

Northwestern University

## Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

### CONSENT FORM FOR ASSESSING SOCIAL NETWORKS IN CYBER SPACE

**Project Title: Assessing Social Networks in Cyber Space**

**Principal Investigator: Aleksandar Kuzmanovic**

**Co-Investigator(s): Peter Dinda**

**Supported by [or Funded by]: National Science Foundation (pending)**

#### Introduction/Purpose:

You are being asked to participate in a research study that seeks to determine fundamental properties of social networks in the Internet.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you responded to our posters, web site, or email advertisements.

The purpose of this research study is to understand how social behavior in the Internet is different from that in the non-cyber domain. Moreover, insights about the ways that different Internet applications are used can help design better traffic engineering and application protocols as well.

Approximately 300 persons will participate in this study.

#### Procedures:

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to install a client application on your computer and run it for 3 weeks. The application will collect information about your communication patterns (e.g, web browsing, email, and other network-based programs). This information will be sent back to our server where it will be stored in a privacy-preserving manner.

At any time in the study, you may decide to withdraw from the study. If you withdraw no more information will be collected from you. When you indicate you wish to withdraw, you will be asked if the data already collected in the study can be used. In addition to fully withdraw from the study, you have the ability to temporarily withdraw

from the study. This can be done by clicking the 'stop' button in the application's client window.

**Risks:**

Your participation does not involve any risks other than what you would encounter in daily life.

You may withdraw at any time.

**Benefits:**

There may be no direct benefit to you by your participation in this research study. The potential benefits to you from participation in this study may include statistics about your social contacts in the Internet and the way in which you use Internet applications. This feedback will be provided only at your request.

Your participation in this study may aid in our understanding of how social behavior in the Internet is different from that in the non-cyber domain.

**Alternatives:**

You have the alternative to choose not to participate in this research study.

If you do not wish to participate in this study, the following alternatives are available: you may choose to participate opportunistically, i.e., you have the ability to temporarily enroll and withdraw from the study. This can be done by clicking the 'stop' button in the application's client window, as explained above.

**Confidentiality:**

Participation in this research study may result in a loss of privacy, since persons other than the investigator(s) might view your study records. Unless required by law, only the study investigator, members of the investigator's staff, representatives of National Science Foundation, the Northwestern University Institutional Review Board, and representatives from the Office for Human Research Protections (DHHS) will have authority to review your study records. They are required to maintain confidentiality regarding your identity.

Results of this study may be used for research, publications, or presentations at scientific meetings. If your individual results are discussed, your identity will be protected by using a study code number rather than your name or other identifying information.

**Centralized data collection or registers:**

The results of your examinations will be collected in a centralized computer or data registry at the Northwestern University's EECS Department, Evanston, IL. Results will be stored without names or other identifying information.

All records will be destroyed at the end of the study.

**Financial Information:**

Your participation in this study will involve no cost to you.

You will receive \$25 for your participation in this research study. The EECS department administrator will provide the payment after you finish the study. If you withdraw from the study, you will not receive the payment. The withdrawal from the study means that you either explicitly withdraw from the study, or that the logging application was turned "off" for more than 20% of time during the 3 weeks.

**Subjects' Rights:**

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time.

Choosing not to participate or withdrawing from this study will not affect your class standing.

**Consent:**

I agree to participate in the research study described above. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Subject's Name (printed) and Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (printed) and Signature of Person Obtaining Consent