

## **Participant Guidelines: Commonwealth Campus Psychology Participant Pool (CCPPP)**

### **Purpose of the subject pool**

For the most part, the material taught in psychology courses is the product of psychological research. To increase your familiarity with psychological research, students may be required to earn research credit as part of a course grade and/or extra credit in a course. Research credit is earned by participating in research activities sponsored by the Psychology Programs at Penn State that are offered through the departmental Participant Pool. This research participation will count as part of your course grade or extra credit as specified in your course syllabus. If you do not want to participate in the research activities or do not complete all the research credits, there will be alternative assignments for you to do as specified in your course syllabus.

### **How it will benefit the student**

Research participation provides opportunities for students to see and experience the methods and procedures used to study the human mind and behavior. Participation can also help students dispel myths about psychological research and become better consumers and critics of studies reported by the media. As careers involving scientific psychology require research, participation can also help students preview aspects of psychology as a career.

### **Student procedure**

1. Go to the Subject Pool web site ([psucc.sona-systems.com](http://psucc.sona-systems.com)) and create your Subject Pool account. Use that link; do NOT do a google search and click on whatever shows up. At least once a year someone does not listen, signs up for the wrong campus participant pool, and wonders why they did not get their credits.
2. Click on the **Request an account** link located under the 'New Participant' heading (on the left side of the screen). Fill out your name and User ID. Your User ID is your Penn State email address. You MUST use your Penn State email address; you can optionally set it to forward to another email later. Other information required is your name. No other demographic information is required to set up an account.
3. Select your course(s). Be sure to select all courses you want to receive research credit in. You will be able to add courses at any time during the term prior to the last day of classes. All courses involved in the subject pool will look like this:  
Campus, Term, Course abbreviation/number, instructor  
Example: Beaver SPR25 PSYCH256 Camodeca
4. Click request an account. After a few minutes check your Penn State email account for an email with your password in it. This email may end up in your junk email folder.
5. Log in with your User ID and password. Optional: go to your profile and change your password and put in a forwarding email. Check your PSU email account regularly for Subject Pool information.

### **Important information about credits:**

1. You can change your courses and course allocations at any point up until the final day of classes.
2. All credit received is approved by the IRB based on how much time the study is expected to take. One credit equals about 30 minutes of time. Most studies are worth 1 or 2 credits (up to 30 or up to 60 minutes), but a few are worth more (3 credits for 90 minutes, etc.). The credits you will receive are noted on the pool website for each study. There are no half credits.
3. Because there are no half credits, the timeslot (on the pool site) may be slightly longer than the actual time it takes you to complete the study (in the study description and on the consent form). This has to do with the pool website requirements—the credits must match to the ½ hour. For example, a one-hour experiment slot, worth two credits, might only take you about 45 minutes as stated in the description and on the consent form. However, you are still awarded two credits.
4. Research alternatives need to be submitted to the participant pool administrator at ([asc19@psu.edu](mailto:asc19@psu.edu)). These are not graded, as research participation is not graded. The research alternative is based on your course selections. Alternatives for students in 100-200 level courses are Ted talk summaries. Alternatives for students in 300-400 level courses are research paper summaries. See below for more info.
5. Your professors do not know if you participated in research studies or if you completed the research alternatives. They do not know your responses to any studies, nor do they know what studies you have participated in. They receive only a list of # credits earned by each student.

Penn State's Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviews all human subject research before it can begin. Most (but not all) studies ask you to do some kind of simple task (e.g., paper-and-pencil task, computerized task, use a map, watch videos, express opinions, etc.).

Researchers are required to explain experimental procedures and give you the chance to ask questions before you participate. If they don't, or if you find the procedure objectionable, you can choose not to participate. You may choose to stop participating at any time if you become uncomfortable with the procedures. You can also choose not to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

### **Signing up for experiments**

Only individuals 18 and older are able to participate in research studies through the subject pool. Please see the section below titled, "Research Alternative Assignment Instructions" for more

information on how individuals under the age of 18 can complete the research alternatives to earn the required credits.

