Collecting Baseline Data from Introductory Engineering Courses

Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a project that is being conducted by Suzanne Brahmia, Math and Science Learning Center Associate Director of Physics, Mary Emenike, Learning Center Director of STEM Support Programs, Lydia Prendergast, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs and Engineering, and Eugenia Etkina, Professor of Science Education. The purpose of this project is to collect baseline data from engineering students in introductory physics and chemistry courses. These data will be used to improve learning experiences of the students in these courses in the future. Your responses to these tests and surveys will have no bearing on your course grade.

Students in Physics 115, 123, 227 and 229, Chemistry 159 and 160, and Statics will take part in this study. The study involves the use of tests assessing your understanding of the content of the subject and of your beliefs about the subject.

• The content pre-test will be given in recitation.

• The beliefs survey will be assigned as homework at both the beginning and end of the semester; it should take about 20 minutes to complete.

• At the end of the semester, the content post-test will be administered in recitation.

If you agree to take part in the study, your responses on conceptual inventories and attitudes and beliefs surveys will be confidential, but not anonymous. Only the Principle Investigators (PIs: Suzanne Brahmia, Mary Emenike, Lydia Prendergast and Eugenia Etkina) will have access to your individual responses. The PIs will provide your course instructors with a list of students who have completed the surveys for credit on the assignment; however, your course instructor will not have access to your individual responses or whether or not you choose to participate in the study. After all grades have been submitted for the course at the end of the semester, course instructors will have access to de-identified aggregated data, but not to students’ individual responses.

Participation in this project involves no more than minimal risks. While there is no direct benefit to you from participation in this study, the results of this study will benefit future students by helping course instructors and departments assess future changes made to the introductory courses.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw your participation at any time during the study without any penalty. Your course instructor will not know whether or not you have agreed to participate or not in this project. Only the PIs will know who agreed to participate in the project. You must be 18 years or older to participate in this project.

This study is confidential, but not anonymous. Confidential means that the original collected responses will be linked to your name, but only the PIs will have access to your individual responses. The PIs will de-identify all data prior to sharing with any course.
This informed consent form was approved by the Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects on August 20, 2013; Currently there is no expiration on the approval of this form.

instructors or reporting aggregate data in publications. All data will be stored in a secure location. The PIs and the Institutional Review Board at Rutgers University are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data, except as may be required by law. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only aggregate results will be shared.

If you have any questions about the study procedures, you may contact any PI:

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If you have any questions about your rights as a subject, you may contact the Sponsored Programs Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
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We will be asking for your oral consent in class. You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

There is NO PENALTY if you choose not to participate in this study. Sign below if you do NOT want to participate in this study and return this paper with your pretest. We will be sure to keep your responses out of the study:

I do NOT want my responses to be included in the study.

Student Name (Print) ____________________________________________

Student Signature ___________________________ Date __________________

Principal Investigator Signature __________________ Date ________________