

Project Title:

Exploring Chronic Student Absenteeism in Northern Saskatchewan

Principal Investigator Name:

Mitchell Keene

This is a: New Project Application
 Project Renewal. IRB Case Number:

IRB Application Date (mm/dd/yy): 1/21/2024

Anticipated Project Start Date (mm/dd/yy): 1/25/2024

Project End Date (mm/dd/yy): 5/3/2024

Form Instructions:

Please read all instructions very carefully.

Incomplete applications will be returned to you unreviewed, and will result in a delay in the start of your project.

Empty gray boxes (e.g.) will expand as you type in them.
These boxes will accept cut-and-paste, formatting, etc.

Black squares (e.g.) are checkboxes.
Clicking on the box will check/uncheck the box.

Approved by the
Niagara University
IRB Committee

Approved Date: 2/7/24
Effective Date: 2/7/25

This Section for IRB Committee Use Only

Does the IRB approve this application?

- Yes. This research is exempt under 45 CFR 46.101. Approval is not required.
- Yes. Risks to subjects are either negligible or minimized with responsible research design and data management procedures are warranted by study goals.
- Yes, pending resubmission to the IRB Chair for approval with the following minor revisions:
- No. The applicant must address significant concerns before resubmitting for committee review:

Paul R. Schuyler
Signature of IRB Chairperson:

2/8/24
Date (mm/dd/yy)

2024-011
IRB Case Number

Department: **Ontario Educational Studies; PhD, Leadership and Policy**
Telephone Number: **(306) 960-3841**

Co-Investigator 1 Name: Dr. Lori Quigley

Status (check one): **Faculty at Niagara** **Graduate Student**
University Faculty at Other **Undergraduate**
University Staff at Niagara **Student**
University

I am the NU faculty advisor for

the PI's student project: **Yes No Not**

Applicable Title/Position: **Professor**

Email Address: **lquigley@niagara.edu**

Department: **College of Education**

Telephone Number: **(716) 286-8551**

Home Institution & Mailing
Address (if not at Niagara):

Co-Investigator 2 Name:

Faculty at Niagara University

Graduate Student

Status (check one):

Department:

Faculty at Other
University Staff at Niagara
University

Title/Position:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Home Institution & Mailing
Address (if not at Niagara):

Undergraduate Student

2. Study Activities and Description

It is important that your responses are clear and understandable for reviewers. In your responses, please summarize the proposed research using non-technical language that can be readily understood by someone outside of your discipline.

2.1 Describe the purpose and goals of this study (100-250 words):

When I arrived and began teaching in northern Saskatchewan, it became evident to me that

student absenteeism was (and still is) a chronic issue. Chronic absenteeism can be defined as missing 40 school days. 88% of the students in my school division self-identify as First Nation, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) (NLSD, 2022). The attendance recorded for FNMI students has been declining well before the COVID-19 pandemic (Government of Saskatchewan, 2020). Most, if not all, of the students I teach are FNMI and are somehow connected to the residential school system in Canada. Most Indigenous families in Canada experienced the horrific travesties of the residential school system whereby Indigenous children were forcefully taken from their homes in an attempt to assimilate them into mainstream society. Students were suppressed from expressing their culture and harshly punished for doing so. Some children died (TRCOC, 2015). The purpose of this study is to explore the chronic student absenteeism that many public schools staff experience in northern Saskatchewan. Specifically, I seek to understand how the fallout from the residential school system has impacted the way Indigenous people of northern Saskatchewan feel about the current public education system. I am interested to hear whether individuals believe if current attendance patterns of students are an additional intergenerational expression of trauma experienced by the Indigenous population. Additionally, I wish to understand the feelings of students that attend regularly and their parents/guardians who encourage them to do so. Conversely, I am also seeking to understand the feelings of students that do not attend regularly and their parents/guardians who do not encourage them to attend.

2.2 Explain the activities and tasks that participants will undertake as a part of your study (100-250 words):

Indigenous voices, perspectives, and feelings are central to this study. Participants will have an opportunity to talk about their feelings towards the current education system, what they believe to be the motivators of students who do and do not attend school regularly, the motivators of parents who do and do not encourage their students to attend school regularly, and how they believe students can get back into the classroom regularly. Participants will be invited to take part in a one hour (approximately) interview. Interviews will take place in-person or virtually (i.e. Zoom, FaceTime, Goolge Meet).

