General Features of the Psychology Human Subject Pool

The Psychology Human Subject Pool (Subject Pool) provides a system for coordinating enrollment in Department research involving human subjects. The Subject Pool is used for most, but not all, human research. The Subject Pool is restricted to research that is supervised by Psychology faculty.

Information System Used by the Subject Pool

Information in the Subject Pool is based on proprietary SONA software. SONA is the most popular commercially available software for human subject information and is in use at over 900 universities.

SONA is compliant with current research regulations, and provides for SSL encryption and anonymous personal identification (ID) codes. The SONA system has wide latitude for configuration by users, providing system wide settings, specifiable permission roles for researchers, non-research credit management, and email notifications for researcher and subjects.

Participants in the Subject Pool

The Subject Pool involves only adult volunteers who are students in Psychology, or other competent adults who request to be added to the system.

Volunteers may participate in research in order to (1) earn research experience credits in Psychology, (2) earn extra credit in Psychology classes, (3) earn money or objects of value for their participation, or any combination of these three.

INFORMATION FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS IN THE HUMAN SUBJECT POOL

All human subject research in the Department of Psychology is voluntary. No one is required to participate in any research project. If you are an adult and wish to participate in research, you will be asked to give your explicit consent to participate after potential risks and benefits have been explained to you. You may stop participation in a study at any time without penalty or prejudice. If you have begun a research study you may stop answering questions, stop performing research procedures, or leave the study site, at any time. If you discontinue the study before it is completed, you will receive credit or payment corresponding to the amount of time that you did participate.

All human subject research at WSU is governed by Federal statutes and State law. Review, evaluation, and approval of human subject research is the responsibility of the WSU Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you ever have questions or concerns about human research at WSU, you should address those questions and concerns to the WSU IRB at phone number (509) 335-2995, or email at irb@wsu.edu, or regular mail at Office of Research Assurances, PO Box 643143, Pullman, WA 99164-3143.

In addition, you may also address questions or concerns about human research in Psychology to the Chair of the Department of Psychology at (509) 335-2632, or email psych@wsu.edu, or regular mail at Johnson Tower 233, PO Box 644820, Pullman, WA 99164-4820.

General Features of the SONA Human Subject Pool System

Most human research studies in Psychology are coordinated by the online SONA software system. SONA is the most widely used human subject software because of its ease of use for both researchers and research participants. SONA is designed to protect the privacy of your personal information. SONA provides a description of available research opportunities, allows you to sign up for appointments to participate, and allocates credits for research studies that provide credit as compensation. Complete details about the use of SONA by research participants is given at the end of this section.

Categories of Research Participation in the Subject Pool

As mentioned at the beginning of this document, adult volunteers may participate in research in order to (1) earn research experience credits in Psychology 105, Introduction to Psychology, (2) earn extra credit in Psychology classes, (3) earn money or objects of value for their participation, or any combination of these three.

(1) **Research Experience Credits in Psychology 105**

If you are a student in Psychology 105, you course syllabus will contain the following information about the research experience requirement and possible participation in research.

Syllabus statement:

One objective of Psychology 105 is to provide students with a better understanding of the science of Psychology. To accomplish this objective, you are required to complete three hours of engagement in a research-related activity for a total of 40 points.

The three hour requirement can be met in a number of different ways: completing Option 1, Option 2, or a combination of Options 1 and 2. You must complete all 3 hours (3 credits) of research, research papers, or a combination of research and research papers to complete this requirement. No partial credit will be granted - this is an "all or none" assignment.

Option 1 - Research Participation

You may serve as a research participant in studies conducted by the Department of Psychology. Research Study sign-ups occur via the SONA System:

www.wsu.edu/psychology (click on the "Experiment Sign-Ups" link located under the "Undergraduate Studies" tab of the Psychology Homepage).

You must complete 3 research credits with at least one credit coming from a live/in-person study (i.e., all credits cannot be earned for participating in online studies).

