

Department of Psychological Sciences

University of Missouri-St. Louis

Human Subjects Pool

Policies and Procedures

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1. Overview, Purpose and Objectives

Research Activity

The purpose of the human subjects pool (HSP) is to facilitate research in the department. Experimenters who wish to use the HSP must be affiliated with the Department of Psychological Sciences at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL).

Researchers who use the HSP to collect data for research projects must be one of the following three parties: (1) department faculty members at UMSL, (2) graduate students currently enrolled in a Psychology degree program at UMSL, or (3) undergraduate declared Psychology majors at UMSL. All students (graduate and undergraduate) must be supervised by a faculty member in the Department of Psychological Sciences to use the HSP. Specific responsibilities for researchers are outlined in section 2 of this manual.

Instructors in the Department of Psychological Sciences at UMSL may choose to use the HSP as a component of their classes, either as a course requirement or for extra credit purposes. Specific information for instructors is outlined in section 3 of this manual.

Students of courses in the Department of Psychological Sciences may participate in research studies either as part of a requirement or extra credit in a course, or for voluntary participation. Specific information for participants is outlined in section 4 of this manual.

Policies in this manual are enforced by the Director of the Human Subjects Pool (DHSP) and the Subject Pool Assistant (SPA), as outlined in sections 5 and 6 of this manual.

Currently the department uses Sona-Systems as a research management program. This program serves as a mechanism for posting recruitment flyers, study signups/scheduling, and relaying credit reports to instructors. All HSP users are responsible for using this system. Quick notes for using this system are outlined in appendices A, B, and C of this manual.

Ethical Guidelines

By instituting these policies, the HSP aims to uphold ethical principles in conducting research as outlined by the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (updated 1 June 2002), as well as Title 45 CFR Part 46 (updated 23 June 2005), and the Belmont Report (18 April 1979). In particular the following *concepts* guide these policies:

- Confidentiality
- Deception and Debriefing
- Competence and Delegation of work to others
- Informed consent
- Offering of inducements for research participation
- Pedagogical emphasis of research participation

The HSP is not responsible for researchers' actions regarding the conduct of ethical research. However, the HSP expects that ethical principles will be upheld, and is structured to facilitate ethical behavior.

To facilitate the ethical conduct of research, the HSP also includes a mechanism for arranging research alternatives. Currently this takes the form of reading a journal article and writing a brief summary report. Each article report is worth 1 experimental credit. These are currently posted within Sona-Systems and processed by the SPA.

Departmental Requirements

Currently, all regular-section (i.e., day sections of classes that meet on-campus) of 1000-level Psychology courses require research participation from students. Specific information will be made available to students by instructors. Each semester, prior to the opening of the HSP, a handout will be made available to all instructors that details sign-up processes, the closing date, and contact information for the HSP to facilitate student participation.

Additional Information about Sona-Systems

Sona-Systems is an experiment management program that is used by the department to coordinate research. Students enrolled in psychology courses that require research participation or allow participation for extra credit must use this system to sign up for studies, and relay credit information to instructors. Please note that the system uses specific roles for different users:

- *Participant (Student)* – students who sign up to participate in research studies.
- *Researcher* – can either be a faculty member or student (graduate or undergraduate) that is running a research study. Researchers are in charge of posting timeslots, awarding credits, maintaining contact with participants, and other details associated with running studies.
- *Principal Investigator* – this role is only held by department faculty. If a student is running a study as a researcher, they must be supervised by a faculty member, listed as a 'principal investigator' in Sona-Systems.
- *Instructor* – this role is held by instructors of classes that are listed in Sona-Systems.
- *Administrator* – only the DHSP and SPA have administrator accounts. These users oversee system use, conduct system maintenance, diagnostic information, and other processes not

The system serves as an electronic/online location for posting study information. Participants must sign up for studies through Sona-Systems. Once they have completed their participation, researchers award credits in the system. Credits are also relayed to instructors for class grade purposes. This system provides a secure interface for relaying information in a confidential manner. Additional details about using Sona-Systems are covered in the annual Department Workshop.

