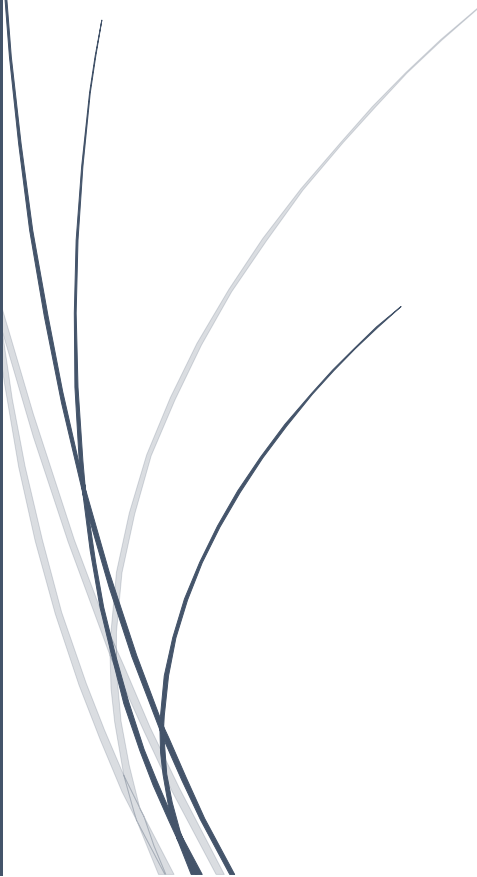
A dark blue vertical bar runs down the left side of the slide. A light blue arrow-shaped bar points to the right from the vertical bar, containing the date.

4/25/2017

***What is the
Relationship Between
the "Big Five"
Personality Traits and
Academic
Achievement of
Online Students who
are Visually Impaired
or Blind?***

Several thin, light blue lines curve upwards from the bottom left corner of the slide.

**A Proposal to ASU
Online from
Dean Colston, Ph.D., of
VERA, INC.**

Executive Summary

The purpose of this proposal is to seek funding and approval to engage in research at Arizona State University (ASU). This proposal was written to help ASU Online enhance the graduation and retention rates of its online students with vision disabilities.

Research has revealed that personality plays a part in predicting academic motivation and achievement of college students (Komarraju, Karau, & Schmeck, 2009). The main purpose of the study is to determine what “Big Five” personality factors are related to academic achievement among online university students who are visually impaired or blind. According to the “Big Five” factors, the five well-known personality dimensions include neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Earlier research has been promising, but specific questions must be asked to better serve this student population.

In 2011, research found that “although online learning is expanding in availability and popularity, the high dropout rates remain a challenging problem” (Lee & Choi, p. 593). Despite safeguards from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act provisions, The American Foundation for the Blind (2017) noted that those learners with severe visual impairments or blindness are even less likely to graduate from college compared to their sighted counterparts.

Given these findings, the following research question will guide us as we conduct this study:

- What is the relationship between the "Big Five" personality traits and academic achievement of online students who are visually impaired or blind?

Our plan will address this research problem through correlational methods. In our case, this approach is ideal for scholar-practitioners who need to predict behavior for real-world applications. Thus, this study may yield useful data on the topic and will fill a gap in the education, psychology, and disability literature.

At **VERA, Inc.**, we understand the needs of the higher education industry. As experts in virtual education, research, and accessibility, we have a well-known reputation for advancing knowledge and getting results. Founded in 2008, we innovatively solve business and educational problems by providing customized service and by sharing best practices.

A few benefits of this plan may include increased online student success, greater market share, increased graduation, persistence, and retention rates, as well as gained competitive advantage through greater insight. Based on the high return on investment (ROI), the total costs for services are \$11,405.00 during the months of May-June 2017.

This proposal outlines the introduction, current situation, project plan, **VERA, Inc.**'s qualifications, costs and benefits, conclusion, and supporting data.

