

## Instructions for Participating in the Psychology Course Credit Participant Pool

**Due to COVID-19, all studies in Spring 2021 will be conducted online/virtually.**

Below are instructions about participating in the Psychology Department's Course Credit Participant Pool. Read the information carefully. If you have questions, consult the FAQ on the department website or contact the Participant Pool Coordinator ([psych-subjects@illinois.edu](mailto:psych-subjects@illinois.edu)). If you have moral or ethical concerns with participating in research, please contact your instructor for an alternative assignment.

You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in the Course Credit Pool. For Spring 2021, **you must be 18 years old on or before March 3, 2021** to participate.

**If you will NOT be 18 by the date above, you will complete the Under-18 Alternative Assignment. You must still register on SONA and complete the prescreen questionnaire.**

### Participation Credits

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SONA is an online system where you can sign up for studies and keep track of your credits earned. Credits are determined by the length of the study according to the following:

0.5 credit = 25 mins	1.5 credits = 80 mins	2.5 credits = 140 mins
1.0 credit = 50 mins	2.0 credits = 110 mins	3.0 credits = 170 mins

For PSYC100, 7 credits are required. For other courses, please consult your course instructor or the course syllabus for the number of SONA credits offered by your course. How each credit is converted to points for your psychology course grade will be determined by your instructor.

You can only receive credit for participating in studies that you sign up via SONA. You can review your credits by logging into SONA and clicking on "My Schedule and Credits." Researchers must record credit within 48 hours of the study. If credit has not been recorded after 48 hours, email the researcher in charge of the study and the Participant Pool Coordinator (be sure to include your name, NetID, study #, and date/time of your study appointment).

### SONA Registration and Prescreen Questionnaire

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If you have ALREADY REGISTERED on Course Credit SONA at any time after January 2017, please use your existing user ID and password. All others, please request for a new account.

If you DO NOT have a user account on Course Credit SONA, please register ASAP to become a Course Credit Pool participant and complete the prescreen questionnaire.

Registering for the Psychology Course Credit Participant Pool consists of 2 steps: (1) Create an account in the online SONA system, and (2) Complete the prescreen questionnaire. Even if you are under-18, you must still register in SONA before completing the alternative assignment.

**The deadline to register in SONA for Spring 2021 is March 3, 2021.**

1. Go to the Course Credit SONA website [<https://uiuc.sona-systems.com/>]. On the screen, click *Request Account*. Enter your name, user ID (the NetID should be used), UIUC email, student ID number, birthdate, and the course(s) you want credit in. Your temporary password will be emailed to you promptly (be sure to check your junk mail folder). **When you register, you MUST use your UIUC email address**; if you use an alternative address, you may be asked to complete the registration process again. **Please enter your UIUC email address carefully**, as you will need a correct email address to receive the temporary pass code. Please double check that you have selected the correct psychology course section. If this part is wrong, your instructor may not receive reports of your credits, which may affect your grades.
2. Using the user ID and the temporary password that was emailed to you, log into your Course Credit SONA account. You will be asked to take a prescreen questionnaire, which includes a variety of background questions. The prescreen results are purged at the end of each semester, so you will be prompted to complete the prescreen every semester when you take psychology courses that allow credit for research participation. Please answer all questions honestly. All responses will be kept confidential.
3. For returning users from previous semesters, remember to update your list of course(s) that you'd like to receive credit for! If this part is not updated, your instructor may not receive reports of your credits, which may affect your grades.

You will automatically receive 1 credit for completing the prescreen questionnaire if you complete it **before the registration deadline**. After that, you will still need to complete the prescreen before participating in any studies, but you will only get 0.5 credit for it.

Please contact the Participant Pool Coordinator if you have problems registering. If you do not register in the Course Credit SONA system, you will not be able to sign up for any studies.

### Signing up for Studies

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Once you have taken the prescreen in the Course Credit SONA, you can sign up for studies. **You must complete all studies by May 6, 2021 at 5:00pm CST (Reading Day)**. If you're under-18, you must complete the Under-18 Alternative Assignment and submit the necessary information to the Participant Pool Coordinator by May 6, 2021 (see Under-18 Alternative Assignment Instruction). It takes some time before studies are posted. Don't panic if no studies are posted for the first few days of the semester. Follow the directions below and keep checking SONA.

To sign up for studies, log in to the Course Credit SONA website and click the Study Sign-Up box. This will take you to a list of the studies that you are eligible to participate in. You can also click on "Studies" from the top toolbar and a list will be provided. This page shows studies that are available on a particular day. You can select a different date by using the drop-down menu at the top of the page. Studies that currently have available participation times (timeslots) will have "TIMESLOTS AVAILABLE" listed next to the study.

