3.0 Description of Activity **(Delete the instructions below when providing your information)**

ACTIVITY TITLE:

Include the full protocol title as listed in the eIRB+ System.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

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VERSION DATE:

7/23/20

3.1 Purpose

This project compares Northwestern's existing course allocation mechanism to alternate course allocation mechanisms in order to identify mechanisms that would more equitably balance the capacity of over-demanded courses.

The data collected from surveying students is for evaluating course allocation mechanisms and is not of interest itself.

3.2 Procedures

The project will collect data on what Computer Science courses students want to take, which courses they enroll in Fall quarter, and current course capacities for these courses.

The data will be collected via a survey that will be sent out to all Computer Science majors, minors, and master's students via email that will survey their interests in courses for next fall. Students will receive contact information from the project team and a brief explanation of the purpose for the survey. They will then quantify how much they want to take each Computer Science course next quarter on whatever scale they wish. Because the student's preferences need to be paired with the courses they are actually enrolled into, the survey results will not be initially anonymous; this is so that survey results can be paired with actual fall enrollments. Once these pairs (course preferences and enrollments) are attained, the data will be deidentified. The current course capacities for next quarter will be obtained from the CS department.

3.3 Data and/or specimens

Describe the data and/or specimens that you will gather about individuals, including names of datasets you will access and links to data sources.

- **Data and/or Specimen Collection and Analysis**

  The students' preferences for Computer Science courses next quarter and the Computer Science courses that each student is assigned will be

collected. Because each student quantifies this using his/her own scale, these scales will be normalized. This data will be used to test Course Assignment mechanisms.

- **Data and/or Specimen Collection Method**

  The students will be surveyed for their course preferences, as described above, and the responding student's student IDs will be used to collect data on which courses they were able to enroll in via the CS department. The CS course capacities will be obtained from the CS department as well.

- **Identifiability of Data or Specimens**

  Each individual's course preferences need to be linked to the courses he/she enrolls in. Each individual that responds to the survey will provide a student ID and name that will be used to pair their reported course preferences with the courses they actually enroll in. When all of this data is obtained, it will be deidentified.

3.4 Protected Health Information (if applicable):

If you are requesting the use of protected health information, the Northwestern IRB in its role as the Privacy Board will need to consider if a HIPAA Authorization is required or if it can be waived.

In order to make that decision, the Privacy Board will consider the following:

1. The use or disclosure of protected health information involves no more than a minimal risk to the privacy of individuals, based on, at least, the presence of the following elements. Describe:
   a. Your plan to protect the identifiers from improper use and disclosure.
   b. Your plan to destroy the identifiers at the earliest opportunity consistent with conduct of the research, unless there is a health or research justification for retaining the identifiers or such retention is otherwise required by law.
   c. Written assurance that the protected health information will not be reused or disclosed to any other person or entity, except as required by law, for authorized oversight of the research study, or for other research for which the use or disclosure of protected health information for which an authorization or opportunity to agree or object is not required by 45 CFR 164.512.
2. The research could NOT practicably be conducted without the waiver or alteration.
3. The research could NOT practicably be conducted without access to and use of the protected health information.