

**Application for Ethics Approval
StFX Research Ethics Board**

- (1) **Project Title:**
Self-Directed Learning Skills in Adult Immigrant and International Students
- (2) **Project Start Date:**
February 2007
- (3) **Name of the Principal Investigator:**
Thomas Robles
Mailing Address:
5-1065 Bathurst Street
Toronto ON M5R 3G8
Telephone Number: (416) 536-4410
E-Mail Address: trobles@faculty.ocad.ca
Fax Number:
- (4) **Is the PI a member of the StFX Faculty () or a Graduate Student (√)?**
In which Department, School, or Programme?
Master of Adult Education Programme
- (5) **Names of Co-Investigators:**
None
- (6) **For Faculty Members:**

Signature of the Principal Investigator **Date**

- (7) **For Graduate Students:**

If this research is for a graduate thesis or project, has the applicant's Supervisor committee approved the project? Yes (X) No ()

Name of the Faculty Advisor:
Dr. Leona English

Faculty Advisor's e-mail address:
lenglish@stfx.ca

Department, School, or Programme:
Department of Adult Education

Student's Signature **Date**

Signature of Faculty Advisor **Date**

(8)(a) The Research Topic: Self-Directed Learning Skills in Adult Immigrant and International Students

This research project will focus on adult immigrant and international students' experiences of self-directed learning. I will obtain this information through interviews of adult immigrant and international students, their instructors, and my own recorded observations of students. Such knowledge will contribute to the adult learning literature on self-directed learning. Exclusive of this project, this information can later help to ascertain the feasibility of implementing a self-directed learning approach into an adult immigrant and international student academic writing class as well as the acquisition or creation of self-directed learning lessons and resources students can use.

Self-Directed Learning is arguably mostly practiced in Western learning contexts (e.g.: North American, Western European, Australian, New Zealand, and some South African) because of their accommodation of the individual and their emphasis on personal achievement. In contrast, many adult immigrant and international students come from cultures that emphasize the group more than the individual, that value indirect communication, learning through absorption, and the insights of past experience. In light of these factors, could self-directed learning techniques be practiced within non-Western cultural learning contexts?

In a classroom of adult immigrant and international students, self-directed learning techniques could facilitate inclusion (Vella, 2002), providing more opportunity for all voices to be heard. The knowledge gained from these interviews would add to the literature of adult education because acquiring knowledge about how students of other cultures learn sheds light on the learning conventions of these cultures. Such insight would not only inform the process of acquiring or creating appropriate lessons and/or resources students could readily use, but also assure adult immigrant and international students that the possession of specific skills prior to studying in Canada is not necessary in order to succeed. The goal rather is to discover the learning traditions and cultural influences in which students grew up in and to introduce those of North America. For many of these students, this symbiosis would absolve them of the guilt that often results in not having specific skills prior to studying in Canada, instead placing the emphasis on the possibilities of learning individually as well as collaboratively.

(b) The Relevant Research Literature: Action Research

Self-Directed Learning came to prominence in the field of Western adult education in the 1960s, and though seemingly simple to define, defies singular definition (Leach, 2005). What is unanimously accepted about Self-Directed Learning, however, is its focus on the individual or "self," to which Western culture, with its emphasis on personal choice and freedom, is ostensibly amenable. It seems clear that Self-Directed Learning is reflective of "white, middle-class, male, North America[n]" culture (Leach, p. 568). Applied in a classroom of adult immigrants and international students, however, this concept can be problematic as many students come from cultures where collectivism is favoured over individualism and where factors such as gender and class equality are goals not necessarily striven for. The question, therefore, is whether Self-Directed Learning has been, or can be, practiced by students who come from cultures that may not be amenable to it.

