**Appendix A**

**Student Focus Group Interview Guide**

Each appendix has a label and a title. If you have only one appendix, label it Appendix. If you have more than one, label them with letters to indicate the order in which they are discussed in the text. Here, “Appendix A” shows this is the first of more than one appendix. The label and title are centred and bolded on the first two lines of the page.

# Welcome and Purpose of Interview

Good (morning/afternoon). Thank you so much for taking time from your busy schedules to be here. As you know from my emails, the goal of this research project is to understand the motivations, skills, habits of mind, and professional opportunities associated with a history major. All of you are current history majors, and so you have the most direct and immediate experience with these questions. Your expertise is essential to helping me to understand the experiences of majoring in history.

# Guidelines

* “There are a few guidelines I would like to ask you to follow during the focus group interview. First, you do not need to speak in any particular order. When you have something to say, please do so. Second, please do not speak while someone else is talking. Sometimes, the exchanges get emotional, and it is tempting to ‘jump in’ when someone is talking, but we ask you to refrain from doing so. Third, remember that there are many people in the group and that it is important that we obtain the point of view of each one of you” (Vaughn et al., 1996, p. 42). Further if there are any questions that you do not wish to answer for any reason, please feel free to pass without comment. As you know from the consent letter you signed, you are free to leave this interview and the study as a whole at any time. Finally, you will remain anonymous in any report written about this interview. What questions do people have?

# Focus Group Questions

## Introductory Question

1. Take a moment to reflect on your own decision to become a history major. What do you remember about your decision? Was there a particular class, book, or topic that inspired you? Please take a moment to jot down some notes and then we’ll discuss your answers.

## Transition Question

1. How do you think you have changed or developed as you advanced as a history major within university?
2. Have you or anyone else ever doubted your decision to become a history major? Why do you think they did so?
3. How do you think your experience majoring in history is similar to or different from the experience of students majoring in other Programs?

## Key Questions

1. What do you think it means to think historically? What is the value of thinking historically?
2. Can you give an example of a particular assignment that helped you to develop a particular skill or habit of mind?
3. Are there particular issues, challenges, or decisions that you feel you have struggled with as a history major?
4. Are there resources on campus or online that you have turned to to help you make those decisions or deal with those struggles?
5. What kinds of careers or professions are you considering as a history major?
6. Do you feel like you have a good knowledge of what careers are available to you? What online or in person resources have you drawn on to learn about what careers are available to you?
7. What books or resources have you referred to as you complete assignments in history?
8. What makes these resources helpful?
9. As I work toward creating a new resource for students considering and majoring in history, what would you like me to keep in mind?
10. What do you think would be most important to include in such a resource?
11. Are there areas you think I should avoid?

## Concluding Question

1. What advice would you give a student considering a history major?

# Member Check and Closing

As we move toward the end of this interview, I’d like to summarize some of the themes we’ve discussed today and hear your thoughts on whether I’ve accurately captured our discussion.

“As we come to a close, I need to remind each of you that the audiotape will be transcribed, you will be assigned false names for the purpose of transcript and data analysis so that you will remain anonymous, and then the tape will be destroyed. I ask that you refrain from discussing the comments of group members and that you respect the right of each member to remain anonymous. Are there any questions I can answer?” (Vaughn et al., 1996, p. 47).