**[Template for Cover Letter**

**>>BHSU Letterhead<<]**

Date:

Dear :

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is **[general description of the project].**

We are inviting you to be in this study because **[describe why the person receiving this letter is eligible for the study – e.g. you are a student at BHSU, you are a teacher in the Spearfish school district, etc.]**

**[If mailing the letter add]** We obtained your name and address **[explain how you obtained the person’s name and address].**

If you agree to participate, we would like you to

**[Describe study procedures, including examples of the kinds of questions you plan to ask the participant and how long it will take to answer your questions].**

**Survey or Questionnaire**

**[If the study involves completing an enclosed survey or questionnaire include the following information.**

* **How the participant should let you know if they do not want to participate (e.g. return the blank survey to you, return an enclosed postcard)**
* **Whether you will contact the subject again by letter or phone (how long after this letter? How many times?) if they do not return the survey)**
* **The fact that the subject is free to not answer any questions they would prefer not to answer**

We will keep the information you provide **[confidential/ anonymous],** however federal regulatory agencies and the Black Hills State University Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research.

**[If study is anonymous add]** Your responses will be anonymous to ensure that they cannot be linked to you.

**[If study is confidential i.e.uses an ID code on an enclosed survey/questionnaire that is linked to the participants name/address describe how you will destroy the link between the code number and the person’s name and when this will done, e.g. as soon as you check off that you received the survey, when the study is complete, etc.]** If we write a report about this study we will do so in such a way that you cannot be identified.

There are no known risks from being in this study, and you will not benefit personally. However,

we hope that others may benefit in the future from what we learn as a result of this study.

**[Add below if you are conducting internet surveys]**

All survey responses that we receive will be treated confidentially and stored on a secure server **[only state if accurate]**. However, given that the surveys can be completed from any computer (e.g., personal, work, school), we are unable to guarantee the security of the computer on which you choose to enter your responses. As a participant in our study, we want you to be aware that certain "key logging" software programs exist that can be used to track or capture data that you enter and/or websites that you visit.

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits for which you are otherwise entitled.

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints now or later, you may contact us at the number below. If you have any questions about your rights as a human subject, complaints, concerns or wish to talk to someone who is independent of the research, contact the Sponsored Programs Office at 605-642-6542. Thank you for your time.

Project Director Name

Department Address (no personal addresses)

Phone # (no personal phone numbers)