2.3 Discuss any potential risks to participants that may result from your research and how you will minimize them:

There are no known physical risks to participants for this study. It is important to note that although I require participants to have either attended or are somehow connected to the residential school system in Canada, I do not ask direct questions about it. Their experience of being somehow connected to it is enough to potentially shape their responses to my questions. However, participants may choose to disclose and discuss emotional, traumatic, and sensitive issues with me which may cause some distress for the participant. If this occurs, I will ask the participant if they feel comfortable continuing with the interview. If they wish to stop the interview, then that will be respected and the interview will stop. If they wish to stop and carry on at another time, we will reschedule at their convenience. If they wish to stop and remove themselves from the study then I will destroy raw data and the audio recording. If they wish to continue, I will wait and proceed when they are ready to do so. This may prolong the interview time and I will inform them of that. I will remind the participant that their information will be kept confidential at all times throughout the entire project. I will also remind the participant that they can remove themselves from the study at any time without an explanation.

2.4 Discuss any potential benefits to society that may result from your research:

Although it is unquestioningly important to realize that many groups of people experience poverty, violence, and racism, the experiences and people involved in the residential school

system in Canada are truly distinct. It is important to be clear (and re-emphasize) that this is an important group of individuals in Canada that have survived attempted cultural genocide by means of assimilation through enacted legislation and religious fear. I believe that experiences of those who attended residential schools are slowly being shared publicly for the first time. Based on the research I have done for this project and the work that I do on a daily basis with Indigenous students as a teacher, I believe that the consequences of the residential school system will not be fully understood for a long time. Within this population of people, it is not unreasonable to suggest that there exists a potential undercurrent of distrust, fear and anxiety towards the public education system. Current student attendance patterns may very well be one of the ways that these feelings are manifested intergenerationally but this needs to be explored. I believe that research in this area will provide local administration with more concrete knowledge about student attendance patterns which would hopefully provide more strategic and creative ways of helping students, families, and communities heal from the trauma that has been inflicted upon them. This is a unique situation which requires a unique investigation. I do not believe that pre-existing attendance improvement intervention models should be applied until more research is done with this specific population of people.

3. Research Participants

Please include a copy of all study procedures and documents with your IRB application (e.g. survey questionnaires, measurement tools, study procedures, scripts, interview protocols and

questions, informed consent forms, email recruitment scripts, etc.).

Please note: Answering affirmatively on any of the following questions will **not** automatically disqualify your IRB application (e.g. researching vulnerable populations, using deception, etc.). Each question is part of the IRB risk-assessment procedure, and will be placed within the context of the study's activities, goals, and procedures.

3.1 Research Subjects:

The primary research participants will include: (check all that apply)

3.5 Will there be any incentives offered for participation in your study?

Non-Vulnerable Populations:

Adults (18 years or older)

Vulnerable Populations:

Minors (younger than 18 years old)

Medical or other clinical patients

Individuals who may lack fluency in the language of the study

Mentally or developmentally disabled

or impaired individuals

Prisoners, parolees, or incarcerated individuals

Pregnant women or fetuses

Native American/First Nations/Other indigenous persons

Other vulnerable populations (please list):

Please provide a rationale for the involvement of vulnerable individuals and why alternative approaches cannot be used: I will be working with the Indigenous population in the area in which I teach and live. They are the fabric of the community as well as the dominant culture and group of people in the area. They are also the group of people that have experienced or are somehow connected to the residential school system that occurred in Canada. Any experiences, frames of reference, and/or feelings about education are vital to this study and cannot be found elsewhere or through a different means because they are the ones that have experienced it.

3.2 Data Sources:

The data collected will include: (check all that apply)

3.3 Estimated number of participants (if any):

3.4 Estimated time for a participant to complete study procedures (if any):

Interviews (Face-to-face, video, telephone, focus group etc.) Questionnaires or surveys (paper, online, electronic, etc.) Experimental data collection

Existing data banks, archives, or documents

Physiological measurements, medical tissue, or blood samples

Public records

Educational tests

Other (please explain):

5 would be ideal but 3 would be the minimum.