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"Big Five" Personality Traits and Online Students with Vision Disabilities Research Proposal: A Request to Arizona State University

Since 2006-2007, ASU joined the ranks of other premier higher education institutions that provide online academic degrees. Among its many successes and accolades, U.S. News & World Report placed ASU in the top five of online education institutions in the U.S.A. Although a gold standard of student-centered education, ASU Online is experiencing a significant amount of rapid change and challenges with its current growth. To assist ASU Online, this research proposal provides an opportunity to help enhance the graduation and retention rates of online students with vision disabilities.

The purpose of this proposal is to seek funding and approval to engage in research. By conducting this study, our intent is to help ASU decrease dropout rates of online university learners who are visually disabled by better understanding the relationship between the "Big Five" personality factors and academic success.

This study will be guided by one research question. What is the relationship between the "Big Five" personality traits and academic achievement of online students who are visually impaired or blind? According to the Big Five factors, the five well-known personality dimensions include neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

The significance of this study is that it may reveal a unique personality profile of online university learners who are visually disabled that is required for successful online academic achievement. It will provide needed information to e-retention specialists and academic e-advisors. Furthermore, it sends a strong message that students with vision disabilities matter at ASU Online. At the same time, this study supports Arizona State University's core goals of embracing inclusion and diversity while enhancing academic excellence and accessibility (Arizona State University, 2017a; Arizona State University, 2017b).

While there have been many reasons for the growth of online education, there have been numerous challenges along the way. Many of these challenges have been driven by change. For example, most online instructors and administrators are aware of the high dropout rate of online students in the industry overall. In fact, online learners who are visually impaired or blind are at greater risk of dropping out due to the many obstacles that they face on a daily basis.

The best decision to help with this issue is to examine student personality factors that may be interfering with online student success. By ignoring this dropout problem, ASU Online may experience decreased graduation, retention, and persistence rates among learners with visually disabilities. However, by approving this research study, ASU Online administrators will confirm their commitment to the success of learners with vision disabilities. Plus, they will develop greater insight into holistic student advising for these learners, which is a source of competitive advantage.

In this proposal, we will discuss the current high dropout and graduation rates of online learners who are visually impaired or blind. Second, we will offer a plan to conduct a research study, which will examine the relationship between five specific personality factors and academic achievement of this student population. Third, we at **VERA Inc.** will present our qualifications, which will show why we are an ideal partner to conduct this correlational research study. Finally, we will discuss this project’s costs and explain its overall benefits.

Current Situation: ASU Online Needs for Increased Graduation, Persistence, and Retention Rates among Online Students who are Visually Disabled

Many postsecondary educators are interested in what personality characteristics or factors contribute to academic success of university students. Research has revealed that personality plays a part in predicting academic motivation and achievement of college students (Komarraju, Karau, & Schmeck, 2009). Other psychological findings suggest that there are five basic personality dimensions, often called “the Big Five” (Goldberg, 1993, p. 26). Many psychologists believe that these major dimensions provide a thorough description of our personalities; and “therefore are appropriate in studying daily behavior and performance in a wide range of domains” (De Feyter, Caers, Vigna, & Berings, 2012, p. 439). According to the “Big Five,” these five factors include the following: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Table 1 lists McCrae and Costa’s (1987) “Big Five” personality factors with their description.

Table 1. McCrae and Costa’s “Big Five” Personality Factors

Factors	Description
Neuroticism	Worried, insecure, nervous, highly strung
Extraversion	Sociable, talkative, fun-loving, affectionate
Openness	Original, independent, creative, daring
Agreeableness	Good-natured, softhearted, trusting, courteous
Conscientiousness	Careful, reliable, hardworking, organized

Overall, these factors are common in many cultures and appear to be stable over a lifetime (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

In 2011, research found that “although online learning is expanding in availability and popularity, the high dropout rates remain a challenging problem” (Lee & Choi, p. 593). Despite safeguards from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act provisions, The American Foundation for the Blind (2017) noted that those learners with severe visual impairments or blindness are even less likely to graduate from college compared to their

sighted counterparts. As many postsecondary educators are aware, online education is a popular option today for many students with visually impairments due to its advantages. For example, students can avoid the navigational issues that are common on large university campuses. In light of the high online college student dropout rates, no empirical data on *online* college students who are visually disabled and their dropout rates can be found.