You need to make appointments with researchers to participate and earn course credit. Use the Commonwealth Campus Psychology Participant Pool web site ([psucc.sona-systems.com](http://psucc.sona-systems.com)) to make appointments. Typically, it takes researchers a few weeks to get research studies ready. It is advised that you do not wait until the end of the semester to check for studies. Rather, it is better to check the website periodically throughout the semester (once a week) and find studies that fit your time. Each study will tell you if it is online or which campus the study takes place at. Researchers at other campuses are asked to limit their participation to their own campus to avoid students mistakenly signing up for studies at campuses that are not their own (i.e., far away). However, they may open a study to a campus that is nearby. If an in-person study takes place at another, nearby campus, do not sign up for it unless you are willing to drive there.

Researchers will update your Commonwealth Campus Psychology Participant Pool account electronically within 48 hours. You can check to see if your credit has been updated by logging into the Commonwealth Campus Psychology Participant Pool website (use the 'My Schedule/Credits' link).

As outlined in your course syllabus, you are required to earn up to 6 research credits per semester whether through participating as a subject in a research study OR completing the available alternative research assignments. If you do not complete the required number of credits, you will receive partial credit for the amount of research or alternatives that you completed.

Note: The Commonwealth Campus Psychology Participant Pool website tracks your research participation and completion of research alternatives. Your instructor tracks your other course credits, such as quizzes, homework, etc., separately (i.e., on Canvas). At the end of the term, your instructor will receive your research/alternative credit information and will update your course credit as such on Canvas.

Keeping appointments is very important. First, most experiments require a lot of work to prepare, so it is rude to skip the appointment when someone has prepared for you. Second, when you sign up and then skip the appointment you take an opportunity to earn course credit away from another student.

You can use the 'My Schedule/Credits' link to view appointment information. Note that this button only appears after you have created a personal account and signed up for a research activity. Once you select the relevant study, you'll see a list that includes all the needed information.

To see contact information for the researcher use the 'My Schedule/Credits' link and then select the relevant study.

If you sign up for an experiment and no one is there, go to the Subject Pool web site and click on the 'My Schedule/Credit Check' link to make sure that you went to the right place at the right time. If you did, then please contact Dr. Camodeca ([asc19@psu.edu](mailto:asc19@psu.edu)) and she will look into this

for you. If you showed up at the correct place at the correct time, you will get credit for participation (the same amount you would have received if you had completed it).

Your experiment credits must be completed by the last day of classes. After this time, the administrator for each campus will send credits to your professors. No research studies will be running, nor will alternatives be available during finals week.

## **Research Alternative Assignment Instructions**

People may decide they do not want to take part in a research study for many reasons, such as religious or moral grounds, or because they just don't want to. Others may be under the age of 18, which means they would need parental permission to participate. The information below is for students that are not yet 18 years of age and students of any age who choose not to participate as a subject in a research study.

Only individuals 18 and older may sign up for research studies through the subject pool. Individuals under the age of 18 must complete the research alternatives in order to receive subject pool credit. While researchers may recruit individuals under the age of 18 for their individual studies, it must be completed separately outside of the subject pool and any compensation for participation in a research study would not be for subject pool credit.

If you turn 18 during the semester, you can wait to participate in CCPPP studies until you are 18 and able to consent for yourself. You will need to contact the pool administrator (Dr. Amy Camodeca at [asc19@psu.edu](mailto:asc19@psu.edu)) to have your account changed such that you can sign up for a timeslot.

### **Purpose**

To increase your familiarity with psychological research, students are required and/or offered extra credit to participate in research activities sponsored by the Psychology Program at Penn State. This required research participation is 10% of your course grade and 5 research credits per class per term. Extra credit research participation is 3% onto your course grade and 3 research credits per class per term.

### **Learning Point**

Research participation provides opportunities for students to see and experience the methods and procedures used to study the human mind and behavior. The alternative assignments give you the opportunity to learn about methods, procedures, and findings in psychology through watching a lecture or reading a journal article.

### **Procedures**

There are two research alternatives designed for students at different levels of experience with psychological research. You can count each assignment's credits for one course only. They cannot double-count across courses, as research credits do not double-count across courses. These assignments must be completed by the final day of the term.

If you are enrolled in 100 or 200-level course, your alternative is a TED Talk summary and reaction paper. If you are enrolled in a 300-400 level course, your alternative is an article summary/reaction paper. If you are enrolled in both a 100/200 and 300/400 level course, you should complete the 100/200 assignment (TED Talk) for the 100/200 course and the 300/400 assignment (article) for the 300/400 course.