1 hour

No.

(e.g. cash, class points
or extra credit, entry in
prize drawing, etc.)

*alternative procedures are
not
feasible.*

**3.6 Please briefly
discuss how you
will recruit
participants, if any:**
If you plan on using
recruitment letters,
posters, mass
email/web materials, oral
scripts, etc., please
include along with this
IRB
application.

Yes. Please describe what incentives will be offered, and how you will deal with compensating participants that choose to withdraw from your study:

I will recruit participants through non-random convenience sampling because we are in a remote Indigenous community in northern Saskatchewan. I have built many relationships with the people that I live and work with. My focus will be community members and Elders. I will first attempt to recruit them through in formal conversation and then I will provide them with the participant invitation/informed consent letter.

**3.7 Will all participants
be required to
complete
informed consent
procedures prior to
participating in the study?**

Yes. Please include your informed consent form or statement as an attachment with your IRB application.

No. Please provide a rationale for why informed consent will not be required of study participants. Also include a script, statement, or other documentation as an attachment with your IRB application.

**3.8 Will any participants
be deceived as part of
your study's activities
or
procedure?**

'Deception' is defined as
*intentionally misleading
the participants in a
research
study in order to obscure
the actual purpose of the
study, and may only be
used when effective
nondeceptive*

No.

Yes. Please describe the details of the deception, and provide a rationale for deception. Please also include your debrief documentation or procedure with your IRB application.

4. Participant Confidentiality

4.2 What steps will you take to ensure confidentiality of individually identifiable data (if any)? Please be specific about your steps in collecting, storing, securing, analyzing, anonymizing, and publishing information.

4.1 Who will have access to individual identifiable data for this project (if any)? Please be specific about each person, their roles, and their level of access.

Because I am the primary researcher for this project, I will be the only person who will have access to the data for this project.

Pseudonyms will be used in place of participants' actual names and in any written work, oral presentations, or publications to protect them from identification. Interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed. Only myself and the interviewee will be present during the interview. Data will remain

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confidential and secure. The data will be saved/stored in a password protected external hard drive that will be locked in my desk at home. Nobody will have access to it other than myself.

4.3 How, and for how long, will you retain individually identifiable data? If you are required by a funding agency or academic publication to retain data for an extended period of time, please explain.

I will keep the raw, individually identifiable data for a period of 5 years. The reason why I wish to keep the data for 5 years is because I may be able to use the data for other projects, presentations, or conferences as I progress through my PhD program. I believe my dissertation may have something to do with this topic and I would not want to destroy something that may come in handy later. After that, all identifiable data will be shredded, deleted, and/or destroyed.

5. Funding and Conflicts of Interest

5.1 Funding Sources: Have any of the researchers applied for or received any form of funding, including grants, fellowships, or contracts (please include internal NU grants)?

No.

Yes. Please provide the funding source(s)
and grant/contract numbers (if any):

5.2 Financial Conflict of Interest: A financial conflict of interest may exist whenever financial considerations or publication rights have the potential to compromise or have the appearance of compromising one's professional judgment and independence in the design, conduct or publication of research.

Does any investigator (including principal or co-investigator), key personnel, or their immediate family members have a financial interest (including salary or other payments for services, equity interests, or intellectual property rights) that would reasonably appear to be affected by the research, or an interest in any entity whose financial situation would reasonably appear to be affected by the research?

No.

Yes. Please disclose: Name of the person with the potential conflict of interest:

Explain the potential financial conflict of interest:

Explain how the potential conflict of interest will be managed:

6. Applicant Comments

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6.1 Please use the space below to provide any additional comments that you think might be of use to the committee in reviewing your IRB application (optional).

No further comments.

7. Primary Investigator Signature & Assurance

7.1 Please check the following boxes, and sign and date.

I confirm that I am familiar with and abide by the guidelines and best practices of ethical research involving human subjects, and I agree to comply with the conditions outlined in university, state, and federal regulations.

I confirm that should this study need to CHANGE ANY procedure, measurement device, process, population, or other aspect of this study involving human subjects before or after IRB approval, I must notify the IRB Director prior to implementing these changes, and additional reviews may be required.

