

## Letter of Information/Consent to Participate in a Research Study

**Title of Research Study:** *Differential impacts of transition to remote academic labour at GTA universities during the COVID-19 pandemic*

### **Research Team:**

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**Research Partner Organization:** Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations

**Sponsor:** Social Science & Humanities Council of Canada, Partnership Engage Grant - COVID-19 Special Initiative

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**Purpose of the Study:** Our research partnership is studying the impacts of the transition to remote academic work on GTA faculty during the pandemic. This research will help to identify the ways in which changes to teaching, research, and service under remote conditions have affected academics within and across different disciplines and universities.

You have been invited to participate in this study, entitled *Differential impacts of transition to remote academic labour at GTA universities during the COVID-19 pandemic*, because you work as an academic at a GTA university. Your participation is voluntary. Please read the information below concerning details on study procedures, risks and benefits. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Natalie Oman to make sure that all of your questions have been answered before proceeding to the survey. Your completion of the survey will indicate your voluntary consent to participate. You may skip any question or terminate the survey at any time.

This study has received ethics approval from the University of Ontario Institute of Technology Research Ethics Board (REB #16341) on 21 July 2021.

**Procedures involved in the Research:** You are invited to take part in an online survey that should take about 15 minutes if you answer all questions. Some questions are about how remote working has impacted your research, teaching, and service during the pandemic. Others ask about demographic information. This anonymous survey is conducted online through Qualtrics, and is hosted on U.S.-based servers.

**Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:** Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you can stop answering the survey questions at any time by closing your browser. You can also skip any question that you do not want to answer. If you decide to terminate the survey before completing it, there will be no consequences for you. Once you have submitted your responses for this anonymous survey, your answers will be entered into a database and will not be identifiable. This means that once you have submitted your survey, your responses cannot be withdrawn from the study because it will not be possible to identify which responses are yours.

**Potential Harms, Risks or Discomforts:** The risks in this study are minimal. There is a chance you might feel uncomfortable answering some questions and you might feel concern about how answers are interpreted.

**Potential Benefits:** The research will not benefit you directly. However, we hope this research will advance understanding of the impact of emergency remote teaching, research, and service on academic workers at GTA universities. We expect that this will help us to identify gaps in support and in the assessment of professional productivity.

**Confidentiality:** Your participation in this study is confidential and once you begin the survey, your responses will not be connected to any of your identifying information, such as your name or email address. This survey tool does not collect or store your name or email address. Whether you participate in the study is and will remain confidential. Only aggregate summaries of data will be used in published research. This study will include a large pool of participants whose data is being aggregated. Publications based on survey results will not include any information that could identify you. You will not be named in any reports, publications, or presentations that may come from this study.

Nevertheless, the research team is required to make you aware that despite best efforts it is possible that your identity could be determined even when data is aggregated. Furthermore, while data is in transit over the Internet, confidentiality cannot be fully guaranteed.

**Use and Storage of Data:** All of the anonymous data collected will be stored electronically on a secure server. Analysis datasets will be stored on encrypted hard drives protected by passwords to minimize risk of accidental data breach.

**Information about the Study Results:** The findings from this study will be presented at academic conferences and submitted in the form of one or more articles for publication in peer-reviewed journals. If you would like to see the published results of the research study, you may

either contact a member of the research team at the email addresses listed above or check the website of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) for publication links (<https://ocufa.on.ca/>).

The data collected from this research project will be securely stored indefinitely for archival and replication purposes.

**Participant Rights and Concerns:** By participating in this study, you do not give up any of your legal rights, nor does your consent to participate relieve the researchers, OCUFA, or other involved institutions of their legal and professional responsibilities.

If you have any questions concerning the research study or experience any discomfort related to the study, please contact Dr. Natalie Oman at [facultyimpacts@ontariotechu.ca](mailto:facultyimpacts@ontariotechu.ca). If you have any questions about your rights as a participant or complaints, or experience any adverse events, please feel free to contact either Dr. Oman or the Research Ethics Office at [researchethics@ontariotechu.ca](mailto:researchethics@ontariotechu.ca).

COVID-19 Support Resources are available at:

- the Government of Canada's COVID-19 website at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html>
- the Government of Ontario's COVID-19 Support webpages at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-support-people> .

### **Participant Consent:**

I have read this consent form and understand the study being described. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. I am free to ask questions about the study in the future. I freely consent to participate in the research study, understanding that I may discontinue participation at any time without penalty. This consent form has been made available to me for copying via screenshot and I am aware that additional copies can be requested from the research team for my records.

By participating in the following survey, I indicate my consent.