



INFORMED CONSENT FORM - KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

1. I have read the attached *Participant Information Sheet* and agree to take part in the following research project:

Title:	The Impact of the Shift from Full Face-to-Face Classes to Online Learning on UST Journalism Graduates in Pursuing a Career in Journalism
Ethics Approval Number:	1012402021154958

2. Background of the Study

Online learning as a mode of teaching for all students during the COVID-19 pandemic may have shifted practices, perspectives, and decision-making both in the academe and professional industries, but it was an inevitable phenomenon. The UST journalism graduates of 2021-2024 are among the many products of this online learning during the pandemic. The main objective of this paper is to determine the impact of the shift to online learning on their motivation to pursue a career in journalism after graduation.

3. Participants' role

You are invited to participate in this study given that you graduated from the batch 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024 of the Journalism program of the University of Santo Tomas (UST). To conduct this study, the researchers came up with this selection of participants as they were students who experienced online learning in UST journalism during the pandemic. You may be invited to be part of this research, but it is your discretion whether to participate; therefore, participation is voluntary.

4. Duration of the study

The focus group discussion will take at least 60 minutes to complete but within a day only. If necessary, the researcher will then conduct one follow-up interview—at a time of your convenience, still through online means—if there are unclear or missing answers from the first focus group discussion.

Through snowball sampling, the participants will reach out to you through your social media accounts and send an invitation to participate in the study. Once you agree to participate, the researchers will send the Google Form link containing the necessary documents you have to read and sign before conducting the study. Then, the researchers will create a group chat through Facebook Messenger together with the other participants from the same batch as yours to settle the schedule of the focus group discussion.

5. Possible risks of the study

The researchers will assign a human transcriber to transcribe the audio recordings of the focus group discussions. While there may be minimal risks for your participation in the study since the information you share will be entrusted to a non-researcher, be assured that the researchers will inform the transcriber about the transcript confidentiality agreement.

Moreover, the researchers might ask questions that are sensitive to you, which may cause dismay or discomfort. If that is the case, you are free to share these concerns with the researchers so they can address the situation with the help of the UST Faculty of Arts and Letters Research Ethics Committee. There will be no conflict of interest involved throughout the duration of the study.

6. Participants' benefits

A token of appreciation will be provided to you through a P100 worth of SM Gift Pass Choice after the focus group discussion. The researchers will directly obtain the gift pass from the SM Department Store and relay the code to you via email for your convenience. You may present the code at any branch, no need for the physical card as the researchers have clarified with the SM Customer's Service, and purchase an item of your choice that is also in line with the voucher's value.

There are no other benefits that will be given to you and other potential respondents other than the SM Gift Pass Choice. Your answers during the focus group discussion will be used to pursue the researchers' study, which focuses on whether online learning has affected the motivation of journalism graduates to enter the journalism industry. The effects of online learning to students have been studied but no particular research has been published that delves into graduates. Through this study, the researchers will be able to determine if online learning is a significant factor to why some journalism graduates decided not to practice the degree they graduated from. Since the researchers do not have the capacity to test the entirety of UST journalism graduates from the aforementioned batches, it is best to reach out to a representative group that will be diverse enough to convey the shared experiences of their peers.

7. I have had the project, so far as it affects me, fully explained to my satisfaction by the researchers. My consent is given freely.
8. Although I understand the purpose of the research project it has also been explained that involvement may not be of any benefit to me aside from the token of appreciation that the researchers will provide.
9. I have been informed that, while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified but my career choice or the nature of my work will be divulged given the objective of this study.
10. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time.
11. Provided that researchers strictly abide by the *confidentiality* of this interview, I agree to the interview being recorded via... (please choose one only)

- ☒ Google Meet with *full recording of video and audio* (open camera and microphone)
- ☐ Google Meet with *full recording of audio only* (without open camera)
- ☐ Google Meet with *full recording of chat only* (without open camera and microphone; the answers will be sent via the chat feature of Google Meet)

Given that the method is a focus group discussion, the researchers opted for one online meeting platform only to ensure that all participants from the same batch will be interviewed at the same

time and platform. However, the researchers made options for ways you can participate in the discussion for your convenience.

12. Confidentiality and anonymity

All personal information you will be providing in the demographic profile sheet and during the actual interviews will be made **confidential**. Please be assured that the identifying information about you will not be revealed in written reports (anonymity) except the year that you graduated, current occupation, and your company position. The researchers will also assign a pseudonym or permanent identifier in the format of "Participant + participant number" (e.g. Participant 1), which will be used in the following mention of the participants in the manuscript.

All interview materials (audio, video [if agreed upon, written] will be kept in a secure location and only those directly involved with the research will have access to them. After this research is completed, the accomplished interview data will be securely kept.

13. I give my consent that the researchers will use data from the interview conducted unto me in future research projects and papers (please check). ☒ Yes ☐ No

14. Researchers' contact information

Cali S. Asajar	Co-investigator	0966-558-5875 or cali.asajar.ab@ust.edu.ph
Katrin Louise B. Bolos	Co-investigator	0995-465-0896 or katrinlouise.bolos.ab@ust.edu.ph

15. I am aware that I should keep a copy of this Consent Form, when completed, and the attached Information Sheet.

Participant to complete:

In general, I agree to be a participant of this research.

Name: Kimberly Anne Ojeda

E-Signature:  Date: 14 March 2025

Researcher/Witness to complete:

I have described the nature of the research to _____ (print name of participant) and, in my opinion, she/he understood the explanation.

E-Signature: _____ Date: _____