As more university disability resource centers become committed to achieving full accessibility, one area that is gaining attention by some educational researchers is the topic of personality traits that impact academic achievement of online students who are visually impaired or blind. Like face-to-face teaching, an important part of online teaching is understanding different learners' styles, attitudes, and behaviors, especially those online students who could possibly slip through the cracks. For example, it is well-documented that college students who are blind and visually impaired have unique challenges on campus and online compared to sighted students (Parry, 2010). Yet many of these learners will find online academic programs more suitable to their educational needs and preferred learning styles.

While some students may thrive online, others may not. Therefore, one must ask if there are specific personality traits that these learners possess that are predictors of academic success in an online learning environment. Given that university students with vision disabilities face unique obstacles, other questions are raised as to how and to what degree various personality traits correlate with academic achievement. Thus, the purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a relationship between the "Big Five" personality traits and academic achievement of online students who are visually impaired or blind.

This study may yield useful data on the topic and will fill a gap in the education, psychology, and disability literature. Earlier research has been promising, but specific questions must be asked to better serve this student population. The key goals are to better understand and support online university students who are visually impaired or blind, so they can reach their potential. By doing so, academic e-advisors and online educators will help improve retention, persistence, and graduation rates, which ultimately will support ASU's strategic goals. Altogether, this study may provide insights for innovative practice, policy, and future research.

Problem Causes

This researcher examined the core possible reasons behind the high dropout rates of online university students who are blind or visually impaired. These four central issues were noted as the causes of the problem:

- Student Factors
- Environmental Factors
- University Course/ Program Factors
- Accessibility/Technology Factors

The topic with the greatest number of minor causes were student factors. Some associated causes included poor emotional self-regulation, poor discipline, poor self-advocacy, weak writing skills, and poor time management. Related to these factors were environmental concerns. Two minor causes were a poorly designed study area and poor family support. A third cause of the high dropout rates involved university course/program factors. Online courses that were hard to navigate with existing computer software used by the visually impaired and overall poor course design were noted as problematic. Finally, the last major causes were accessibility/technology factors. One related minor cause was assistive technology for the visually challenged that was not compatible with advances in educational technology. The other minor cause was unreliable/inconsistent or unsuccessful use/access.

Currently, a significant amount of attention is being focused on software that is solving accessibility problems. In addition, federal regulations that require access to online information have already been in place for years. For example, the following gold standards are committed to adhering to specific accessibility and rehabilitation guidelines, which benefit online learners with disabilities:

- The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level
- The Section 508 Standards of the Rehabilitation Act in the United States

Given these results, it is logical to investigate student factors as a major cause of the online dropout problem for this research study.

Problem Effects

What are the effects of not addressing this high dropout rates of online university students who are blind or visually impaired? This researcher noted four areas of concern for ASU.

- Poor Student Retention/Persistence
- Not Embracing Diversity of this Potential Student Population
- Elimination of Some Academic Programs
- Lost Revenue

Two of the major effects were poor student retention and persistence. Greater federal oversight, poor academic performance, poor social and family support, poor student attitudes and satisfaction, as well as poor online academic engagement were related minor effects of not addressing these issues. Another effect was the perception that the university was not fully embracing diversity and inclusion. Thus, a poor public image could result. Next, the last major effect of not addressing the online dropout problem was lost revenue. This could force the university to become uncompetitive with other academic institutions with online programs/universities. And finally, academic programs could be eliminated, such as rehabilitation counseling/ teaching programs.

