

## **THE RESEARCHER'S GUIDE TO THE PSY 150A1/INTRO PSYCH PARTICIPANT POOL**

From the Psychology Department Human Participant Pool  
Committee

(John Allen and Jeff Greenberg (Co-Chairs), Bob Wilson)

### **PLEASE READ CAREFULLY**

All researchers are responsible for knowing and following the rules in this guide. Faculty Supervisors are also responsible for ensuring that all research assistants know and follow these rules! Give them this guide to read — particularly sections II & III! Copies are available in the Department Office, Room 334.

### **I. PRELIMINARIES**

#### **ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR USING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS – The LONG FORM**

All experiments require human participants approval – whether or not they use the PSY 150A1/Psych 101 pool. The cover page and a hard copy of the long form are available in the Psychology Department Office, Room 334. The long form is also available from the website at <http://www.irb.arizona.edu/>.

- ✓ After your Faculty Advisor's signature is obtained, give the application to the Graduate Coordinator in the Psychology Office, room 334.
- ✓ Our Graduate Coordinator will obtain the Departmental Human Participants Committee approval, which consists of Connie Beck and Erika Lawrence.
- ✓ Next, the Department Head's signature will be obtained by the Graduate Coordinator.
- ✓ Then our Graduate Coordinator will mail the application to the University Human Participants Committee.

All users of the participant pool, as well as all other researchers affiliated with the University, regardless of their sources of participants, are required by the University IRB to learn the guidelines for ethical research and pass a test to complete the Human Participants Training Exam called the Rochester program "Protecting Study Volunteers in Research," which is available from the Human Participants Protection Program Office, 1350 N. Vine, PO Box 245137, 626-6721. Please make sure you and any collaborators, including undergraduate research assistants, have passed this test before seeking approval for use of the participant pool or engaging in the collection of data.

#### **PARTICIPANT POOL ALLOCATION – THE SHORT FORM<sup>1</sup> (after receiving Human Participant Pool Committee approval)**

1. To receive access to the PSY 150A1/Psych 101 Participant Pool, you must submit the short form, also available from the Department Office. Fill this out completely – including indicating when ethical approval was obtained, location, etc.
2. This is only for the current fall semester, but you can notify Beth Owens if you want to continue for the

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<sup>1</sup>Note: The rules for the short form may differ for summer terms. See the Department Office for further information.

spring of the same academic year. So in spring, you don't need to submit if you are continuing a project from fall; just let Beth know. For summer, and each fall, you must submit anew.

3. You cannot post an experiment on the web site until you receive approval for the short form; it will be reviewed by a committee member, typically **Jeff Greenberg or Bob Wilson** (turn-around time is generally within a few days, although this is not guaranteed; also see #6 below). Once your short form is approved, you will be assigned an experiment number and Beth Owens will email you an ID and password and activate your experiment on the web site.
4. Note that the maximum number of credits (1/2 hour per credit) for any single experiment is 4 credits.
5. All short forms must include the signature of the Faculty member who is supervising the project, and email addresses of all experimenters and assistant experimenters.
6. **IMPORTANT POLICY REGARDING DEBRIEFING PROCEDURES:** Before approving a study for the PSY 150A1/Intro Psych course, the committee must insure that the study will fit the course's educational objectives i.e., students will learn something about psychological research. Therefore, each request to use the participant pool must now include a detailed description, or sample of the ORAL debriefing procedure to be used. This should be a summary of what will be orally explained to students, in language that PSY 150A1/Psych 101 students would understand. "The procedures used will be explained" will not suffice. A written debriefing sheet can be used as a supplement for the oral explanation of the study but it is not acceptable as a substitute for it. At times the committee will ask researchers to clarify their debriefings before access is granted to the participant pool. (The department policy is outlined in more detail below, under Debriefing).
7. Be sure to indicate if you are requesting running a web-based study using the participant pool (which still requires in person debriefings).
8. **NEW POLICY –To streamline procedures, while all studies require a shortform in the fall, if you intend to simply continue the identical study in the spring and/or summer, you do not need to fill out a new short form. You can simply email Beth Owens to notify her the study is continuing, and include in the email requests for additional credits, and any changes in personnel or IRB approval/expiration dates.**