To cancel a session, you must notify the experimenters no later than 12 hours before the appointment. You can cancel a session online by clicking on the "Drop Registered Experiments" option. Failure to do so will result in a "NO SHOW". Two "no shows" locks you out of the SONA system and eliminates you from being able to participate in research to complete this requirement.

Please note that the SONA system closes on last day of Dead Week at 5:00 pm, so be sure to complete your research credits before that time. That means that you must be signed up for studies 12 hours prior to that deadline. Also, you must specify to which course the credits will be applied within your SONA profile/account. Failure to assign your research credits will prevent your instructor from knowing that you participated in research and will result in a zero for the research participation requirement (i.e., a loss of all 40 points).

Option 2 - Research Papers

If, for any reason, you do not wish to serve as a research participant, you may write 3 critical summaries of research articles selected from an approved list (posted on Blackboard) to earn research credits.

Each written assignment should take about 1 hour and is worth 1 research credit.

Research assignments should be turned in via the dropbox in Blackboard. Note that there is only one dropbox in Blackboard, so you should turn all of your assignments in using one file.

Assignments must be at least 700 words, not including headers, titles, or references. They must be double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 inch margins. Failure to adhere to these guidelines (trust me, I can tell) will result in your research assignments not being graded.

Assignments must address: (1) the question(s) the researchers were attempting to answer (the hypotheses) (i.e., the purpose of the study) (2) a description of the participants or subjects in the study (3) the independent and dependent variables of the study (what is being measured) (4) the important findings and if the researchers' hypothesis was supported (5) the implications of the findings (what the results mean)

Remember to use your own words to write these summaries and avoid plagiarizing. No credit will be given if the summary is inaccurate, unclear, or plagiarized.

A list of approved articles that can be written about is posted on Blackboard.

Research papers must be submitted by 5:00 pm on the last day of Dead Week, via Blackboard in order to earn credit. Late submissions will not be accepted.

You are responsible for making sure that your submission(s) was (were) successfully uploaded into the Blackboard dropbox.

(2) Extra Credit in Psychology Classes

Some classes in Psychology offer options for extra credit during the semester. If your Psychology class offers extra credit for research participation, the details will be given in your class syllabus. The credits for research participation in any class have been approved by the Chair of the Department of Psychology, so that the amount of effort required for credit is comparable across all classes. Your class instruction can answer any questions you have about extra credit policy. Sign up for research participation is through the SONA system.

(3) Earning Money for Research Participation

Some studies in Psychology offer money, or objects of value such as gift cards, for participation in research. The amount of money for a given time in effort for participation is determined by the WSU IRB. Some of the studies that offer money as compensation appear in the SONA. The description of the study will clearly distinguish studies for money and studies for Psychology research credit.

Procedures for SONA as a Research Participant

For most people the SONA is easy to learn and use. Rather than giving detailed written descriptions of use procedures, the Department of Psychology has found it more valuable to provide video tutorials for SONA functions.

The tutorials are found at the following link:

https://psychology.wsu.edu/undergrad/experiment-signups/

There are four separate tutorials:

(1) Password retrieval and logging in

(2) Signing up for studies

(3) Managing credits

(4) No-show policy

Participant Research Credits

Credits for participating in research are determined by the amount of time and effort required by participation. The following table specifies approved credits for online and in-person research studies, and apply to all Psychology classes for which research extra credit is given.

Time (hours:min)	Online study credits	In-person study credits
0:00 – 0:45	0.5	1
0:46 – 1:15	1	1
1:16 – 1:45	1.5	1.5
1:46 – 2:15	2	2
2:16 – 2:45	2.5	2.5
2:46 – 3:15	3	3

Comments and Questions

If you have comments or questions about Department of Psychology Human Subjects policies and procedures please contact the Department at (509) 335-2632, or email psych@wsu.edu, or regular mail at: Johnson Tower 233, PO Box 644820, Pullman, WA 99164-4820.