2. Use of Human Subject Pool: Information for Researchers

Departmental Policies and Procedures: Steps for Utilizing the Subject Pool

The steps for getting a study into the system/approved to begin recruitment are listed below. Please note that the principal investigator of the study should furnish the documentation and be the primary point of contact for a study. In other words, if a graduate student is the lead researcher/ investigator on a project, they are responsible for furnishing the documentation. If a faculty member is the lead researcher/principal investigator, they should serve as the primary point of contact and furnish the required documentation (below).

1. First, attend the Department Workshop on the use of the Human Subjects Pool. A department-wide meeting is held once per year, typically during the first week of classes in the fall semester.
2. After you have attended the Department Workshop, the following documentation is required for all studies before they will be posted in the system and approved for recruitment. All documentation will be submitted via the Subject Pool Canvas site:
 - a. Proof of ethical training (CITI workshop certificate).
 - b. UMSL IRB approval (the letter published by the IRB chair is required).
 - c. Completed and signed *Subject Pool Use Agreement* form (Faculty only if a faculty member is the sole researcher, and Faculty and Student if student research project).
 - d. Completed *Study Information Sheet* for Sona-Systems posting.
 - e. Also include CITI certificates for any other research assistants helping with the project (i.e., graduate students or 3390 undergraduate students).
3. Once these documents are received, the DHSP will review all materials and note any required modifications. After any modifications are made and approved, the study posting will be input into Sona-Systems and recruitment may begin. In some cases, researchers may be required to meet with the DHSP to discuss recruitment issues for complex protocols.

Researcher's Duties and Responsibilities

1. Maintain strict confidentiality of research participants
2. Use appropriate sign-up procedures and communicate important information to participants
3. Ensure informed consent, maintain copy if applicable
4. Log experimental credits in Sona-Systems within 24 hours of study completion.
5. If requested, provide a receipt for participation to participant.
6. Ensure reasonable steps made to conduct research in a professional manner (show up!, treat participants ethically, etc)
7. Provide debriefing to participant as specified by APA ethical guidelines
8. Check with DHSP before contacting instructors about your study.
9. Notify DHSP:
 - a. when no longer accepting participants, and
 - b. when data collection is complete

Credit Values for Studies

One participation credit is equivalent to one hour of participation in a study. The increments listed below should be used for assigning study credit. *However, 1 additional credit will be added to the amounts listed below for all in-person studies due to the extra effort and time it takes to complete an in person study.*

Time	Credits	Time	Credits
0 – 30 min	0.5	121 – 150 min	2.5
31 – 60 min	1	151 – 180 min	3
61 – 90 min	1.5	181 min and beyond	Speak with DHSP
91 – 120 min	2		

3. Use of Human Subject Pool: Information for Instructors

Instructors will be contacted approximately two weeks before the beginning of the semester to inquire whether their course(s) will be participating in the subject pool.

The DHSP will request a few pieces of information to get each class listed in the system:

- Course name
- Course number
- Section number
- Days and times course meets
- Number of credits students can earn/apply (maximum of 6 credits currently allowed)

From this information, a course listing will be created and linked with your name. For example, a class listing will look like: “Abnormal Psychology 2245-001 MW 11:00AM”

Within Sona-Systems, instructors have access to their own courses and are free to get the information regarding their class/credit roster directly.

If instructors do not wish to use Sona-Systems directly, the following information will be requested:

1. Spreadsheet with class list (e.g., exported grade sheet from Canvas)
2. Preference as to frequency of update of research credits (i.e., weekly, monthly)
3. In addition, if instructors would find a demonstration/tutorial helpful for showing students in their class how to sign up for studies, one can be conducted

4. Use of Human Subject Pool: Information for Participants

Responsibilities of Participants/Students

(This information is also posted on the Research Participation area of the department website)

