



a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Psychology

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Project Title: Grade Alignment Policy Development Study

Principal Investigator: Dr. Catherine Rawn, Professor of Teaching, Psychology Department,
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Why am I conducting a focus group? A general goal of the study is to examine people's ideas about grade alignment policies as one potential way to coordinate courses within a department. The specific goal is to evaluate a potential model that may help groups of faculty members develop such a grade alignment policy (or even decide against developing one). I created this potential model while constructing themes from a previous study investigating faculty and students' perceptions of a particular grade alignment policy (in psychology). In the spirit of a constructivist grounded theory approach, this focus group will serve to interrogate the potential model, and to inform the next iteration of the model.

Study Procedures: The Principal Investigator (Catherine Rawn) will lead a 90-minute workshop as part of UBC's Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology's *Celebrate Learning Week* in May 2025. The workshop title is "Workshopping a model for developing a grade alignment policy across (multi-section) courses." As a participant in that session, you will be asked to participate in discussions related to grade alignment policies. This session will serve simultaneously as a discussion-based workshop for participants, as well as a focus group for research purposes. The contributions you and other participants make to the discussion will be captured without identifiers. No individual participant's contribution will be able to be identified in the notes. All participants in the workshop will also need to participate in the research, because of the anonymized way data will be recorded. There will be no way to identify any individual's data after the session.

Study Results: The notes, as well as any artefacts produced during the workshop (e.g., flipcharts) will be analyzed to inform the next phase of the grade alignment policy development model. These results from this study may be shared publicly, including in peer-reviewed academic research journals, at local meetings and/or scholarly conferences, to advance knowledge in this area of grading policies. Data from individual participants will **not** be able to be identified in the data collected nor the reports.

Confidentiality: Your confidentiality will be respected; however, complete confidentiality cannot be assured for a focus group because researchers do not have control over what participants disclose about the other people in the group. We will keep identities anonymized in reports and write-ups. Identifying information (e.g., attendance records, consent forms) will be kept separate from the rest

of the data. All electronic notes will be stored on an encrypted drive and on an encrypted and password-protected computer. Paper data will be stored in Dr. Rawn's locked office. Access to paper and electronic data will be restricted to Dr. Rawn. After five years, if we determine that these documents are no longer needed, they will be securely deleted.

Potential Risks, Payments, and Benefits: You will be asked to express your views about grade-related policies, which may cause some discomfort depending on your views and experience. You do not have to answer any question nor participate fully in any activity if you do not want to. There is no remuneration for participation, although you are welcome to take the developing model, and any insights you gain from participating, back to your home unit to inspire further dialogue. Overall, I hope that current and future faculty and students will benefit from what we learn about grading policy development.

Contact Information about the Study: If you have any questions about what you are being asked to do, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Catherine Rawn, at cdrawn@psych.ubc.ca.

Contact for Concerns about the Rights of Research Subjects: 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 Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598. Please reference our application identification number: H25-01138.

Consent: Taking part in this workshop/focus group is entirely up to you. You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of the study at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact on you. Please note that because all responses are being recorded in a completely anonymized way, it will be impossible to identify and remove your data later if you change your mind. Please review this consent form at your leisure.

By signing below you are indicating that you consent to participate in this study.

Participant Name: _____ Participant Signature: _____

Today's Date: _____