Psychology Program Participant Pool Policies and Procedures Shepherd University

A. General Information

The Psychology Program Participant Pool has been established for two major purposes: 1) to provide a source of research participants for psychology faculty and students who are conducting research and 2) to introduce students in Psychology courses to the conduct of psychological science.

The Participant Pool functions as part of the broader PSYC 101 Research Exposure Requirement. Students enrolled in PSYC 101 Introduction to Psychology can satisfy this requirement by either participating in research (via the Participant Pool) or by writing reaction papers. The present document focuses primarily on the Participant Pool. (Complete instructions for the Research Exposure Requirement are provided to PSYC 101 students at the beginning of each semester.)

While it is generally accepted that participation in a research study is beneficial to psychology students, Shepherd's faculty consider mere participation insufficient to serve the second purpose. Therefore, it is required that some substantive information about the subject of the study and its methods be provided to participants during the APA-required debriefing following participation.

B. For PSYC 101 Instructors

1. Updated text describing the Research Exposure Requirement will be provided by the Research Exposure Coordinator the week before classes begin and must be included in your course syllabus.

2. During the first week of classes, you should arrange with the Research Exposure Coordinator to have them visit your PSYC 101 section(s) during the second week of classes to provide your students with an informational handout and some instruction on the Requirement and how to complete it. Plan on this taking about a half-hour of class time.

3. While completion of the Research Exposure Requirement does not *increase* a student's course grade, failure to complete this requirement should result in their grade being reduced by one full letter grade (10%). This should be clearly indicated in your course syllabus. (Inclusion of the text mentioned above in #1 satisfies this requirement.)

4. You may check the progress of your students at any time by accessing your Instructor account on the Sona system (https://shepherd.sona-systems.com/). Instructions on

how to use that system may be found here:
Sona Documentation for Instructors
During the week of final exams, the Research Exposure Coordinator will send you a
report listing any students who did not complete the requirement.

5. Questions about this requirement or use of the Sona system may be directed to the
    Research Exposure Coordinator. Most student questions are answered in either the
    handout they receive from the Coordinator, the Program's main Research Exposure
    webpage, or the Research Exposure FAQ page linked from that web page. Students may
    also be directed to the Coordinator if none of those resources suffices to answer their
    question.

C. For PSYC 101 Students

1. The Research Exposure Requirement is an important part of the PSYC 101 Introduction
    to Psychology course. Some information about this requirement will be included in your
    course syllabus. Additional information is available on the Psychology Program
    research participation website
    At the beginning of the semester, the Research Exposure Coordinator will visit your
    PSYC 101 class and describe exactly how you can go about completing this requirement.

2. Students enrolled in PSYC 101 are responsible for making sure that they meet the
    Research Exposure Requirement by the deadline listed in their PSYC 101 syllabus.
    Failure to meet this requirement will result in one full letter grade reduction (10%) in
    your final grade. Students can satisfy this requirement by either participating in
    research OR by reading research articles selected from the approved set available
    through a Brightspace site (which students will be given access to in the third week of
    classes) and correctly completing a quiz on each article they read. Students may mix
    and match these two options to meet this requirement. **Students must be at least 18
    years old in order to participate in the research studies. If you are under 18 years
    old, you must fulfill the Research Exposure Requirement by reading articles.**

3. Students will use the Sona system to sign up for research studies and keep track of their
    Research Exposure credits (https://shepherd.sona-systems.com/). Students will
    receive an e-mail during the second or third week of the semester containing their user
    ID and password for accessing the Sona system.

4. Students are expected to complete online studies immediately after signing up for them,
    and to must report to in-person and virtual research sessions on time. Cancellation of
    an in-person or virtual research appointment within 24 hours of the appointment time,
    failure to report at the assigned time, or tardiness of 10 minutes or more will result in
    an unexcused absence. Accrual of two unexcused absences will result in no longer being
    able to sign up for studies. Students with two unexcused absences would then have to
    complete the Research Exposure requirement by reading articles. This policy will not
    apply to documented emergency situations (e.g., medical emergency, death in the

family). Documentation must be presented to the Researcher or the Research Exposure Coordinator. Please note that "I forgot I signed up" or "I forgot I had a doctor's appointment at the same time" are not valid excuses.

5. If a researcher cancels within 24 hours of the agreed upon time, fails to report to the session, or is more than 10 minutes late, the student will receive credit for participation in that session and will not be required to make up the session. The student should report the incident to the Participant Pool Coordinator within 24 hours so that proper credit may be assigned.