- a. Do not query instructors about specific details of individual research projects (e.g., “Did you get that credit from the study I did?”). You can always check your credits under “My Schedule and Credits” within Sona-Systems. Alternately, you can follow up with the researcher directly through their email address listed on the study posting in Sona-Systems. If you see that credits were granted for participation, and that it was assigned to the proper class, your instructor will receive the report and update their grade sheet.
- b. Locate projects in which to participate in Sona-Systems and follow instructions for signing up and participating. Details are listed on postings or you can contact the researcher via email if you have any questions.
- c. Participate with informed consent and assurance of confidentiality unless otherwise stated
- d. Provide credit verification information to researchers (typically your name and UMSL email address). You should receive a confirmation email when credit(s) are granted. If you prefer to receive a printable receipt, request this from researcher(s) directly.
- e. Do not divulge specifics of any experiment (i.e., following debriefing of a study involving deception or study hypotheses).
- f. Attend the experimental session if you sign up, or give advanced notice if you must cancel. Researchers plan on you being present unless you tell them. You can cancel sessions up to 24 hours in advance.

Dealing with No-Shows

The following procedures pertain to the possibility that either the participant or the researcher fails to keep a *confirmed* appointment without reasonable notification (i.e., at least 24 hours prior to session).

1. *Participant no show* ... researcher logs a ‘no show’ in the system if participant does not cancel at least 24 hours before participation and reasonable arrangements were not made to reschedule. This practice is to determine if a pattern emerges. Instructors have discretion for enforcement. If a participant is repeatedly not showing up for studies they may not be allowed to continue to register for studies.
2. *Researcher no show* ... reasonable accommodations must be made by the researcher in the event of emergencies. If a researcher does not show up for a scheduled session and rescheduling was not attempted or possible, the participant should receive credit. For a grievance, the participant must first contact the researcher – the researcher is then expected to provide credit or justify why credit should not be granted. Participant may contact the DHSP or SPA to register a complaint.

5. Responsibilities of Director of Human Subjects Pool

1. Governs policies and procedures within this document.
2. Conducts Department Workshop on the use of human subjects – the workshop provides an introduction to use of the HSP, department policies, and use of Sona-Systems for research participation. The workshop is conducted at the beginning of the Fall semester, typically during the first week of classes. Information about the workshop is announced in a department-wide email.
3. Supervises and coordinates activities with the SPA.
4. Assists researchers with study setup and adherence to department policies governing recruitment activities.
5. Assists participants with account creation and management issues.
6. Assists instructors with course setup, credit reporting, and communication of information to students.
7. Maintains Sona-Systems experiment management system for Department of Psychological Sciences use.
8. Works with department website administrator to maintain updated documentation for posting on department website. The website contains the following information:
 - a. Contains information on why we do research and why students may be involved as participants.
 - b. Instructs participants where and how to create Sona-Systems accounts.
 - c. Contains contact information of current DHSP and SPA.
 - d. Contains instructions and troubleshooting for use of Sona-Systems software.

6. Responsibilities of Human Subjects Pool Assistant

1. SPA attempts to maintain strict confidentiality of research participants.
2. Coordinates alternative assignment credits provided from participants as assignments are turned in.
3. Assists DHSP by answering questions from students about participation and assists participants in signup issues.
4. When instructor cannot view information in Sona-Systems, sends to each instructor (on a timeline they prefer) a spreadsheet containing students' total number of research credits earned (but not in which studies the participant was involved).
5. Updates records and assists with helping students on HSP use, credits, no-shows and other important information.
6. Serves as first line contact for help requests grievance issues.

Appendix A: Quick-Start Instructions for Researchers

1. First be sure you have completed the HSP training (offered once each year).
2. If you are a new user, please email the DHSP (psyc_spa@umsl.edu). You will be emailed a login name and password for your account.
3. In addition, you must submit the DHSP required documentation to the Subject Pool Canvas page as explained in [section 2](#). After all required documentation is received, the DHSP will assist in creating the posting.
4. The DHSP will assist in editing the posting for content using the study information sheet. Edits will be made for consistency and procedural clarity.

If Setting up a standard study (in a lab)...