I understand that ethics approval is only granted until the application's expiration date. Should this project require renewal, I confirm that it is my responsibility to submit the annual renewal ONE MONTH prior to the expiry date of this application.

I confirm that should an ADVERSE EVENT (i.e. an unanticipated negative consequence or result affecting participants) should occur, I will report it to the IRB director within three days.

/Mitchell Keene/

02/07/2024

Signature of the Principal Investigator.

Date (mm/dd/yy)

[type a slash on either side of your name to indicate signature,
e.g. /jane smith/]

PRS
2/7/24

Elder Informed Consent Form

Dear Annette.

This research project is seeking to better understand how the residential school system has impacted the way local Indigenous people of northern Saskatchewan feel about the K-12 education system today.

Specifically, I am seeking to understand if current student attendance patterns are an example of intergenerational trauma experienced by the local Indigenous population who are connected to the residential school system.


Indigenous voices, perspectives, and feelings are important to this study. I wish to interview 3-5 local community members that self-identify as Indigenous who have a personal connection to the residential school system. This is a voluntary opportunity and participants can stop participating at any time without negative consequences. No explanation is required.

The interviews will be recorded and converted into text. The interviews will take approximately 1 hour each. Participants will be given an alternate name to keep identities private. The recordings and text interviews will be kept for 5 years in a password protected hard drive and then destroyed.

You are a highly respected traditional knowledge keeper and Elder in our community. You have an important understanding of how the local community may feel about this project if they are asked to participate. The relationship we have is important to me and this research project will not proceed if you feel that it is not something that should be discussed at this time.

If I have any further questions or concerns, you can contact Mitchell Keene at keene@niagara.edu or (306) 960-3841. The Niagara University IRB (Institutional Review Board) case number for this study is XYZ.

By voluntarily signing below, you fully understand this consent form and approve of this research project.



Signature

Feb 7/24

Date

Annette Montgrand

Print Name

1-306-822-2443

Telephone/email

11/11/11



PRS
2/7/24

Elder Informed Consent Form

Dear _____,

This research project is seeking to better understand how the residential school system has impacted the way local Indigenous people of northern Saskatchewan feel about the K-12 education system today.

Specifically, I am seeking to understand if current student attendance patterns are an example of intergenerational trauma experienced by the local Indigenous population who are connected to the residential school system.

Indigenous voices, perspectives, and feelings are important to this study. I wish to interview 3-5 local community members that self-identify as Indigenous who have a personal connection to the residential school system. This is a voluntary opportunity and participants can stop participating at any time without negative consequences. No explanation is required.

The interviews will be recorded and converted into text. The interviews will take approximately 1 hour each. Participants will be given an alternate name to keep identities private. The recordings and text interviews will be kept for 5 years in a password protected hard drive and then destroyed.

You are a highly respected traditional knowledge keeper and Elder in our community. You have an important understanding of how the local community may feel about this project if they are asked to participate. The relationship we have is important to me and this research project will not proceed if you feel that it is not something that should be discussed at this time.

If I have any further questions or concerns, you can contact Mitchell Keene at keene@niagara.edu or (306) 960-3841. The Niagara University IRB (Institutional Review Board) case number for this study is XYZ.

By voluntarily signing below, you fully understand this consent form and approve of this research project.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Telephone/email



Exploring Chronic Student Absenteeism in Northern Saskatchewan

PRJ
2/7/24

Dear _____,

This research project will explore how the residential school system has impacted the way local Indigenous people of northern Saskatchewan feel about the K-12 public education system today. Specifically, I am seeking to understand if current student attendance patterns are an additional expression of intergenerational trauma experienced by the local Indigenous population who are connected to the residential school system.

Indigenous voices, perspectives, and feelings are important to this study. I am looking to interview 3-5 individuals for this project. Interviews will be scheduled at a time and location that is convenient for the participant. The interviews will take place in-person or virtually (i.e. Zoom, FaceTime, Google Meet, etc.).

The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. The interviews will take approximately 1 hour each. Participants will be given an alternate name to keep identities private. Only myself and the participant will be allowed in the interview space. I will be the only person who has access to the original recordings. The recordings and transcriptions will be kept for 5 years in a password protected hard drive and then destroyed.