This project will employ Action Research methods. In this method, the researcher takes the role of facilitator for problem solving and acts as advocate between the research findings and the individuals who will likely benefit from them. This approach differs from other research approaches in that the design of the study is formulated while the research is in progress, rather

than being totally pre-determined prior to its start, and the results may be immediately applied (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). In action research, the problem is stated generally while hypotheses are seldom formulated. In an on-line conversation, Newman (1998) states that:

[T]he point of a piece of action research isn't to "prove" anything -- the most any research account can really do (no matter what the flavour) is to allow the reader to take a fresh look at his or her own work...[I]f what I care about is whether I can see the problematic in my own work with new eyes, if [an] inquiry raises questions that I think I might find it useful to ask of myself, then that's what I think this enterprise is about.
(<http://www.lupinworks.com/article/validity.html>)

(c) Design of the Study:

The research project will be conducted in four stages. Stage 1 will consist of interviews of 3-5 students, conducted individually. Stage 2 will consist of interviews with 2-3 instructors who are familiar with these students. These will also be conducted individually. All interviews will be initially audio-recorded then selectively transcribed. Stage 3 will involve reviewing the transcripts of the interviews along with written observations. Stage 4 of the project will consist of writing the report that summarizes the research, reflects on the results, and provides recommendations for addressing issues and needs.

(d) Research Methods to be Used:

Stages 1 and 2 will entail oral, semi-structured interviews (see Appendix E & F), which will be audio-recorded and then selectively transcribed. I also intend to keep a written record of my own observations and reflections on students' responses, which I will review together with written records of students I have tutored in academic writing over the last two years. These will indicate techniques I had prescribed to students that encourage self-direction.

(e) Rationale for the Use of these Research Methods:

As learning experience varies with each individual, Stage 1 and Stage 2 interviews will help to ascertain if adult immigrant and international students have experienced self-directed learning in their lives. These, together with the review of interview transcripts and past written records (Stage 3), will help to increase an understanding of adult learners as well as of the approach of self-directed learning. They may also inform the decision to later implement a self-directed learning approach into a class of adult immigrant and international student through the acquisition or creation of self-directed learning lessons and resources students can access. Subsequently, the written report (Stage 4) will summarize the project's results and inform the writing of my final thesis for this master's program.

(f) Dissemination of any data:

Data from this project may be used internally to inform future revisions of course outlines and/or curricula and to create or acquire appropriate lessons and resources for students. Data from this project will be also used to inform the final thesis of this master's program. Participants will be offered the opportunity to have a copy of the final report and thesis.

***Attach copies of all relevant instruments including tests, potential interview questions, and observational forms.**

(9)(a) The Participants:

One group of participants will consist of approximately 3-5 adult immigrant and international students currently enrolled at the Ontario College of Art & Design. They range in age from 20 to 50 and are of varied cultural backgrounds. Students include those from Korea, China, Taiwan, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Latin America pursuing Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in order to establish careers in the visual arts field. The other group of participants is instructors of the Ontario College of Art & Design familiar with the same students.

(b) Specific Details of the Recruitment Process:

Recruitment will involve randomly choosing volunteer participants from a pool of adult immigrant and international students. Participants will then be given a letter of invitation (see Appendices A & B) outlining the purpose and nature of this project and a consent form (see Appendices C & D). Two interviews will be conducted with two different groups (see Appendices E & F).

(c) The Nature of the relationship between the Researcher and Participants:

One group of participants is students enrolled in the current academic year (September, 2006-April, 2007) and taking a variety of academic and studio-based courses. At the end of the academic year, the students will either move on to the next level of their program or graduate from the institution. None is a student taking a class I am teaching.

Another group of participants is instructors who teach a variety of academic and studio-based courses and with whom I have a professional relationship.

(d) Indicate any possible conflicts of interest or other ethical difficulties that could exist or arise as a consequence of the nature of the proposed participants, and describe the steps you will take to overcome such problems:

I do not foresee any conflicts of interest or other ethical issues that either exist or arise as a consequence of being a participant. Participation in my research project is voluntary and will not affect either course grades or employment status. None of the participants is either a student I teach or someone whose performance I evaluate or employment status I determine. The identities of the research participants will not be revealed. Participants will be assured of this confidentiality in the Invitation to Participate (see Appendices A & B).

(10) If the research is to be carried out within an organizational setting such as a school board, government department, or private company, provide a copy of *your* letter requesting permission to carry out the research in this setting or provide an explanation for the Research Ethics Board of why such approval will not be sought. (Note: If you believe that there are good reasons why such permission should not be sought, please provide the REB with your reasons.):

A letter requesting permission for this project will be submitted to the Dean of Liberal Studies, Ontario College of Art & Design (see Appendix G).

