Course Title_____

Date:_____

Dear _____:

Thanks for agreeing to participate in our study of student persistence and dropout in online, computer-conferenced classes. You were selected because of your expertise in teaching in the online format.

Your assistance is needed at two junctures during the semester. At the onset of the semester, I am asking you post the enclosed Topic Note in your online conference. As you can see, the note asks each of your students to complete and return the pre-course survey and the Goal Orientation Index (GOI). Each of these instruments is enclosed for your reference.

As the note further explains, participation in the study is strictly voluntary. Every student response is confidential. If a student elects not to participate, he or she simply does not return the survey.

In addition, your support will be required at the end of the semester when I will ask you to complete a "Participation Summary Sheet". This report asks you to make judgments about each participant's assignment submission timeliness and level of participation in the online conference. (My hypothesis is there is a strong correlation between a student's pace of assignment submission and course completion.) I've included a copy of the Participant Summary sheet for your reference. You will receive a duplicate form with student names toward the end of the semester.

To complete the form, you are asked to record student assignment timeliness. The categories include:

       4 - All assignments submitted in a timely manner
       3 - Most assignments submitted in a timely manner, a few were late
       2 - Some assignments submitted in a timely manner, most were late
       1 - No assignments were submitted

Next, you are asked to rate student participation. These categories include:

       5 - No interaction
       4 - Little interaction
       3 - Interactive to a limited degree
       2 - Somewhat interactive
       1 - Very interactive

If you should have any questions or if you want to discuss the study, please call me at 301-985-7849.

Sincerely,

Inez M. Giles, Director
Distance Education Technologies

P.S. Directions for uploading a topic note follow:

1) Select New Topic in your conference
2) Press <Shift><F5>
3) Select "Upload a document from your workstation"
4) From the dialogue box select the a drive (a:) and find the topic note
5) Click on "OK" to start the upload process
6) Name the topic something like "Survey Note"