For each study, you can see available timeslots, the length of the study, and the study type (e.g., multi-part study). Some studies have requirements that you must meet in order to take part in them. Pay close attentions to a study's requirements and do not sign up for it if you do not meet them. You won't know any other details about the study. For scheduled sessions, you will receive a reminder email the night before the study. However, you are responsible for properly completing the study even if you do not get the email.

## General Guidelines for Participating in Studies

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**For Spring 2021, all studies will be conducted online/virtually.** That is, no Course Credit studies this semester will involve physically visiting a research lab.

Please follow instructions, be respectful, take participation seriously, and try to give quality responses. Before starting a study, please turn off mobile phones and anything else that may be distracting. If you purposely provide inaccurate or inappropriate responses, or respond in a manner which makes the researcher believe that your data will be unusable, you will not receive any credit for the study.

There are 3 basic types of studies:

### Online Studies

- Online studies may be survey questionnaires or computer-based experiments with cognitive or behavioral tasks.
- After you sign up for an online study on SONA, you need to click on the study number and click "View Study Website" to access the study. **To receive credit for an online study, you must complete it before the study deadline.**
- ***Note that for online studies, the "timeslot" you sign up for in SONA is the deadline.*** For example, if you sign up for an online study timeslot for May 2 at 5:00pm, the entire survey must be completed by May 2 at 5:00pm for you to receive credit.
- If you do not complete an online study before the deadline, you will be marked as a No-Show. Note that all deadlines/times are in CST.
- You **MUST** complete the entire online study in one sitting; be sure you have enough time to complete the study before you begin (study duration is indicated on the sign-up page).

### Virtual Studies

- Virtual studies are usually studies conducted over video-conference (e.g., Zoom) that involve virtual interactions with an experimenter (i.e., no in-person contact).
- After you sign up for a virtual study on SONA, you will be given the study link 10 minutes prior to the scheduled appointment via email. The link will also appear in the "My Schedule" section of your SONA account 10 minutes prior to the scheduled time.
- ***Note that for virtual studies, the "timeslot" you sign up for in SONA is the scheduled appointment date/time.*** This means you must access the study link at the scheduled date/time and follow the experimenter's instructions throughout the study to receive credit. For example, if you sign up for a virtual study scheduled to begin at 5:00pm on May 2, you must log on to SONA at 4:50-5:00pm on May 2 to access the study.

- Be sure you have enough time to virtually interact with the experimenter for the entire duration of the study (study duration is indicated on the sign-up page). Note that all timeslots are in CST.
- During your appointment, please make sure that mobile phones and anything else that may be distracting are turned off.
- If you're late or if you miss the appointment for a virtual study, you will be marked as an Unexcused No-Show. Thus, be sure to sign up for the dates/times that you are actually available to do the study. For example, accidentally signing up during your class time and failing to cancel the appointment (and therefore missing the study) will NOT be excused.
- If the researcher is not available when you access the virtual study, double check your appointment date/time first. If you wait 15 minutes past the scheduled start time and the researcher is still not available, then email the researcher in charge of the study and the Participant Pool Coordinator to notify them that you accessed the study on time and were ready to participate (be sure to include your name, NetID, study #, date/time of study session). The information will be reviewed, and you will be given credit.

### **Multi-Part Studies**

- Multi-part studies are online or virtual studies that have 2-4 separate parts.
- If you sign up for a multi-part study, it is your responsibility to complete ALL of the sessions on time. Note that all deadlines/timeslots are in CST.
- If you cancel a part of a multi-part study, the subsequent parts (but not preceding parts) will also be cancelled. You will need to ask the Participant Pool Coordinator to manually sign you up for the other parts again, if you would like to participate in it at a later date.
- Often, if you miss the first session, you will be marked as No-Show for the subsequent sessions.
- In some cases, you may receive prorated credit for partial completion of a multi-part study. Ask the researcher to provide the Course Credit Early Withdrawal Form, which must be submitted to the Participant Pool Coordinator for you to receive partial credit.

### **Cancelling Studies**

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Each study has their own cancellation deadline. Please pay close attention to this information on the study information page before you sign up. If it is before the cancellation deadline, then you can cancel your appointment online in the Course Credit SONA system. Log in and click My Schedule/Credits. This screen shows studies that you are signed up for. If it is before the deadline for a certain appointment, there will be a "Cancel" button next to it. Once you click "Cancel," you will need to confirm that you want to cancel the appointment. Save a copy of this page as a record of your cancellation.

