

Research Participation (Subject Pool) Information

This document contains further information about research participation. Participating in research studies is one way of fulfilling your course research requirement, or of obtaining extra credit. Your course syllabus should contain further information regarding other ways you can fulfill this requirement or to obtain extra credit. You can also ask your instructor about the full range of options that are available in your course.

Why should I participate in research?

The studies you will participate in are run by Penn faculty, researchers, and students, and can provide a very interesting glimpse into cutting-edge psychological science.

It's a learning experience: participating in psychological research can provide you with insight into the empirical research process that will be valuable whether or not you pursue psychology as a career.

It also serves to foster the research in our department – which is one of the finest departments in the country and is conducting groundbreaking studies every day.

How does the research participation system work?

First, you'll need to request an account on the Sona Systems website. Your account allows you to sign up for studies and check the number of credits you have accrued. The account also keeps track of your credits for your instructor. After creating a new account, you will be sent an email with login details, including password. If you forget your password, you may request that the system resends it to you.

IMPORTANT: Please read the instructions carefully BEFORE creating your account!!

To create an account:

1. Go to Penn's Sona Systems website: <https://upenn.sona-systems.com>

Make sure you are using this url and not another similar-looking one; other institutions than the Psychology Department at Penn may use Sona Systems for different purposes; signing up for studies in any other website will **not** count toward fulfilling the requirements for your class.

Please make sure that your web browser accepts “cookies” (an option that should be turned on).

2. Click on “Request Account” at the right of the first page (or “Forgot Password?” if you need to retrieve your password.)
3. Fill out all the fields of the page in the following way:
 - Fill out your first and last name.
 - Choose something easy to remember as your User ID. You will use this each time you log in to the system.
 - Use your Penn email address.
 - As Student Number, use your 8-digit Penn ID number (the 8 large digits in the middle of your Penn ID card). Please make sure you have entered this number

accurately. This number will be used by your instructor to link your participation record to your name, in order to assign you credit.

- You may optionally include a phone number.
4. Once you have received your login details and password, log into the Sona Systems website (<https://upenn.sona-systems.com>) using your User ID and password on the left hand side of the page.

If you need to change something on your account, you can do that by logging in to your account and then going to "My Profile."

If you have participated in the subject pool in a past semester, you do not need to set up a new account. Your old account information will still be active (though all of your past courses and credit history will be removed).

How do I find out about experiments?

Log in to the website and select the "View Available Studies" option. New experiments and new time slots will be posted throughout the semester. If nothing is available when you look the first time, try again in a day or two. There are many different kinds of studies going on, so if you start early, you should be able to find ones that fit your interests and your schedule.

IMPORTANT: Some experiments have requirements for participants (e.g., participants must be 18 or older; participants must be English native speakers, etc...). If you wait until the last minute to fulfill your requirements, there may not be enough studies you fulfill the requirements for and you may not be able to accrue all of your participation hours.

What do I need to do to participate?

Sign up for an open slot on the Sona Systems site. If you are signing up for an in-person lab experiment, be sure to write down the time and location of the study, the name of the experimenter, and his/her email address. Be on time for the experiment, and plan to stay for the entire time (the length of the study will be specified on the Sona Systems site). If you are not familiar with the building where the study is being held, look at a campus map or give yourself extra time to find it.

Some experiments have specific requirements for participation (e.g., only left-handers, only people who love Penn, etc.). Please read the requirements carefully before signing up.

If you sign up for an online web experiment, there will usually only be a single available session. After you sign up, you will immediately be able to participate by clicking on the link to the experiment. You may also log back into the system at a later point to participate then.

How do I assign credit to my course(s)?

When you sign up for an experiment, you'll need to select a course to assign your credit to in order to make sure your participation is properly credited. If you are enrolled in more than one course that requires experiment participation, you will need to distribute your credited hours to

each class accordingly. That is, you must assign credit to one course or another and cannot double count the same experimental participation for two different courses. You may adjust these assignments of credit to courses after you have participated as well. To do so, make sure you have selected both of your courses. Then, go to “My Schedule / Credits, and click “Reassign” alongside the credits you wish to reassign. **At the end of the semester, it is very important that you have allocated the requisite credited hours to each course.**

Please note that the system does not allow you to split up credit from a single experiment across multiple different courses. For example, if you sign up for an experiment that assigns 2 credits, these 2 credits must be assigned in full to only a single course, and cannot be split up across different courses.

What if I sign up for a session and can't go?

You should plan carefully to avoid missing experiment sessions. Failing to show up for a study wastes the experimenter's time and prevents another student from attending that session. If you know 24 hours or more in advance that you can't make a session, you can cancel through the Sona Systems website. If an emergency arises closer to the time of a session, you should email the experimenter to cancel. If you fail to show up for a study without contacting the experimenter, you may receive a penalty—that is, you will have to do extra experiment hours on top of your requirement.

If you show up for a study and the experimenter is not there, contact them to find out what happened. If they had to miss a session and did not contact you beforehand, you should receive credit for the session. If a problem arises surrounding an issue of this sort, please contact the subject pool administrators: sona-admin@psych.upenn.edu

Can I participate in more hours than is required to receive credit/extra credit?

Nothing prevents you from participating in many more hours than necessary. However, in doing so, you may create difficulties for your classmates who need to fulfill their requirements and may not be able to find studies to sign up for. Also, note that any extra hours you may have accumulated will **not** roll over to the subsequent semester. All accounts are reset at the end of each semester.

How long will experiments be running?

Experiments will be running through reading days, but **not** during finals. We strongly encourage you to START EARLY! Many studies will be finished before the end of the semester, so if you wait until the last minute, you may not be able to find any experiments.

What if I forget my login or password?

Use the "forgot password" option on the front page of the Sona Systems site—all you need is your email address, and your logon or password can be automatically sent to you.

Is there an app?

Yes. You can download a Sona Systems Mobile app for iPhone in the Apple App Store, or for Android in the Google Play Store. This will allow you to sign up for experiments using your phone. Please see here:

<http://www.sona-systems.com/app-download.aspx>

However, please note that it is preferable for you to participate in online experiments using a full screen computer.

What if I have other questions?

If you have questions about your course requirement, please ask your professor or TA. If you have general questions about the research participation system, you may contact the subject pool administrators, at: sona-admin@psych.upenn.edu

And finally...

The faculty, graduate students, and your fellow undergraduates who are running these studies **greatly appreciate** your participation. Thanks so much in advance for signing up and taking research participation seriously—you are helping to advance science!

Further generic information about participating in experiments on Sona Systems is available on youtube at this address:-

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1OnT2ZU6QQ