

Instructions for Participating in the Psychology Course Credit Participant Pool

When participating in in-person studies, you will need to show your building access granted screen using the Safer Illinois app or the Boarding Pass. All COVID-related directives from the department, campus/university, and state apply to research setting.

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). 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 Fall 2021, **you must be 18 years old on or before October 1, 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

SONA is an online system where you can sign up for research 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 the course syllabus for the number of SONA credits offered. How each credit is converted to points for your psychology course grade is determined by your instructor. Not all psychology courses offer research participation via the Course Credit Pool; please check the course syllabus.

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

If you have ALREADY REGISTERED on Course Credit SONA at any time after January 2018, 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 Fall 2021 is October 1, 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 get only 0.5 credit for it.

Please contact the Participant Pool Coordinator at psych-subjects@illinois.edu 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

Once you have taken the prescreen in the Course Credit SONA, you can sign up for studies. **You must complete all studies by December 9, 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 December 9, 2021 (see Under-18 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 attention 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

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.

Some studies have requirements that you must meet in order to take part in them. Pay close attention to a study’s requirements and do not sign up for it if you do not meet them.

There are 4 basic types of studies:

In-Person Studies

- In-person studies take place in a laboratory on campus, and you must physically attend the session. After you sign up for an in-person study on SONA, the study location will appear in the “My Schedule” section of your SONA account.
- *For in-person studies, the “timeslot” you sign up for in SONA is the scheduled appointment date/time. You must physically visit the lab at the scheduled date/time and follow the experimenter’s instructions throughout the study to receive credit.*
- Be sure you have enough time to participate for the entire duration of the study (study duration is indicated on the sign-up page). Note that all timeslots are in CST.
- Arrive on time for each study. If you are late or if you miss the appointment, you will be marked as Unexcused No-Show. Thus, be sure to sign up for the dates/times that you are able to attend. For example, accidentally signing up during your class time and failing to cancel the appointment (and therefore missing the study) will NOT be excused.
- Other than verification of building access, you do not need to bring any items with you unless specifically directed.
- If the researcher is not in the room when you arrive, double check your appointment date/time/location 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 were there on time and were ready to participate (be sure to include your name, NetID, study #, date/time/location of study session). The information will be reviewed, and you will be given credit.

Online Studies

- Online studies may be survey questionnaires or computer-based experiments with cognitive or behavioral tasks. For online studies, you do not physically visit the lab.
- 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.
- *For online studies, the “timeslot” you sign up for in SONA is the deadline. To receive credit for an online study, you must complete it before the study deadline.* For example, if you sign up for an online study timeslot for October 25 at 5:00pm, the entire survey must be completed BEFORE October 25 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 Zoom that involve virtual interactions with an experimenter. For virtual studies, you do not physically visit the lab.
- After you sign up for a virtual study on SONA, you will be given access to the study link 10 minutes prior to the scheduled appointment. The link will appear in the “My Schedule” section of your SONA account.
- *For virtual studies, the “timeslot” you sign up for in SONA is the scheduled appointment date/time. 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 October 25, you must log on to SONA at 4:50-5:00pm on October 25 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.
- If you’re late or if you miss the appointment, you will be marked as Unexcused No-Show. Thus, be sure to sign up for the dates/times that you are able to attend. 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 in-person or online 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.

Cancelling Studies

Each study has its 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

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 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 in-person and virtual studies, in which experimenters are counting on participants to 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 4 or more 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 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 IRB Training. 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 "Core IRB Training" listed under "My Courses". Click "Enter".
 - You need to complete the following 5 required modules:
 - Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)
 - Basic Institutional Review Board (IRB) Regulations and Review Process (ID: 2)
 - Consent in the 21st Century (ID: 17060)

- Defining Research with Human Subjects (ID: 491)
- 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 the Unexcused No-Shows or showing your completion of the ethics training, your account will remain locked for the rest of the semester.