(11) Transcriptions of Interviews or of Group Discussions:

Transcriptions of interviews will be conducted solely by the researcher.

(12) Plain Language Usage: The Tri-Council stresses that information must be provided to subjects in a form that they will be able to understand easily (i.e., “plain language”).

(a) What is the estimated literacy or grade level of your participants?

Participants are adult immigrant and international students who have met all academic requirements (for international students this includes the submission of Test of English as a Second Language [TOEFL] scores) necessary to be granted entry into a post-secondary institution. They, therefore, have satisfactory level literacy skills.

(b) If there is reason to believe that reading comprehension could be an issue, explain your reasons for believing that the information provided will be readily understood by the target population.

A concerted effort will be made to ensure that all letters of permission, interview questions, and consent forms (see Appendices A-F) are in a language that all will easily understand. Participants will also have the option of asking questions in order to clarify information found in consent documents or during interviews.

(13) Deception: Does your project involve deception?

There is no known risk or deception involved in the project.

(14) Are there other issues related to your understanding of the *Tri-Council* policy statement that are not described above? If so, please describe them and discuss how you intend to ensure that no ethical problems develop.

There are no additional issues related to the researcher’s understanding of this policy.

(15) Distribution of Findings to Participants: Do you intend to make the results of your study available to those who participated in your study? If you do, please indicate how this will be done.

Copies of the report and thesis from this research will be available to any student who wishes to see them.

(16) Funded Research

(a) Is your research being funded or financially supported? Yes () No (X)

(b) If the research is being funded or financially supported, by whom?

(c) On what date was funding granted? [day, month, year] ___/___/___

Reference List:

- Brookfield, S.D. (2000). The concept of critically reflective practice. In A. Wilson & E. Hayes (Eds.) *Handbook of adult and continuing education* (2nd ed., pp.33-48). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brookfield, S.D. (2005). *Critical thinking in self-directed learning* (notes transcribed from lecture), McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.
- Candy, P.C. (1991). The growth of interest in self-directed learning. In *Self-direction for lifelong learning* (pp. 24-28). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Celce-Murcia, M. (Ed.). (2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Washington D.C: Heinle & Heinle.
- Fox, H. (1994). *Listening to the world: Cultural issues in academic writing* [Electronic version]. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers in English.
- Fritschner, L.M. (2000). Inside the undergraduate college classroom: Faculty and students differ on the meaning of student participation [Electronic version]. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 7 (3). 342-362.
- Leach, L. (2005). Self-directed learning. In L. M. English (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of adult education* (pp. 565-569). Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Newman, J.M. (1998). *Validity and action research: an online conversation*. Judith Newman website. Accessed December 21, 2006. <http://www.lupinworks.com/article/validity.html>
- Vella, J. (2002). *Learning to listen learning to teach: the power of dialogue in educating adults (revised edition)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Vella, J., Berardinelli, P. & Burrow, J. (1998). *How do they know they know? Evaluating adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Appendix A

Invitation to Participate/Information Letter (for participating students)

Self-Directed Learning in Adult Immigrant and International Students

Researcher: Tom Robles
Teaching Assistant
Ontario College of Art & Design
100 McCaul Street
Toronto, Ontario M5T 1W1
(416) 819-2173
E-mail: trobles@faculty.ocad.ca

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Leona English,
Associate Professor and Chair
Dept. of Adult Education
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 2W5
(902) 867-2459
E-mail: lenglish@stfx.ca

ADDRESS OF STUDENT

DATE

Dear NAME:

Invitation to Participate:

This letter is an invitation for you to participate in a research project entitled *Self-Directed Learning in Adult Immigrant and International Students*. I am conducting this research as part of my graduate studies in Adult Education at St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

Participation is Voluntary:

Your participation in the project is completely voluntary, and you may stop participating at any time without negative consequences. ***This project is not connected with your course work at the Ontario College of Art & Design, so your participation in it will not affect your grades.*** If you choose to stop participating in the project, you may inform me in person or in writing. Please note that if you do stop your participation before the project is completed, any information collected up to that point will be kept unless you specifically make a request for such information to be withdrawn. You may make this request in person or in writing. I will write a final report outlining the project's results which you are free to review at the end of the project.