## II. RUNNING PARTICIPANTS

**NOTE: WE HAVE IMPLEMENTED A SONA WEB BASED SIGN-UP AND RECORD KEEPING SYSTEM; ALTHOUGH THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO USE THIS SYSTEM IS IN THIS DOCUMENT, TIMES AND LOCATIONS OF TUTORIALS REGARDING USE OF THIS SYSTEM WILL BE ANNOUNCED FOR EACH FALL SEMESTER.**

### RECRUITMENT

1. Experiments must be in 1/2 hour increments, rounding up. E.g., if your experiment takes between 30 minutes and one hour, you should schedule one hour time slots.
2. Only two methods of recruitment are allowed: (a) web site sign-ups, (b) phone-calling in some cases. **TWO OTHER FORMS OF RECRUITMENT ARE PROHIBITED:** (i) Researchers may not recruit at the PSY 150A1 or PSYC101 classes, and TAs may not recruit in their sessions. (ii) Researchers may not recruit participants for one study at another study. (Also see #4 above.) Mass emails and advertisements

should not be used to promote recruitment into your particular experiment.

3. Experiments offering 101 credit may not offer additional incentives (e.g., money) for recruitment.
4. Special restrictions must be approved by the Human Participant Pool Committee. All experimenters are expected to run some participants whose data they may not be able to use, or accommodate some participants with alternative projects. The committee will only approve such restrictions when it is shown that not having the restriction would be excessively costly or burdensome. The restrictions of greatest concern are those that may be seen as likely to exclude people based on minority ethnic group membership.

## WEB-BASED SIGNUP

i) How to use the web-based system:

- (a) The online experiment scheduling and point tracking system is located at <http://experiments.psychology.arizona.edu>.
- (b) Once your experiment has been approved, the faculty PI and the experimenter (if different than the PI) will receive by email a UserID and password. Passwords can be changed, but are visible to system administrators and the TA assigned to the experiment tracking duty.
- (c) Go to [experiments.psychology.arizona.edu](http://experiments.psychology.arizona.edu) and log in with your UserID and Password, and read and acknowledge the “Human Participant and Privacy Policy Notice”
- (d) To set up your experiment:
  - ✓ Go to “My Experiments”, then click on the experiment number on the left. At the bottom, click on the button labeled “Change Experiment Information”
  - ✓ IMPORTANT: Do not change the “NAME” of the experiment, or the “SHORT DESCRIPTION” of the experiment. These were approved on the short form and changing them can result in a loss of participant pool privileges.
  - ✓ Edit the long description to include a description (please limit to 250 characters), contact information, exclusions, etc. You should place here the specifically approved language that was approved in your University IRB (long form) application.
  - ✓ Complete the remaining options, then click the “Save Changes” button at the bottom. Before saving changes, be sure make the experiment ACTIVE if you wish students to be able to see it and sign up.
  - ✓ NOTE: If you change the VISIBLE setting to “not visible,” you cannot change it back to “visible.” This must be done by the system administrator. Instead, use “ACTIVE” to set the experiment to “not active” to make sure it does not yet appear, or to “active” to make it visible.
  - ✓ Click View/Administer Time Slots to add new times or change existing times. If you run groups of participants or several participants at once, you will be pleased to see that you can enter on a single screen a session that will allow several students to sign up.
  - ✓ Click “View All Timeslots” to see all your sessions.
  - ✓ To see those students signed up for your experiment, and credit those who have participated, go to “My Experiments” and using the link at the top “View Your Uncredited Timeslots” You can also manually add a user here, and view the pretest results (currently only age, sex, handedness, and native language) for any users signed up for the experiment.
- (e) You can also include a sign-up password, termed an “invitation code,” and set the eligibility for your experiment if special restrictions have been approved by the Human Participant Pool Committee. You can use email to provide passwords to eligible participants
- (f) IMPORTANT: Each day after completing experiments, you must complete the credit or no-show status for all timeslots for that day. This can be accessed from the top section of the main page “My Studies” and using the link at the in that section “grant or deny participation credit” followed by the link for “timeslots” and finally “modify.” **Please note that we no longer are able to penalize**