The rights of privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of all participants will be respected. Involvement in the project is completely voluntary. Participants are free to withdraw from the research project at any time without giving a reason and you may decline to answer any specific questions during the interview. I will use the data collected for this study for my doctoral studies. I may also use it for scholarly publications, conference presentations, and future research and writing projects. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

I believe that your involvement in this project will provide educational decision-makers with improved knowledge about student attendance patterns. You may provide more strategic ways of helping students, families, and communities heal from the trauma that has been previously inflicted upon them. The findings from this project may also help develop creative ways of getting students back in school consistently.

If you understand and consent to participating in this research, please sign below and return to me. The Niagara University Institutional Review Board (IRB) case number for this study is XYZ. I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

IRB Chair

Sincerely,

Mitchell Keene, M.Ed.
Ph.D. Student
Leadership and Policy
College of Education
Niagara University
keene@niagara.edu
(306) 960-3841

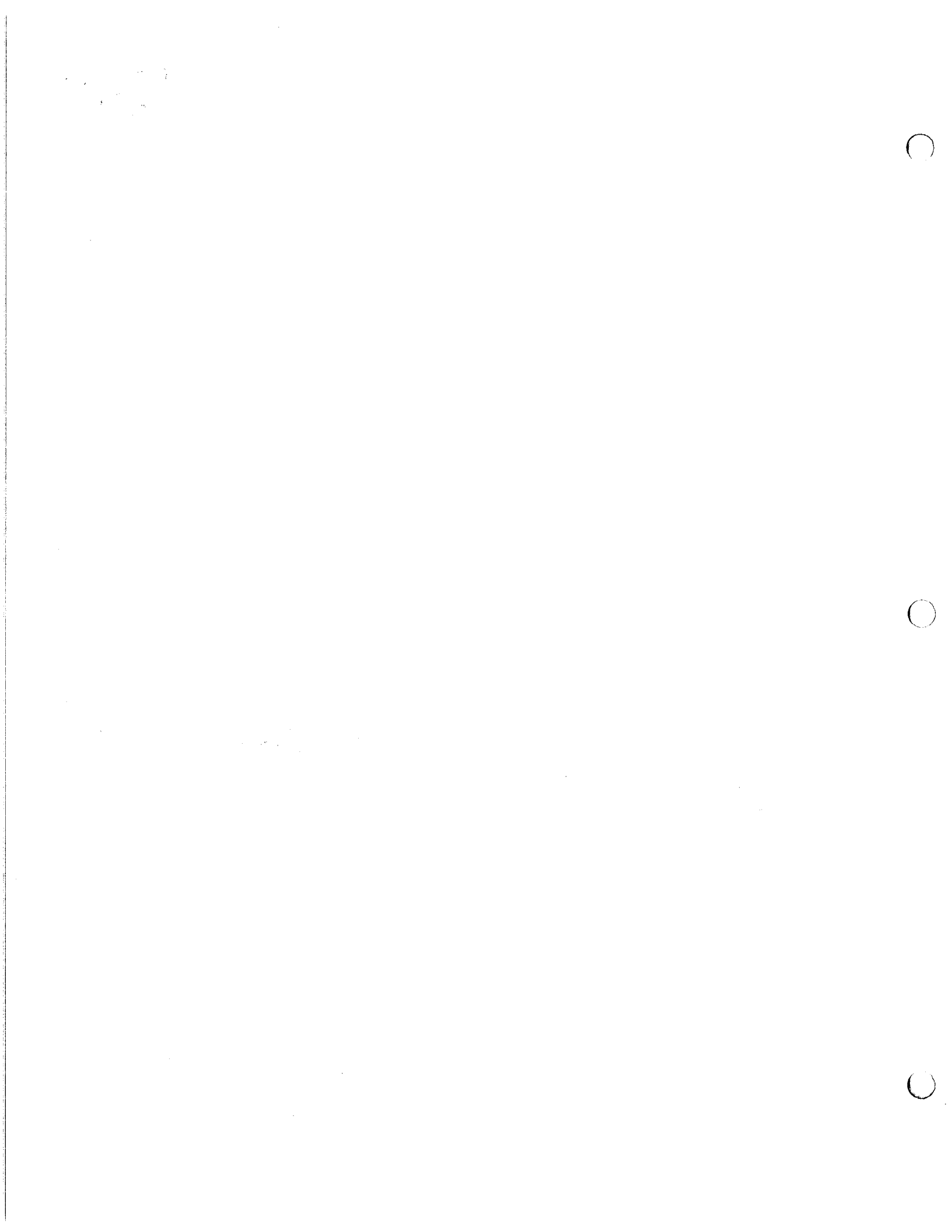
By signing below, I verify that I have read and fully understand the research project. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions before signing. I also know that I can ask questions about the research later. I sign it voluntarily.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Telephone/email



