

October 1, 2000

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a student/faculty member working under the direction of Professor Kevin Minch, in the Division of Language and Literature, at Truman State University. I am participating in a nation-wide project called DebateWatch 2000. The purpose of this project is to increase public interest in 2000 political campaign debates and to gather public reactions to the format and content of those debates. Your participation in this project will involve completing the attached survey instrument (optional), watching a 60 to 90-minute political debate, and participating in post-debate discussion.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate there will be no effect on your grades in any class or on any service you might receive from the University in the future. If you choose to participate, the possible benefits of your participation are increased knowledge of the Presidential candidates, a chance to indirectly influence the electoral process, and depending on courses you are enrolled in, extra academic credit. Your responses to this questionnaire will be completely confidential, and it is preferred that you do not identify yourself in any way on the survey. You may also choose to remain anonymous in the post-debate discussion by not verbally identifying yourself.

Results of the surveys and discussions will be shared with the DebateWatch 2000 Research Center at the University of Kansas. DebateWatch will, in turn, release summaries of data collected from similar groups nationwide to the media, the candidates' campaigns, and the Commission on Presidential Debates. Your name or association with this project will in no way be connected with the accumulated data.

If you have any questions about this project please call me at _____, or Dr. Minch at (660) 785-5677. Return of the enclosed questionnaire and/or participation in the post-debate discussion will be considered as your consent to participate in one or the other (or both) of the DebateWatch activities.

Sincerely,

Name of Student/Faculty Member Holding Focus Group
Department (If Applicable)
Phone Number and E-Mail (If Applicable)