleared with the Evergreen HSR officer prior to publicatoi.

Since we are informing the local newspaper of this study, it is possible that a reporter will want to follow up with subjects; we will NOT allow this. We will NOT divulge any information about subjects (other than those cited above).

1. What are the specific, anticipated **benefits** to be gained by completing the project? These may be at an individual, institutional, or societal level.

Benefits to the students involve their experience in a qualitative research project, thus gaining those research skills and an understanding of those research techniques that hey will be able to use in their professional and educational careers. Benefits to students and faculty involve the experience of conducting together a research project of extreme currency. Benefit to the Olympia area and Washington State involve the potential for follow on research and education about, and citizen action for mitigation of, climate change. Benefits to society and to the academy in general involve the possible future collaboration of faculty and students conducting similar studies across the U.S., and perhaps nationally.

Benefits to subjects involve the satisfaction of meeting enthusiastic and competent young students/adults, and contributing to their education, as well as the satisfaction of contributing to the body of scientific knowledge and an understanding of climate change attitudes in the Olympia area.

1. **How will the information derived from this activity be used?** To whom will the information be distributed, and if made, how will the promise of **confidentiality** be kept or carried out in the final product?

Information derived from this activity will be

* 1. presented by the students in a public panel session Tuesday, December 6 or 13. All collaborators and subjects will be invited to attend the public presentation.
  2. written up in transcript form (names, places, and all personal information about interview NOT included) and submitted to faculty Nov. 29.
  3. Included as transcript and interpreted in the students’ final research report, and in the panel presentation.
  4. Interpreted results will be published on the program web site (<http://blogs.evergreen.edu/gcore>), distributed to collaborators, and possibly in the local newspaper and in academic journals or conferences

The promise of confidentiality is addressed in our response to Question 4 (above), final paragraph.

1. A major ESS (winter quarter) topic is climate change; students will learn about the science of climate change. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)