Arguably, most of these effects impact the bottom line. By ignoring these concerns, it may send a message that accessibility is not a top priority for university administrators. That said, lawsuits may ensue.

Most of these causes and effects of the problem can be attributed to the growth of online education, which is a positive outcome for many nontraditional students and institutions of higher education, such as ASU. With growth and change, new opportunities often emerge. We are here to help you address these challenges to ensure the success of every ASU student.

Project Plan

The purpose of this section is to provide a systematic, comprehensive plan of this research study. It will include the major and minor steps and a proposed timeline.

Study Purpose

The main purpose of the study is to determine what “Big Five” personality factors are related to academic achievement among online university students who are visually impaired or blind.

Data Analysis

This research problem will be solved through correlational methods, and SPSS v. 26 will be used for the statistical analysis. The purpose of correlational design is to find relationships between variables. In this kind of investigation, findings can either have positive, negative, or an absence of a correlation. This statistical technique is appropriate for our research question we are attempting to answer. In our case, this approach is ideal for scholar-practitioners who need to predict behavior for real-world applications.

Methodology

The research problem that will be investigated is as follows:

What is the relationship between the "Big Five" personality traits and academic achievement of online students who are visually impaired or blind?

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis HO: There is no relationship between the “Big Five” personality traits and academic achievement of online students who are visually impaired or blind?

Alternative Hypothesis HA: There is a significant relationship between the “Big Five” personality traits and academic achievement of online students who are visually impaired or blind?

Participants

The convenience sample for this correlational study will be 55 online graduate and undergraduate students who are visually impaired or blind. All learners are likely to be majoring in varying academic degrees at ASU Online. All participants will be ensured of confidentiality and will be presented with an online consent form (see Appendix A) via SurveyMonkey.

Procedures

Prior to recruiting the online learners, this researcher (Dr. Dean Colston) will seek approval from ASU's Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. Then, ASU's director of disability resources will be contacted to obtain the ASU email addresses of online students with vision disabilities. The next step will be to email these 55 students with an invitation to participate in the online research study. Details of the study will be included in the email with the SurveyMonkey link. To encourage student participation, they will be compensated with a \$25.00 Visa gift card. To ensure consistency, this researcher will supervise, collect, and analyze the data from the online consent forms, participant demographic surveys, and the 40-item Mini-Marker sets.

Standardized Instrument

To achieve the research objectives, the main instrument is a 40-item Mini-Marker set that measures the "Big-Five" personality factors. As noted before, these five dimensions include extraversion, neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, and conscientious. "The neuroticism domain taps aspects of adjustment and emotional stability. The extraversion domain taps aspects of sociability and assertiveness. Openness refers to openness to experience as well as active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, attentiveness to inner feelings, preference for variety, intellectual curiosity, and independence of judgment. Agreeableness is primarily a dimension of interpersonal tendencies that include altruism and sympathy towards others. Conscientiousness has to do with the active process of planning, organizing, and follow through" (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2005, pp. 358-359).

This Mini-Marker self-report inventory has good reliability and validity. Furthermore, Saucier (1994) noted that "the availability of this extremely short set of "Big Five" markers widens the potential application of the "Big Five" to assessment situations where brevity is an unusually high priority" (p. 515). Most participants can complete it in 5 minutes. Given the study's time parameters and the nature of the participants, it is appropriate to choose this instrument. A copy of the 40-item Mini-Marker set is included as shown in Appendix B.

Online Participant Demographic Survey

This researcher created an online participant demographic survey, which will collect information on socio-demographic variables relevant to this study. The followings questions will be included on the online survey via SurveyMonkey:

1. Are you visually impaired or blind?
2. What gender do you identify with?
3. What is your age?
4. Are you an undergraduate or graduate student?
5. How many online courses have you completed with a passing grade?
6. What is your GPA at ASU?

Online academic achievement will be defined by one’s grade point average (GPA). This will be based on a 4.33 (A+) scale per ASU’s grading policy. The official demographic survey can be found in Appendix C.