   Answers to frequently asked questions may be found here:
   [Psychology research exposure FAQ](#)

D. For Researchers

1. Credits and Penalties
   Studies will be assigned a credit value based on the time required for the participant to complete the study. This includes time for instructions, time to complete the actual study procedures, and time for the debriefing. Credit values will be assigned in thirty-minute increments, rounded up. For example, if an online study requires 25 minutes to complete, it would be assigned a credit value of .5. In-person studies will additionally include a half-hour (half-credit) premium to account for travel time to and from a session. So, a 50-minute in-person session would be worth 1.5 credits (whereas a 50-minute online study will be worth 1 credit).
   If a participant cancels an in-person or virtual research appointment within 24 hours of the appointment time, fails to report to the session, or is more than 10 minutes late to the appointment, then they should be listed in the Sona system as an "unexcused no-show". If they present documentation for a valid emergency, then you may change this to an "excused no-show".
   Researchers have an obligation to set a good example for the student participants, and to treat them respectfully. If a researcher cancels a session within 24 hours of the scheduled time, fails to report to the session, or is more than 10 minutes late, the student will receive credit for participation in that study, but does not have to participate. Each such instance will be reported to the department chair or program coordinator. Two such instances may result in loss of Participant Pool privileges.

2. Responsibilities of Researchers

   a) Researcher documentation may be found linked from the [Psychology Researcher Resources website](#).

   b) The first step in applying for access to the Participant Pool is to have your project approved by the IRB. See the [IRB Web site](#) for the required forms and procedures.

c) While you are awaiting IRB approval, you may begin setting up your study on the Sona system. Just enter "0000" text for the IRB # and any future date for the expiration date (both are required by the Sona system); the Administrator will change these when your study is approved.

d) Every study listed in the Sona system must have a unique Title (used by Sona to identify your study apart from all the other studies). Ordinarily, this will be the same title you use for your IRB submission. This can be different in cases where the more formal title might reveal too much to potential participants. Just let the Administrator know when this is the case.

e) Every study listed in the Sona system must include a Description that is clear and comprehensible to a typical student enrolled in PSYC 101. This Description should give a potential participant enough information to decide whether or not to sign up for the study and proceed to the Informed Consent phase. This Description should not duplicate the consent form, but should provide enough information for a potential participant to make an informed decision as to whether they want to learn more about the study. This is especially important for in-person studies, where a certain amount of effort is necessary to show up to read the consent form.

f) Once IRB approval is obtained and the study is set up on Sona, the researcher should submit proof of IRB approval to the Research Exposure Coordinator. The Coordinator will then make the study Available for students to sign up. Be sure that you have set your study to Active as well.

g) Each session should end with a debriefing. One objective of the participant pool is for students to learn something about psychological research. The debriefing should include, in language that a typical PSYC 101 student will understand, information about the purpose of the study and something about the methods used in the study to accomplish that purpose. For in-person and virtual studies, the participant should have the opportunity to ask questions about the study and each person who will be collecting data on a project should be able to answer basic questions about the research. For online studies, the debriefing must include the researcher's name and e-mail address and/or phone number so that participants may ask questions electronically. In addition, conformance with the American Psychological Association's Ethics Code requires that the debriefing should reveal any deceptions involved in the research, should alleviate any negative cognitive, affective, or motivational impact the research could have on the participant, and it should convey respect for the participant as an individual and appreciation of his/her time and effort.

h) Following each in-person or virtual session, you should log into your Sona Researcher account and indicate for that session which participants showed up (assessing appropriate credit) and which had either an unexcused or excused no-show. This must be done within 24 hours following the session. For online studies,

you should periodically make sure that everyone who signs up and completes your survey has received credit.

E. For the Coordinator

The Research Exposure Coordinator serves as the Administrator on the Sona system and will perform the recordkeeping associated with the Participant Pool. Within the first three weeks of each semester (preferably during week two) the Coordinator will visit each PSYC 101 section to describe the Research Exposure Requirement to the students. The Coordinator will also request from the Registrar's office a listing of all students enrolled in all sections of PSYC 101 and create Participant accounts for them. Finally, the Coordinator will report to the Psychology Program Coordinator any researcher who fails to meet their obligations as outlined previously.

The current Research Exposure Coordinator is Dr. Lindsey Levitan, llevitan@shepherd.edu, Stutzman-Slonaker Room 104, 304-876-5804.