Interview Protocol

Signed informed consent form will be collected before the interview begins.

Participant pseudonym: _____

Introduction/Preamble

The following will be discussed with the participant before we begin:

1. Hello! My name is Mitchell Keene, and I am a PhD student at Niagara University.
2. Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this project – your participation is greatly appreciated!
3. The purpose of this study is to:
 - o Explore chronic student absenteeism in northern Saskatchewan.
 - o I seek to understand how the residential school system has impacted the way Indigenous people of northern Saskatchewan feel about the current public K-12 education system (if any).
 - o I am interested to know if current attendance patterns of students are an additional intergenerational expression of trauma experienced by the local Indigenous population who are connected to the residential school system.
 - o You will have an opportunity to talk about your feelings towards the current education system, what you believe to be the motivators of students who do and do not attend school regularly, the motivators of parents who encourage (or do not encourage) their students to attend school regularly, and how they we can get students back in the classroom regularly.
4. This project has been reviewed and approved by Annette Montgrand who is a local traditional knowledge keeper and respected Elder of La Loche, Saskatchewan.
5. I have 7 questions to ask you and it shouldn't take any more than an hour.
6. I will be recording the interview so that I can transcribe it later. I will also be taking notes while we are talking.
7. As a reminder, this is voluntary; you may withdraw at anytime without giving a reason; you may also decline to answer any specific question.
8. If you are triggered for any reason, we can stop the interview. Just let me know. We will only begin again if you wish to keep going.
9. If you are triggered, here are some relevant counselling services in the area that we can get you connected to:
 - o Pat Allward – Community Mental Health Therapist – (306) 381-9099
 - o La Loche Health Center and Hospital – (306) 822-3200
10. All data will saved and stored in an external hard drive that is password protected; I will be the only one who will have access to the raw data.
11. This research has been reviewed and approved by the Niagara University Institutional Review Board (IRB); if you have any questions, you can contact the IRB chair, Paul Schupp, pschupp@niagara.edu.
12. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Consent Form