5. After approval log into Sona-Systems, view your study, and click “View / Administer Time Slots”
6. Here you can add timeslots. To add a single timeslot, click “Add a Timeslot”, then choose a date, the duration, the maximum number of participants allowed, and state the location. If you have the same times and location on multiple days, click “Add Multiple Timeslots”. Participants will now be able to sign up for your study.
7. Once a session’s date has passed, you may click on the session to issue credit for participation. You will see a list of names of participants that signed up. Issue credit or a no-show this way. **You must do this within 24 hours of completion of the session.**

Setting up a web-based study (external)...

5. After approval log into Sona-Systems and view your study.
6. You must include the study’s URL (e.g., link to Qualtrics).
7. Make sure you ask for an identifier (i.e., first and last name and UMSL email address) so you can award credit after they have participated. This is essential and may require IRB approval prior to posting.
8. Create a single timeslot on the last date you wish to collect data for the semester, and indicate the maximum number of participants you will allow to participate. Check with the HSP closing date – do NOT schedule your session after this date.
9. You must manually award credit afterwards just like a standard study. You will see a list of names of participants that signed up. Issue credit or a no-show this way. **You must do this within 24 hours of completion of the session.**

Setting up a web-based study (internal)...

5. After approval, log into Sona-Systems and click “Update Online Survey”. Follow the instructions and create your survey. When you are finished, click “Final Review”.
6. Click “View / Administer Time Slots”.
7. Create a single timeslot on the last date you wish to collect data for the semester, and indicate the maximum number of participants you will allow to participate. Check with the HSP closing date – do NOT schedule your session after this date.
8. Credits will be automatically awarded when the participant saves their responses.

Appendix B: Quick-Start Instructions for Instructors

1. Email the SPA (psyc_spa@umsl.edu) to update your course information for the semester. If you are a new user, please indicate this in your message. You will be emailed a login name and password for your account. If you have previously used the subject pool as an instructor your account should still be valid/in the system.
2. Each semester this information is cleared and all courses are added (even if it was in the HSP the prior semester).
3. The DHSP and SPA will ask for the following information: (1) Your class name, (2) Section number, (3) Days and times your class meets, and (4) How many credits you would like to allow your students to earn. There is currently a maximum of 6 credits allowed per class.
4. The SPA will then check on other details regarding your specific class needs.

To obtain credit reports...

5. Go to <https://umsl.sona-systems.com/> and log in
6. Click “Course Reports” on the main menu. You will see a list of all the courses you are teaching.
7. You will now be able to generate a report and see which students have participated in research for credit in your course.
 - Alternately the SPA can send you periodic accounts or update your course gradesheet on Canvas, please note this in communication with them.

If a student claims that they earned credits and you do not have a record in your report...

- The student must have verification from the researcher. The researcher can furnish a credit receipt if requested, or confirm participation via email.
- Our goal is that students will not burden instructors with such requests. They can check credit status on their own in Sona-Systems, and have a signup/participation history with contact information for researchers. Please direct them to contact psyc_spa@umsl.edu if they are having difficulties, and we can assist them.

To have us coordinate research alternatives for your class...

- You don't have to do anything. Assignments are made available in Sona-Systems and consist of downloading, reading, and reviewing journal articles. Articles come from a variety of Psychology topics, and are new each semester.
- Students are instructed to submit the summaries through a Qualtrics link in Sona.
- Each summary is worth 1 credit.
- Student responses are reviewed for content, and credits are awarded/uploaded to your credit reports in Sona-Systems.
- If you prefer to coordinate your own research alternatives, just let the DHSP know and we set this option as not available to students in your particular course(s).

Appendix C: Quick-Start Instructions for Students

If you previously have had a Sona account:

1. Go to <https://umsl.sona-systems.com/>
2. On the left hand side, click the UMSL ID Login. Login with your standard UMSL username and password you use for everything else on campus (NOT your prior Sona account). The system will match you up with your previous account.
3. Click on all of the courses in which you are enrolled for the semester. Please make sure that you choose the proper sections of your courses, otherwise your credit may not be awarded or go to the wrong course. Your list of selected courses will be displayed on the right side of the page.