If the cancellation deadline has passed and you miss a scheduled appointment, an Unexcused No-Show will be recorded on your account. If you have a valid justification for the cancellation/absence with supporting documentation, email the Participant Pool Coordinator. This information will be reviewed and in certain cases (e.g., documented illness), the Unexcused No-Show may be changed to Excused.

Sometimes, researchers may cancel a study. If a researcher cancels less than 24 hours in advance, they should email you and explain that the session has been cancelled, and you will receive credit for the study. If it is more than 24 hours in advance, you will still be notified, but you will be marked as an Excused No-Show in the SONA system and will not receive credit for the study (although you can reschedule and sign up for the same study again, if you'd like).

## **No-Shows**

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A No-Show includes any situation in which the participant does not complete a study session and receives 0 credit. A No-Show is not necessarily a penalty because it does not remove credit earned; it just doesn't add a credit to your account. There are two kinds of No-Shows: Excused and Unexcused.

### **Excused No-Show**

- An Excused No-Show is marked when a participant misses a scheduled appointment and has a valid documented excuse (e.g., doctor's note, letter from the Emergency Dean).
- Excused No-Shows are also granted whenever a researcher cancels a study session more than 24 hours in advance, if a participant chooses to withdraw from a study, or if a participant is asked to leave the study.
- An Excused No-Show is also marked when online studies are incomplete or past due.
- Excused No-Shows will not count towards your unexcused absences, so they will not influence whether your account gets locked (see below).

### **Unexcused No-Show**

- An Unexcused No-Show is marked when a participant misses a scheduled appointment and has no valid documented excuse (e.g., forgetting about the appointment, being late).
- Note that Unexcused No-Shows apply specifically to virtual (and onsite) studies, in which experimenters are counting on participants to virtually (or physically) show up.
- If you have been given an Unexcused No-Show and can provide a valid documented excuse, email the Participant Pool Coordinator (be sure to include your name, NetID, study #, date/time of study session). If approved, your No-Show will be changed from Unexcused to Excused.
- If you receive 2 Unexcused No-Shows, your account will be locked. While your account is locked, you will NOT be able to sign up for studies (see "Locked Accounts" below).
- If you have more than 4 Unexcused No-Shows in a given semester, your account will be permanently locked, and you will not be able to earn any further SONA participation credits to fulfill course requirements. Please consult your instructor should that happen.

### **Locked Accounts**

Your account will be locked if you receive 2 or more Unexcused No-Shows. You can be marked as an Unexcused No-Show if you do not have a valid excuse for missing a scheduled appointment or for being late to an appointment. While your account is locked, you will NOT be able to sign up for studies, although you can still take part in any studies that you have already signed up for and keep the credits you have already earned through other studies. There are two ways to get your SONA account unlocked:

1. You can provide documentation justifying your Unexcused No-Shows. Valid documentation would include a letter from the emergency dean, McKinley, or other authorized professional. You can submit your documentation via email to the Participant Pool Coordinator (be sure to include your name, NetID, study #, date/time of study session). If approved, your No-Show will be changed from Unexcused to Excused, and your account will be unlocked.
2. If you do not have a valid documentation for missing the study session(s), you can follow these steps to complete additional online ethics training to unlock your account:
  - Go to the CITI Program website here: <https://www.citiprogram.org>
  - Click "Register Here".
  - Select University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign from list of participating institutions. Also, complete sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 on this page (you can select "no" for sections 6 and 7). Click "Submit".
  - Fill out the information on the next page (for the "what is your role in research question you can just select "student researcher - undergraduate"). Click "Submit".
  - Click to enroll in the Core Basic Training with the option that reads "Basic: Social and Behavioral Research". You can ignore or click "n/a" for all the other options. Click "Submit".
  - Click "no" on next page (to indicate that you do not want to affiliate with any other institutions).
  - You will then come to your main menu. Here you should see "Social and Behavioral Research, Basic Course" listed under "My Courses". Click "Enter".
  - You need to complete the following 6 required modules:
    - Belmont Report and Its Principles - SBE (ID: 1127)
    - History and Ethical Principles - SBE (ID: 490)
    - Defining Research with Human Subjects - SBE (ID: 491)
    - Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)
    - Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)
    - Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)
  - Submit the completion report to show that you have successfully completed the ethics training. **You must submit the completion report to the Participant Pool Coordinator via email as a PDF document.** The dates on your completion certificate must reflect that you completed the ethics training after your account was locked.
  - If you encounter any problems accessing the CITI Training, see here: <https://oprs.research.illinois.edu/instructions-citi-training>

Without documentation justifying an Unexcused No-Show or showing your completion of the ethics training, your account will remain locked for the rest of the semester.