Assignment requirements:

TED Talk assignment (100/200 level courses)

After viewing a TED Talk video (about 20 minutes), write a brief description of what the speaker discussed, and then describe your reaction to the video. Be sure to discuss **how** the video challenged your thinking or added to the information you already had. Each submission should be between 500 - 750 words (about 2 double-spaced, 12-point, times new roman font pages). Feel free to use the textbook, your notes, or any other resource for your reactions and integrations. Each summary will count for two (2) research participation credits.

- a. Human Nature and the Blank Slate by Steven Pinker (22:25)-  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/steven\\_pinker\\_chalks\\_it\\_up\\_to\\_the\\_blank\\_slate](http://www.ted.com/talks/steven_pinker_chalks_it_up_to_the_blank_slate)
- b. The illusion of consciousness by Dan Dennett (21:48)-  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/dan\\_dennett\\_on\\_our\\_consciousness](http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_dennett_on_our_consciousness)
- c. What are animals thinking and feeling? By Carl Safina (19:26)-  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/carl\\_safina\\_what\\_are\\_animals\\_thinking\\_and\\_feeling](http://www.ted.com/talks/carl_safina_what_are_animals_thinking_and_feeling)
- d. The Consuming Instinct By Gad Saad (18:08) -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5fOdch-pKU&spfreload=5>
- e. How language transformed humanity by Mark Pagel (20:10) -  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/mark\\_pagel\\_how\\_language\\_transformed\\_humanity](http://www.ted.com/talks/mark_pagel_how_language_transformed_humanity)
- f. How reliable is your memory? By Elizabeth Loftus ( 17:36)-  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth\\_loftus\\_the\\_fiction\\_of\\_memory](http://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_loftus_the_fiction_of_memory)
- g. What do babies think? By Alison Gopnik (18:29) -  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/alison\\_gopnik\\_what\\_do\\_babies\\_think](http://www.ted.com/talks/alison_gopnik_what_do_babies_think)

Email this document to the participant pool administrator (Amy Camodeca at [asc19@psu.edu](mailto:asc19@psu.edu)). Make the subject Participant Pool Alternative Assignment and include your campus, course number, and instructor in your email. Allow 48 hours for updated credits.

Article Assignment (300/400 level courses)

First, read one of the following articles:

- a. Kushin, M.J., & Yamamoto, M. (2010). Did social media really matter? College students' use of online media and political decision making in the 2008 election. *Mass Communication and Society*, 13, 608-630.
- b. Frenda, S. J., Patihis, L., Loftus, E. F., Lewis, H. C., & Fenn, K. M. (2014). Sleep deprivation and false memories. *Psychological Science*, 25, 1674- 1681.
- c. Wang, X. T., & Dvorak, R. D. (2010). Sweet future: Fluctuating blood glucose levels affect future discounting. *Psychological Science*, 20, 183- 188.
- d. Nairne, J. S., VanArsdall, J. E., Pandeirada, J. N. S., Cogdill, M., & LeBreton, J. M. (2013). Adaptive memory: The mnemonic value of animacy. *Psychological Science*, 24, 2099- 2105.

- e. Faculty can add studies here – I just listed some options that I have used before since I found that students like/relate to them.

Second, in approximately 3 typed (double-spaced, size 12 pt font) pages, answer the following questions/prompts. Write your answers in full sentences and explain everything in your own words (no quotes please). Each paper is worth three research credits.

- a. What was the purpose of the study?
- b. What were the research hypotheses or research questions?
- c. Describe the participants (any characteristics given, how they were recruited, etc.).
- d. Describe how the researchers collected their data (measures used, format of the survey, etc.).
- e. What were the main findings in relation to the research hypotheses?
- f. What are the limitations of the study (check the limitations section of the discussion). How do these limitations influence your perception of their findings?
- g. Think of another limitation of the study. For example, what is another reason the researchers may have found the results they did? It can be related to their participants, design, measures, statistical methods, or interpretation of their findings.

Email this document *and a copy of the article* to the participant pool administrator (Amy Camodeca at [asc19@psu.edu](mailto:asc19@psu.edu)). Make the subject Participant Pool Alternative Assignment and include your campus, course number, and instructor in your email. Allow 48 hours for updated credits.