If you have not used Sona-systems before:

1. Go to <https://umsl.sona-systems.com/>
2. On the left hand side, click the UMSL ID Login. You *do not* need to click request account. Login with your standard UMSL username and password you use for everything else on campus (NOT your prior Sona account).
3. A screen will then pop up with your account information, including your name and email address. Click on all of the courses in which you are enrolled for the semester. Please make sure that you choose the proper sections of your courses, otherwise your credit may not be awarded or go to the wrong course. Your list of selected courses will be displayed on the right side of the page.
4. Click “Request Account.”
5. You will then be taken back to the home page, and an email confirmation will be sent to you.
6. You can now login to the system.

For all students:

7. Once you login to the system, you will be asked to complete a short series of pre-screen questions. Based on your responses to these questions, you may be eligible for additional studies that otherwise might not be listed. You will only need to complete this once per semester.
8. After completing the pre-screen (or opting out if you choose), you will be presented with a page where you can see the list of available studies. Click “View Available Studies”, and you will see a list of studies. Click any of the links and follow the instructions for participation.

*If you have any problems creating an account, contact the subject pool assistant:
psyc_spa@umsl.edu.*

If you have questions about whether credit has been granted...

1. First check the status under “My Schedule and Credits” in Sona-Systems. You can see if a credit has been granted here.
2. If the credit has not been processed but you did participate in a study, email the researcher directly. Do not contact your instructor about this, they will not have information to answer your question. Also note that researchers are required to process credits within 24 hours of study completion, so please do not send an email to inquire before this time has passed.
3. If you are unable to resolve an issue after contacting the researcher running the study, then email psyc_spa@umsl.edu to make inquiries about next steps. Provide the study name, researcher’s name, the date you participated, and any other important details when explaining the situation.

Appendix D: Prescreen Information

If requested by researchers, a prescreen may be arranged prior to the beginning of the semester. The prescreen serves as a mechanism for ensuring that students meet eligibility requirements prior to seeing available studies. This can be important for ensuring that students are honest/accurate in representing their eligibility for studies (i.e., they will not claim to be a person they are not just to participate in a particular study), as well as reducing any effects associated with asking particular questions before signing up (i.e., race or gender). For example, if participation in a study requires that students are female, then this study will only be visible for females. Examples of typical questions may include class rank, major, gender, race, age, employment status, and so on. Typically prescreen information will be linked to a single item, but in the case that researchers require a short multi-item scale, this may require that researchers create composite scores, and then will be able to flag and contact participants directly.

If researchers wish to use the prescreen, materials must be submitted to the DHSP by the specified date prior to the beginning of each semester. The DHSP will solicit requests to use the prescreen, ask for any items that researchers are requesting to be added, and note the deadline for submitting materials. This email will typically be sent to the department 1 month before the due date. The timeline below is an example of general dates for implementing the prescreen for the Fall and Spring semesters.

Fall Semester

Email to department: Early July
Materials due to DHSP: Early August
Opening of subject pool: Mid-late August

Spring Semester

Email to department: Early December
Materials due to DHSP: Early January
Opening of subject pool: Mid-late January

Use of the prescreen for any particular study must be approved by the campus IRB prior to using the information. This includes not only your use of the prescreen, but also the specific items which you are requesting to include. Please note that IRB approval does not guarantee inclusion in the prescreen - particular questions or measures may be excluded based on time constraints, question type, or other concerns that might interfere with recruitment in other studies. The prescreen is designed to take less than 10 minutes to complete in total, and students will not receive credit for completing it. Typically prescreen information will consist of single items, but in some cases a short scale can be included (10 – 15 items maximum), depending on space.

After the specified cutoff date for each semester, no new measures will be added. Once the prescreen is in place, it will remain active for the entire semester. Modifications to the prescreen will only be made if deemed necessary by the DHSP as a result of an error, ethical concern, or other extenuating circumstance.