Collection Source and Data Storage

The data from the written consent, demographic survey, and Mini-Markers’ self-report will be briefly stored on SurveyMonkey. Besides being easy to use, the main reason SurveyMonkey was selected as the preferred collection source was because it is compliant with 508 Compliance and WCAG2. As a result, it is accessible to people with disabilities. In addition, SurveyMonkey is secure and free, but one can upgrade for more options. Once the study is completed, Dr. Colston will permanently delete all of the participants’ confidential results.

Timeline: Forecast of the Plan

Table 2 displays the project timeline with the major steps and weekly deadlines.

Table 2. Project Timeline

Activity	Deadline
Seek approval from ASU’s Human Subjects Institutional Review Board	May 5, 2017
Develop items for online survey and upload 40-item Mini-Marker set	May 12, 2017
Design and activate SurveyMonkey for study	May 19, 2017
Recruit 55 online participants with vision disabilities and send to survey site	May 26, 2017
Collect and analyze data through statistics	June 2, 2017
Report research results through a formal document to Dr. Philip Reiger of ASU Online	June 9, 2017
Provide training of research results to select ASU personnel.	June 16, 2017

Qualifications of VERA, Inc.

This section discusses Dr. Dean Colston's consulting firm and the team's professional qualifications as they are relevant to the study.

Firm's Background

At **VERA, Inc.**, we understand the needs of the higher education industry. Founded in 2008, we specialize in virtual education, research, and accessibility. Since we are a boutique research and consulting firm, we are able to help you solve your problems by providing customized service and by sharing best practices. We maintain an entrepreneurial spirit, which allows our employees to creatively and rapidly respond to the ever-changing landscape of higher education. Other distinctive qualities of our firm include a caring, inclusive, and socially responsible workplace. For example, by partnering with The Foundation for Blind Children, we offer internships to talented individuals who are visually disabled. The bottom line is that we care about our employees, clients, and the community. Dean Colston, Ph.D., CEO and senior researcher, exhibits a servant leadership style and empowers all employees to reach their potential in work and life. Like ASU, we believe higher education has the potential to transform the lives of all learners. And we at **VERA, Inc.** want to make learning accessible to all students around the world.

Our Team's Relevant Work Experiences

R. Dean Colston, Ph.D., fondly known as Dr. Dean, is the senior quantitative researcher for this study. He has 13 years' experience working in the behavioral sciences field as a mental health counselor and quality improvement specialist. He also has 13 years' experience working in higher education as a dean of faculty, department chair, and university professor. Having a diverse academic background and an appreciation for a cross-disciplinary approach, Dean has designed and taught a variety of ground, online, and blended courses to graduate and undergraduate students. Below is a list of those classes that are related to this research topic:

- Success Strategies
- Critical Thinking in Adult Education
- Educational Psychology
- Principles of Psychology
- Theories of Personality
- Abnormal Psychology
- The Science of Emotional Intelligence

Trained in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methodologies, Dr. Dean especially enjoys conducting systematic, quantitative research. In his experience, descriptive and correlational research designs are often useful in psychology and education in studying problems.

Similar Projects

Dr. Dean and his team have conducted several related correlational research studies in higher education and in the behavioral sciences. Unlike experimental research, his role as the researcher in these cases was not to influence the participants (college students) being studied in any way. His primary goal was to predict the strength of the prediction or relationship. Similarly, he has served as a doctoral dissertation external evaluator/editor for a psychology student. Consequently, he has a solid understanding of scientific methodology.

On another note, by partnering with The Foundation for Blind Children, he has written a number of technical manuals for their clients who are visually impaired or blind. Every project had a focus on accessibility and student success.

References

The following third-party professionals can be contacted to verify Dr. Dean's academic/industry expertise and validate his ability to successfully complete this research study.