If you would like to participate, please sign the attached Research Consent Form and return one copy to me by DATE.

Purpose and Description of the Research:

The purpose of the project is to find out how much experience adult immigrant and international students have with self-directed learning. This is the kind of learning where individuals who are interested in a particular topic or activity learn about it on their own. This can be done in either a formal setting such as a school or an informal setting such as at home. This type of learning can lead to a deeper understanding about a topic being studied, increase a person's level of self-awareness, help develop more self-confidence, and bring about a sense of inclusion. In this study, I would like to speak with you about your experience as a self-directed learner both in the past and present, and if you have had this experience, how you have used this type of learning in your

life and work.

What Will be Required of Participants, Including Time Commitment:

As a participant in this project, you will be interviewed individually for approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. During this interview, I will gather information about whether you have ever used a more self-directed approach to learning. I will tape record the interview and later transcribe it.

During the interview, you have the right to ask that tape recording or note-taking be stopped at any point. You also have the right not to answer any question without having to end your involvement in the project. ***Again, this project is not connected with your course work at the Ontario College of Art & Design, so your participation in it will not affect your grades. Similarly, ending your participation in this project will not affect your workshop mark.***

Potential Harms and Benefits:

There are no known harms in participating in this research. There is no cost except for the time you commit to participate. Participation in this project can lead to a deeper understanding about the academic writing topics being studied, a greater level of independence, an increase in a student's level of self-awareness, the development of more self-confidence and a greater sense of inclusion in the classroom experience. All of these qualities are characteristic of self-directed learning.

Confidentiality:

All information you provide will be kept confidential and your real name will not be used in any reports nor will any information about your participation in this study be provided to any of your instructors. I would, however, like your permission to release all data to the public including use of the data in written reports, journals, theses, and at academic conferences. All notes and tape recordings will be kept in a locked cabinet during the project, and all data will be destroyed two years after the project is completed.

If you would like any more information about the *Self-Directed Learning in Adult Immigrants and International Students*, you may contact me or my advisor at the contact information provided above. Please note that this project has been approved by both St. Francis Xavier University and the Ontario College of Art & Design.

Thank you in advance for your interest in this project.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Robles
Student Investigator

Appendix B

Invitation to Participate/Information Letter (for participating instructors)

Self-Directed Learning in Adult Immigrant and International Students

Researcher: Tom Robles
Teaching Assistant
Ontario College of Art & Design
100 McCaul Street
Toronto, Ontario M5T 1W1
(416) 819-2173
E-mail: trobles@faculty.ocad.ca

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Leona English,
Associate Professor and Chair
Dept. of Adult Education
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 2W5
(902) 867-2459
E-mail: lenglish@stfx.ca

ADDRESS OF INSTRUCTOR

DATE

Dear NAME:

Invitation to Participate:

This letter is an invitation for you to participate in a research project entitled *Self-Directed Learning in Adult Immigrant and International Students*. I am conducting this research as part of my graduate studies in Adult Education at St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

Participation is Voluntary:

Your participation in the project is completely voluntary, and you may stop participating at any time without negative consequences. ***This project is not connected with your employment contract at the Ontario College of Art & Design, and your participation in it will not affect your employment status.*** If you choose to stop participating in the project, you may inform me in person or in writing. Please note that if you do stop your participation before the project is completed, any information collected up to that point will be kept unless you specifically make a request for such information to be withdrawn. You may make this request in person or in writing. I will write a final report outlining the project's results which you are free to review at the end of the project.

If you would like to participate, please sign the attached Research Consent Form and return one copy to me by DATE.

Purpose and Description of the Research:

The purpose of the project is to find out how much experience adult immigrant and international students have with self-directed learning. This is the kind of learning where individuals who are interested in a particular topic or activity learn about it on their own. This can be done in either a formal setting such as a school or an informal setting such as at home. This type of learning can lead to a deeper understanding about a topic being studied, increase a person's level of self-awareness, help develop more self-confidence, and bring about a sense of inclusion. This can then

lead to a deeper understanding about a topic being studied, increase a student's level of self-awareness, help a student develop more self-confidence, and bring about a sense of inclusion in the classroom experience. In this study, I would like to speak with you about your experience as an instructor of adult immigrant and international students. I would like to find out if you have ever observed your students taking a self-directed approach to learning, and if so, how you have ascertained them using and benefiting from this approach in their class work.