**participants by deducting points from their total for no-shows. Instead, the system allows individuals no more than two unexcused no-shows; if they accumulate more than two unexcused no-shows, the system prevents them from signing up for future experiments, and they will then be required to complete the paper option. If a student fails to show, you have the option to indicate that it is an excused no-show, or an unexcused no-show. The departmental participant pool committee encourages experimenters to attempt to reschedule participants who no-show and use the excused absence option whenever possible.**

- ii) **IMPORTANT POLICY:** The committee is concerned that the experiment descriptions be truthful and suitably restrained and that all legitimate users of the participant pool have equitable access to participants. Although some individuality in the nature of the experiment descriptions is okay, there are no doubt better places to express creativity, individuality, and “salespersonship” than on the experiment descriptions.

The following rules must be followed in designing experiment descriptions:

- (a) The title and description of the study should be clearly representative of the study and claims of the interest level and value of the study should not be made. Nor should colors or graphics be used.
- (b) Descriptions of the study should be limited to 250 characters, although, if approved by Human Participants, additional description may be allowed. The approved language in the Human Participants approval should be used here in this section.

The order of experiments in the list that is visible to participants will automatically be randomized by the system every time a participant logs on to insure a fair competition for participant resources.

### **POLICY FOR EXTRA CREDIT IN COURSES OTHER THAN INDV 101/PSYCHOLOGY 101:**

Because we have difficulty in the Fall semester (where there are three large intro lectures) providing enough opportunities for 101 students to fulfill their research requirements, other courses offered in the Fall semester may not be allowed to offer extra credit for their students to participate in experiments. There may simply not be enough opportunities to accommodate students not in PSY 150A1 or PSYC101. However, instructors interested in offering such extra credit, should ask for permission to do so from the Human Participant Pool Committee.

In the Spring and Summer semesters, we often have the opposite problem, which is more demand for participants than can be supplied by the 101 students. Therefore, it is typically encouraged to offer extra credit for research participation in courses other than PSY 150A1/Intro Psychology in the Spring and Summer semesters, although instructors wishing to do this must still first obtain approval from the Human Participant Pool Committee.

### **PHONE RECRUITMENT**

1. When recruiting by phone, be sure to give participants the same items of information listed on the web site, and be sure to give an email address and phone number to call in case of cancellation.

2. Please also be sure to tell participants to remember the experiment number of your study. In order to leave a cancellation message for you through the department, the student must know either the experiment number or your name. (The department does not keep track of dates or times of experiment sessions.)

3. Note that phone calling is only for recruitment purposes. Screening potential participants over the phone for eligibility is not allowed; if questions must be asked to determine eligibility this cannot be done by phone. And of course, experiments and/or surveys are not permitted as part of recruitment.

## CANCELLATION/EXCUSED ABSENCES

1. Excused absences: Students may cancel up to 2 hours before the experiment without the absence counting as unexcused. They also have 48 hours after the experiment session ends to bring in documentation of the excuse for missing the experiment, in which case experimenters should mark the session as an excused no-show ("I forgot" is not an excuse).

### UNEXCUSED NO SHOW POLICY:

2. If a student doesn't show up for a scheduled session, you have the option to mark this as an unexcused absence. If a student accumulates more than two unexcused absences, they will be prevented from signing up for any more experiments and will need to write the research paper to meet the research requirement. However, the committee encourages experimenters to provide students with a second opportunity to participate in the study, and marking the no-show as an excused no-show once the student agrees to be rescheduled.

3. Please check the Experimenter's mailbox in the Department Office, as well as your own mailbox and email inbox, for messages – i.e. cancellations – particularly on the day and the days surrounding your experiment sessions.