1. Mark Franklin, director of adult services at The Foundation for Blind Children, Phoenix, Arizona.
2. Karen Bryson, Ph.D., professor of psychology and human services at Ottawa University, Phoenix, Arizona.
3. Barbara Salice, Ph.D., contributing (online education) faculty at Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Training and Education that Shows Knowledge or Proficiency

Dr. Dean has a Ph.D. in adult education with an emphasis in instructional design and psychology. He has a Master of Arts in Human Resources Development. Finally, he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with additional coursework in calculus and statistics.

On a related note, Dr. Dean has had intensive training in cutting-edge software and technology, such as JAWS (a screen reader with speech), ZoomText (a magnifier and screen reader), web and mobile applications, braille, and various visual devices that are commonly used by the visually impaired and blind. Finally, our team is adept with Section 508, WCAG 2.0 and ADA compliance.

Our Talented Employees

We employ four highly educated and innovative thinkers. Always striving for excellence, our associates bring skillsets in technology, higher education administration, accessibility and vocational rehabilitation, as well as data analytics. To further support our talent, we promote work-life balance and encourage lifelong learning.

Altogether, we at **VERA, Inc.** have an accomplished history of conducting quantitative research for online educational environments. As you can see, we have a passion for academic success for all learners. In that spirit, we would like the opportunity to help Arizona State University continue to meet its mission and to exceed its goals.

Costs and Benefits of the “Big Five” Project

To conduct the “Big Five” research study and accompanying training session, we are requesting \$11,405.00. As shown in Appendix D, the amount will cover management and direct labor rates, facilities and equipment, materials, travel, and all communication expenses for the consulting services. The total costs is based on the high return on investment (ROI) that ASU Online will receive through the following tangible and intangible benefits:

- **Increased Online Student Success**
While the Americans with Disabilities Act mandates institutions of higher education to provide accommodations to students who are visually disabled, the main goal of this study is find new ways to help these learners succeed academically, especially since accommodations are not always enough. By examining student factors, it may better explain the high online dropout rates. It may also reveal a unique personality profile of online university students who are visually disabled that is required for successful online academic achievement.
- **Increased Graduation, Persistence, and Retention Rates**
As these factors have historically represented student success, we at **VERA, Inc.** expect online students who academically achieve will persist and graduate from ASU in a timely manner. Scholarly interest in these statistics is important, especially since they have significant financial implications.
- **Greater Market Share**
Based on our calculations, we expect a positive correlation between market share and return on investment. So, as ASU Online grows its market share, it is highly likely its revenues will grow faster than its competitors.
- **Increased Ties to the Community**
By better understanding students who are blind or visually impaired, it sends a powerful message not only to the students but to the community. By partnering with ASU’s Disability Resources Center, it also shows that the university is attempting to better support and serve students who may be more susceptible to greater online academic challenges. Overall, we anticipate that this type of research endeavor will build ASU’s community equity and enhance its overall reputation.

- **Greater Impact through Innovative Research**
 By investing in this research study, we aim to impact the blind and low vision community of online learners in a positive and real-world way. Perhaps new methods of teaching and advising could result and be replicated nationally.
- **Increased Inclusion and Diversity**
 ASU views diversity in terms of representation and inclusion, which includes disabilities. This study, which focuses on students with vision disabilities and their academic success, supports ASU's strategic diversity plan and related metrics.
- **Gained Competitive Advantage through Greater Insight**
 Ground-breaking knowledge from research enables organizations to have a competitive advantage. Through research and discovery, we believe this study will help ASU Online advance knowledge in education and the behavioral sciences. It will also make a lasting contribution to the community of online learners who are blind and visually impaired.

In this competitive market, investing in research pays off through the discovery and development of new ideas. By investing in this research study, you can see what ASU will potentially gain in terms of strategic benefits in the short and long term.