What Will be Required of Participants, Including Time Commitment:

As a participant in this project, you will be interviewed individually for approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. During this interview, I will gather information about whether you have ever observed your students using a more self-directed approach to learning. I will tape record the interview and later transcribe it.

During the interview, you have the right to ask that tape recording or note-taking be stopped at any point. You also have the right not to answer any question without having to end your involvement in the project. ***Again, this project is not connected with your employment contract at the Ontario College of Art & Design, so your participation in it will not affect your employment status. Similarly, choosing to end your participation in this project will not affect your employment status.***

Potential Harms and Benefits:

There are no known harms in participating in this research. There is no cost except for the time you commit to participate. Participation in this project can lead to a deeper understanding about the academic writing topics being studied, a greater level of independence, an increase in students' and instructors' level of self-awareness, the development of more self-confidence and a greater sense of inclusion in the classroom experience. All of these qualities are characteristic of self-directed learning.

Confidentiality:

All information you provide will be kept confidential and your real name will not be used in any reports nor will any information about your participation in this study be provided to any of your students or colleagues. I would, however, like your permission to release all data to the public including use of the data in written reports, journals, theses, and at academic conferences. All notes and tape recordings will be kept in a locked cabinet during the project, and all data will be destroyed two years after the project is completed.

If you would like any more information about the *Self-Directed Learning in Adult Immigrants and International Students*, you may contact me or my advisor at the contact information provided above. Please note that this project has been approved by both St. Francis Xavier University and the Ontario College of Art & Design.

Thank you in advance for your interest in this project.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Robles
Student Investigator

Appendix C

Research Consent Form – Stage 1: Interview of Students

NAME OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

Dear Tom,

I have received a copy of the Invitation to Participate form for the research project entitled *Self-Directed Learning in Adult Immigrants and International Students*. I have had an opportunity to read the information provided or it has been explained to me. I understand my role in this project, and I know that I may ask questions at any time. I can also stop participating in this project without any negative effects on my workshop grades. I have also had questions that I may have had answered.

I agree to participate in this research project, understanding that I am doing so voluntarily, that confidentiality will be maintained, and that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point using the means outlined in the Invitation to Participate form.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If I have any concerns regarding this research, I know that I can contact either you or your faculty advisor with the following contact information:

Researcher: Tom Robles
Teaching Assistant
Ontario College of Art & Design
100 McCaul Street
Toronto, Ontario M5T 1W1
(416) 819-2173
E-mail: trobles@faculty.ocad.ca

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Leona English,
Associate Professor and Chair
Dept. of Adult Education
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 2W5
(902) 867-2459
E-mail: lenglish@stfx.ca

See attached copy

**PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES AND MAIL BACK ONE
COPY IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE
PROVIDED.**

Appendix D

Research Consent Form – Stage 2: Interview of Instructors

NAME OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

Dear Tom,

I have received a copy of the Invitation to Participate form for the research project entitled *Self-Directed Learning in Adult Immigrants and International Students*. I have had an opportunity to read the information provided or it has been explained to me. I understand my role in this project, and I know that I may ask questions at any time. I can also stop participating in this project without any negative effects on my employment status. I have also had questions that I may have had answered.

I agree to participate in this research project, understanding that I am doing so voluntarily, that confidentiality will be maintained, and that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point using the means outlined in the Invitation to Participate form.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If I have any concerns regarding this research, I know that I can contact either you or your faculty advisor with the following contact information:

Researcher: Tom Robles
Teaching Assistant
Ontario College of Art & Design
100 McCaul Street
Toronto, Ontario M5T 1W1
(416) 819-2173
E-mail: trobles@faculty.ocad.ca

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Leona English,
Associate Professor and Chair
Dept. of Adult Education
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(902) 867-2459
E-mail: lenglish@stfx.ca

See attached copy

**PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES AND MAIL BACK ONE
COPY IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE
PROVIDED.**

Appendix E

Stage 1: Interview of Students

I. Introduction

I'd like to talk to you about your way of learning, things you learn, how you learn, and why you learn. Specifically, I would like to know about when you directed your own learning. This kind of learning could have taken place in a class, in an informal group, on your job, or at your home.