Consent Form

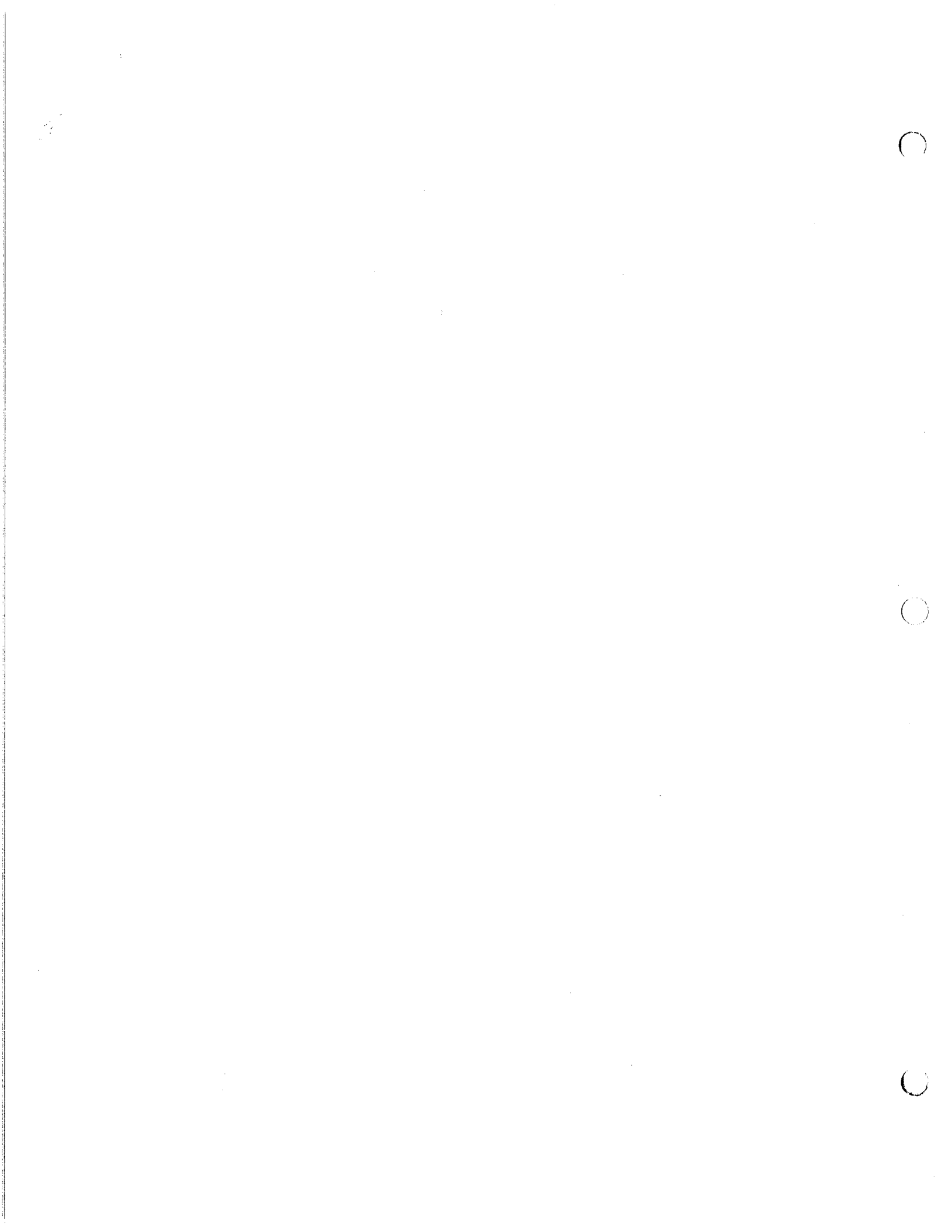
Consent Form

Interview Question	Response
<p>What are your current thoughts and feelings about the K-12 public education system in Saskatchewan?</p> <p><i>Probe: tell me more</i></p>	
<p>Thinking about the students that come to school regularly, how do you think they feel about school?</p> <p><i>Probe: tell me more</i></p> <p>Follow-up: how do you think their parents/guardians feel about school?</p> <p><i>Probe: tell me more</i></p>	
<p>Thinking about the students that do not attend school regularly, how do you think they feel about school?</p> <p><i>Probe: tell me more</i></p> <p>Follow-up: how do you think their parents/guardians feel about school?</p> <p><i>Probe: tell me more</i></p>	
<p>In your opinion, how has the residential school system impacted the current attendance patterns of students today (if any)?</p> <p><i>Probe: tell me more</i></p>	
<p>How do you think we can get students back in the classroom regularly?</p> <p><i>Probe: tell me more</i></p>	

Closing Remarks

Once the interview is over, the following will be discussed with the participant:

1. Those are all the questions I have for you – thank you so much for participating!
2. Do you have any further questions for me?
3. I wanted to remind and confirm with you that this is confidential. Your identity and the thoughts that you have shared will be kept private. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.
4. If I need to contact you during the transcription process because I don't understand something, do you give me permission to contact you again to clarify information?





Completion Date 06-Feb-2024
Expiration Date 06-Feb-2027
Record ID 61090039

This is to certify that:

MITCHELL KEENE

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

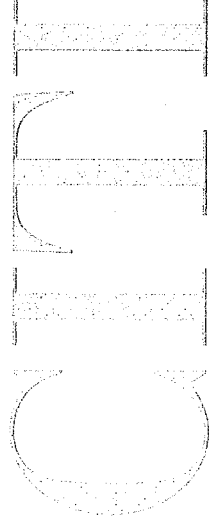
Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research
(Curriculum Group)
Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research
(Course Learner Group)

1 - RCR
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Niagara University

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.



Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

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