Concluding Remarks

In summary, let us review the proposal's current situation, costs, and benefits. ASU Online is positioning itself as one of the leaders in student-centered online education. More students who haven't had access to a higher education are pursuing online options because of its quality, convenience, and accessibility. This includes the community of learners who are visually impaired or blind. In the spirit of "measuring not by whom ASU excludes, but rather by whom it includes and how they succeed" (Arizona State University, 2017c, para. 1), we at **VERA, Inc.** are requesting \$11,405.00 to help us conduct this research study.

By focusing on student factors, the aim of our research study is to determine the relationship between the "Big Five" personality traits and academic achievement of online students who are visually impaired or blind. One key goal is to help ASU Online decrease dropout rates of online university learners who are visually disabled by better understanding the relationship between the five well-known personality dimensions and academic success.

The first major benefit of this study is that it may reveal a unique personality profile of online university students who are visually disabled that is required for successful online academic achievement. Second, it will provide useful data to e-retention specialists and academic e-advisors, which will allow them to be more successful in their jobs. Third, it sends a strong message that students with vision disabilities matter at ASU Online, which supports the university's overarching goals of diversity and inclusion. The bottom

line is the more ASU educators and administrators know about their online learners, the better they can serve them and the more successful the students will be.

One key to ASU's success has been its commitment to innovative interdisciplinary research. As ASU Online continues to grow, we expect that the findings from this research study will give ASU Online a competitive advantage. Similar type of projects will continue to position the university in becoming a "university of choice" for the blind and low vision community. Thus, the consequences of these strategic decisions include a greater market share and an increase in graduation and retention rates for ASU Online.

We sincerely appreciate you for considering to approve and fund our request to conduct this study at ASU Online. We will contact you on May 1, 2017, to discuss the proposal and, if approved, to set a face-to-face meeting. In the meanwhile, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Dean Colston, CEO and senior quantitative researcher at **VERA, Inc.**, at 555-560-5555. Or, you may email him at dcolston@verainc_researchexperts.com.

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Appendix A

Consent Form

The 40-Item Mini-Marker Set And Student Demographic Survey Consent Form

Dear ASU Online Students:

I am a senior quantitative researcher with **VERA, Inc.** You are invited to participate in a research study, which has been designed to explore the relationship between the "Big Five" personality traits and academic achievement of online students who are visually impaired or blind. The five personality traits or factors include extraversion, neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, and conscientious. This research study is correlational by design, so the purpose is to find relationships between these variables. In other words, it will estimate the strength of relationships of these variables.

The findings of this study will be used to inform ASU online administrators and educators to improve the online learning experience for ASU Online students who are visually disabled. So, to encourage student participation, you will be compensated with a \$25.00 Visa gift card. Please note that your participation is voluntary. In addition, you will still be offered these incentives if you have to withdraw from the study.

If you decide to participate, this is what will take place.

Instructions

First, e-sign and date this consent form if you are interested in participating in this project.

Second, complete the 40-Item Mini-Marker Set and the student demographic survey.

Third, you will need about five-ten minutes to complete these two surveys.

After completing the 40-Item Mini-Marker Set and the student demographic survey via SurveyMonkey, your results are reviewed by Dean Colston, Ph.D.

Confidentiality

Your results are treated as confidential and will be shredded once the study ends. During the study, your results will be temporarily stored and protected in SurveyMonkey.

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Dean Colston at dcolston@verainc_researchexperts.com.

Appendix A (Continued)

Consent Form

**The 40-Item Mini-Marker Set
And Student Demographic Survey Consent Form**

By signing below, your e-signature indicates that you have read and understand the purpose of this research project, and you agree to allow Dean Colston, Ph.D., to view your results from the 40-Item Mini-Marker Set and the student demographic survey.