4. Investigators should always show up for scheduled sessions. If you cannot show up for a scheduled session, you are responsible for informing participants ahead of time or at least via a note at the study's location. Also notify the Department Office if you will miss a session. Participants who show up for a session that has been canceled at the last minute are entitled to one credit for having shown up. It is the researcher's responsibility to give out credit slips and record the credit.

## DEBRIEFING PARTICIPANTS

Debriefing fulfills two important objectives. One objective is educational. Our primary justification for requiring students to participate in research (or complete a research paper) is that this is an educational experience that contributes to their understanding of psychology. But this is only true if all experimenters effectively explain the purpose and design of their research to the participants orally in terms they can understand, and give participants a real opportunity to ask questions about that research before leaving the session.

The 2nd objective is ethical. The debriefing should reveal any deceptions involved in the research, it 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.

To meet these objectives, all users of the human participant pool must orally debrief their participants at the end of their experimental sessions. (As noted above, a summary of how this is done must be attached to all requests to use the participant pool.) Although these oral debriefings can be supplemented with written material, it is not sufficient to simply hand the participants a written explanation of the study as they walk out the door. **Violators of this policy, which is essential to the integrity of the research participation requirement, will be barred from further use of the human participants pool.**

Each debriefing should include the following:

- 1) **A general rationale for the study and the hypothesis being tested.**
- 2) **A description of the hypothesis being tested and how the study is going about testing it, including a description of the conceptual and operational independent and dependent variables.**
- 3) **The predictions of the study and the potential implications of the study for advancing psychological knowledge if the predictions are supported**

Each experimenter – including any research assistants – should be able to answer basic questions about the purpose and design of the study. Especially difficult or complex questions can certainly be referred to the principal investigator. (For further guidance on debriefing: consult the Human Participant Pool Committee.)

### **THE LAST DAY**

... to run participants is the last day of classes. Experiments using the participant pool may not be conducted during dead day or the week of final exams.

### **III. RECORD KEEPING**

These procedures are absolutely critical for the pool to run smoothly. RESEARCHERS FAILING TO FOLLOW THESE RULES WILL BE BARRED FROM USING THE POOL!

#### **ASSIGNING CREDIT:**

Each day after completing experiments, you must credit students (or indicate excused or unexcused no-show status if they did not show). This can be accessed from the top section of the main page “My Studies” and using the link at the in that section “grant or deny participation credit” followed by the link for “timeslots” and finally “modify.” You must assign credit or no-show status within 24 hours of completion of the experiment.

#### **CREDIT SLIPS**

**A new change is we are eliminating credit slips!** This saves money, paper, and time. If a student is not properly credited, the student will contact you via email, and you should be able to check your records to verify their participation. Generally, students should be given the benefit of the doubt unless there is good reason to doubt their claims.

#### **PAYING PARTICIPANTS**

If you are paying participants, you have to keep other records and give special forms to participants, for tax purposes. The best way to pay for participants is to get a revolving operational advance. An operational advance is a cash advance used to provide funds for project directors and other authorized University employees for payments to participants for a relatively long period of time. It permits the initial advance amount to be kept to a minimum and requires the individual to periodically submit an accounting with participant log receipts to obtain additional operating funds. Contact the Psychology Business Office for more information or to start the paperwork for the operational advance.

AS NOTED EARLIER, IF YOU ARE PAYING A PARTICIPANT YOU CANNOT ALSO GIVE THEM RESEARCH CREDIT.

More information regarding operational advance and participant pay is in the Handbook for Principal Investigators. The website is: <http://www.sps.arizona.edu/handbook/otheroperatingcosts.htm>

NOTE: The Handbook is currently being revised to reflect the new UAccess procedures.

### **IV. PROBLEMS**

Please contact John Allen, [jallen@email.arizona.edu](mailto:jallen@email.arizona.edu), regarding record keeping problems, or Jeff Greenberg regarding other problems.