II. Interview Questions

1. How do you like to learn? For instance, do you like learning through reading, watching a demonstration, being in a class, hearing a lecture, or practising a skill?
2. Tell me about a time when you learned things on your own/by yourself.
(prompt if necessary: How about learning in organizations? In church?)
3. What tools did you use to achieve this kind of learning?
(prompt if necessary: How about learning from special programs on TV? How about books you have read for a special learning purpose?)
4. Can you tell me what part of this learning worked for you?
(prompt if necessary: Skills you have practiced and developed?)
5. Can you tell me what part of this learning didn't work for you?
6. What did you like about this kind of learning?
7. What didn't you like about this kind of learning?
8. Can you tell me about any obstacles that prevented you from learning on your own/by yourself?
9. What would you like to learn if you have the opportunity?

Appendix F

Stage 2: Interview of Instructors

I. Introduction

I'd like to talk to you about your observations on, or information gathered about, your students' way(s) of learning: things they learn, how you think they learn, and why you think they learn. Specifically, I would like to know about when you observed your students direct their own learning. This kind of learning could have taken place in a class, in an informal group, in their job, or at their home.

II. Interview Questions

1. How have you observed or been informed about the way your students like to learn? For instance, have you observed or gathered information on whether they like learning through reading, watching a demonstration, being in a class, hearing a lecture, or practising a skill? (prompt if necessary: How about students learning in organizations? In church?)
2. Tell me about a time when you have observed students learning things on their own//by themselves.
3. What tools did you observe or were informed about them using to achieve this kind of learning? (prompt if necessary: How about students learning from special programs on TV? How about books you observed/prescribed they have read for a special learning purpose?)
4. Can you tell me what part of this learning you observed worked for them? (prompt if necessary: Skills you observed your students have practiced and developed?)
5. Can you tell me what part of this learning you observed didn't work for them?

Appendix G

Letter of Permission to Conduct Research Project

January 24, 2007

Dr. Kathryn Shailer
Dean, Liberal Studies
Ontario College of Art & Design
100 McCaul Street
Toronto, ON
M5T 1W1

Dear Kathy:

I am writing to ask your permission to conduct my research project for the Master of Adult Education Program at St. Francis Xavier University. This project is concerned with the approach known as Self-Directed Learning, which, through individual initiative, facilitates the personal acquisition of knowledge. A self-directed approach to learning is highly adaptable and applicable to a variety of individual learning circumstances and needs and can help students become more self-aware, self-initiating, and independent.

My project entails conducting interviews of both students and faculty. The purpose of this interview is to find out whether adult immigrant and international students specifically have ever been self-directive in their approach to learning at any point in their lives. Such learning could have taken place in either informal or formal contexts. Such knowledge will enhance my understanding of adult learners in the context of self-directed learning as an approach as well as inform the final thesis for my degree. Exclusive of this project, this information can help to ascertain the feasibility of implementing a self-directed learning approach into a class of adult immigrant and international student as well as the acquisition or creation of self-directed learning lessons and resources students can use.

I propose starting this project in DATE. It will be conducted in four stages. Stage 1 will consist of one-on-one interviews of 3-5 students. Students will be chosen randomly from the institution's pool of adult immigrant and international students. None of these students are ones I currently teach. Stage 2 will consist of one-on-one interviews with 2-3 instructors. These instructors will be familiar with the group of students. All interviews will initially be audio-recorded then selectively transcribed. Stage 3 will involve reviewing the transcripts of the interviews along with my own written observations of students' learning. Stage 4 will consist of writing the report that summarizes the research, reflects on the results, and provides recommendations for addressing issues and needs. This report will be shared with interested students and instructors who participated in the project as well as faculty who could benefit from it.

I would greatly appreciate it if you would confirm your approval of this project in writing.

Sincerely,

Tom Robles, B.Ed