Date: _____

Electronic Signature: _____

Appendix B

The 40-Item Mini-Marker Set

How accurately can you describe yourself? Please use this list of common human traits to describe yourself as accurately as possible. Describe yourself as you see yourself at the present time, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you are generally or typically, as compared with other persons you know of the same sex and of roughly your same age. Before each trait, please type a number indicating how accurately that trait describes you, using the following rating scale:

INACCURATE..... ACCURATE

Extremely...Very...Moderately...Slightly....Slightly...Moderately...Very...Extremely

.....1..... 2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9

-
- ___ Bashful..... ___ Energetic..... ___ Moody..... ___ Systematic
___ Bold..... ___ Envious..... ___ Organized..... ___ Talkative
___ Careless..... ___ Extraverted..... ___ Philosophical.. ___ Temperamental
___ Cold..... ___ Fretful ___ Practical..... ___ Touchy
___ Complex..... ___ Harsh..... ___ Quiet..... ___ Uncreative
___ Cooperative.... ___ Imaginative.... ___ Relaxed..... ___ Unenvious
___ Creative..... ___ Inefficient..... ___ Rude..... ___ Unintellectual
___ Deep..... ___ Intellectual..... ___ Shy..... ___ Unsympathetic
___ Disorganized.. ___ Jealous..... ___ Sloppy..... ___ Warm
___ Efficient..... ___ Kind..... ___ Sympathetic... ___ Withdrawn

Saucier, G. (n.d.). The 40-Item mini-marker set. Retrieved from <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~gsaucier/gsau41oldversion.htm>

Appendix C

Student Demographic Survey

1. What gender do you identify with?

Female _____

Male _____

Other _____

2. What is your age?

18 – 24 years _____

25 – 34 _____

35 – 44 _____

45 – 54 _____

55 – 64 _____

65 or older _____

3. Are you an undergraduate or graduate student?

4. How many online courses have you completed with a passing grade?

5. Are you visually impaired or blind? _____

6. What is your GPA at Arizona State University Online?

4.0 – 4.3 _____

3.6 – 4.0 _____

3.1 – 3.5 _____

2.6 – 3.0 _____

2.1 – 2.5 _____

2.0 – below _____

Appendix D

Table D1: The Budget Highlights

Item	Project Budget Worksheet	Total Costs
1	Management	
1a	Lead Research Consultant	\$3,000.00
	Total Management Costs	3,000.00
2	Direct Labor	
2a	Statistician/Quality Auditor	2,000.00
2b	Training and Development Specialist	2,250.00
	Total Labor Costs	4,250.00
3	Facilities and Equipment	
3a	Facilities	
	a. Building Lease	1,000.00
	b. Insurance	25.00
3b	Equipment	
	a. Computer Hardware and SPSS v. 26 software	1,500.00
	b. Tables, Chairs and Desks	750.00
	Total Facilities and Equipment Costs	3,275.00
4	Materials	
4a	Paper	125.00
4b	Copying Costs for Bounded Reports	450.00
4c	Toner/Printer Cartridge	75.00
	Total Materials Costs	650.00
5	Travel	
5a	Travel (car estimated per mile)	75.00
5b	Parking	55.00
	Total Travel Costs	130.00
6	Communication	
6a	Internet Provider and Phone	100.00
	Total Communication Costs	100.00
	Total Costs	\$11,405.00

Appendix D (Continued)

The “Big Five” Budget Highlights

The budget worksheet highlights management, direct labor, facilities and equipment, materials, travel, and communication costs associated with this “Big Five” research study. Under each category, the smaller elements also provide transparency in actual costs and true return.

As shown in Table D1, management and direct labor are the main costs. The lead research consultant, statistician/quality auditor, and training and development specialist are the main employees working on this project. Other significant costs will include the computer hardware, SPSS v. 26 software, and the building lease. Additional notable expenses include the tables, chairs, desks, and the copying for bounded reports. Minor costs will include a percentage of the building’s insurance, paper, toner/printer cartridge, travel, parking, as well as phone calls, and Internet usage.

If you have any questions about the budget, please feel free to contact Dr. Dean Colston, CEO and senior researcher at **VERA, Inc.**, at 555-560-5555. Or, you may email him at dcolston@verainc_researchexperts.com.