

Research Participant Pool

As a student in **Introduction to Psychology**, research experience will count for 5% of your final grade. You can fulfill this requirement by participating in psychology research studies. These studies will be conducted on the Hilton Head Gateway and/or Historic Beaufort campuses, or online. Each 1 hour study is worth 1%. All research experience activities **must** be completed by the last day of classes. **I would strongly encourage you to complete three credits by mid-semester to ensure you have the opportunity to earn all 5 points.** New research studies begin frequently; check back often to sign up for new studies that are available to you.

Below are instructions regarding how to register, how to log in to the system and sign up for studies. You may cancel a study; if you fail to cancel a study in advance, you will be assessed a penalty.

How do I get started?

Students will access the web site at:

<http://sc.sona-systems.com/>.

It is important to use this address as written, and not some web address to which you may be automatically redirected. This is the home page for the Participant Pool, which is run through USC Columbia.

INFORMATION for PARTICIPANTS/STUDENTS

Registration

To register as a Participant in the system you will need to self-register by following these steps:

1. Click the NEW PARTICIPANT link at your site's main page to request an account.
2. Enter the information requested. Your email should be the one issued by your institution if possible.
3. During registration, you will also select the Introduction to Psychology class in which you are currently enrolled.

For example, if you are enrolled in Dr. Fitzgerald's MWF 9:00am class, the "course" is PSYC B101-002. This information is on your syllabus and on the Blackboard site for that class.

4. After pressing SUBMIT, an email will be sent to you with your username and a temporary password to login to the system.

Once you have used that information to login to the Sona website, you should change the password to something unique that you will be able to remember.

If you have lost (or don't know) your password, simply enter your email in the Retrieve Password field. Your password will be sent to your email address.

How do I sign up for Experiments?

Once you are registered, you can sign up for experiments by following these steps:

1. Go to the same web site (<http://sc.sona-systems.com/>) and fill in your user name and password.
2. After you login, click on the tab labeled "Study Sign Up." You will then see a list of all the available, as well as the number of credits they offer, for the date that appears in the upper right corner. You can search for available studies on any day that you choose.
3. Find an experiment from the list that interests you and click on it. You will then see all the information associated with that experiment, as well as times that are available. If you wish to sign up for an experiment time simply click "sign up," located to the right of the experiment time.
4. You will then see a confirmation screen. At this point, be sure to select the class to which you want credit assigned.
5. Make sure you make a note of all the information that this screen provides, and click "confirm" to sign up, or "cancel" if the time will not work for you.
6. Note that the system will not allow you to sign up for the same experiment twice.
7. The web will send you an email reminder about the experiment within 24 hours of the experiment.

Note: Please pay attention to where the experiment is being conducted. Some of this research is being conducted on the Columbia campus, and every effort is being made to ensure that you are not able to sign up for these studies. Nonetheless, please double-check the location of the experiments before you sign up. **You can participate in studies conducted at USCB or studies that can be completed online.**

Reviewing Information and Cancellations

In addition to the email reminder, you can review what experiments you are signed up for by clicking on the "My Schedule/Credits" tab. The experiments you are signed up for are listed under the heading "My Schedule/Credits." If you need to cancel an experiment before its start time, you may do so through this function. Simply click "cancel," located to the right of your experiment time. You will then be taken to a confirmation screen which will require you to confirm your cancellation. You may cancel an experiment up to one hour before your scheduled appointment in this way.

Penalties

If you do not attend an experiment for which you signed up (and did not cancel), you will accrue an "unexcused no show". There will not be any penalty for excused or unexcused no shows. However, if you accrue three "unexcused no shows" you will lose the privilege of participating in the participant pool. If you are in BPSY 101, you may still submit papers for alternative credit.

If you have any problems/questions, please contact the Participant Pool Manager at Psycpool@mailbox.sc.edu.

Alternative to Participation in Research Studies:

The Participant Pool offers a written alternative for BPSY 101 students not wishing to participate in experimental research. The purpose of participating in experiments is to gain hands on experience concerning how experimental research is conducted. Therefore, if you do not wish to participate, the next best way to gain insight into experimental research is by reading articles published in professional psychology journals.

Here's what to do. Select an article from a recent issue of a psychology journal (1990's or later). The article must be at least 5 pages and the journal must be one that is listed in PSYC Info (accessed through library webpage). Read the article and write a short, one page synopsis. The synopsis should state directly the major hypothesis being investigated, the method used by the researchers, and how the results supported or did not support the hypothesis. **This should be a one page, type written, double-spaced paper.** Staple to this paper a copy of the front page of the article that includes the abstract, and submit to Dr. Fitzgerald (SciTech, Room 225; cfitzger@uscb.edu; 843-208-8328). Note that University policy on plagiarism prohibits you from using text of the article without proper citation. Each paper will constitute one hour research credit. Thus, to earn five credits, you need to write five such papers. Copying from another student's paper is also considered plagiarism. To discourage plagiarism, these papers are filed by the last name of the article's author. All papers for a particular article will be compared to make sure that students are using their own words.