

# PROCEDURES FOR ACCESSING THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANT POOL 2010

## Overview

The research participant pool is an essential resource for much of the human research being conducted within the Department. Among undergraduate students, the pool supports research projects for group and independent study courses. Among graduate students, the pool supports theses, dissertations, competency projects, and other student-initiated research projects that are required by our graduate programs and directly affect students' job prospects. For many faculty, the pool is critical for maintaining an active research program, and as such, has a direct impact on the ability to attain tenure and promotion.

Given the importance of the participant pool to the research functions of the Department, it is important that we strive for fair and optimal use of the pool. The following procedures have been established in an attempt to meet the full research needs of the Department while also ensuring that (a) students benefit from their participation, (b) requirements placed on students are fair and reasonable, and (c) researchers have fair and equal access to participants. All researchers must strictly adhere to these procedures, lest we sacrifice fair and optimal use of the pool and risk future access to this valuable resource.

## Due Dates

**All research requests are due one week prior to the first day of classes of any semesters.**

**\*The Research Pool does not run during summer session.** There are simply not enough students to facilitate the research pool over the summer. You may however speak directly with a summer instructor who may provide their class with extra credit for participating in your study.

## Procedures

### 1. Project Approval

**All research using human participants must be pre-approved by the Associate Chair of the Department and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), before the project can begin.** IRB approval is desired before requesting participants from the research pool. If you do not have IRB approval prior to requesting research participants, your research will be given participants on a first-come-first-serve basis. There are three types of IRB review procedures, Full, Expedited, and Exempt. All three require the researcher to submit a protocol to the Associate Chair. Expedite and Full review protocols must be entered electronically through eProtocol at: <http://web.research.colostate.edu/ricro/hrc/hrc.aspx>. Exempt review protocols have a separate form that can be sent via paper or email to the IRB administrator. The form is available at: <http://web.research.colostate.edu/ricro/hrc/forms.aspx>. The protocol must be reviewed and signed by the Department faculty member who will serve as the principal investigator. The Associate Chair will then review the forms and return them to the researcher. Once approved by the Associate Chair, the researcher is responsible for obtaining approval from the IRB. The IRB will directly notify the researcher of project approval (or denial).

### 2. Requesting Participants

**In order to use the research participant pool, you must complete the *Research Participant Request Form*.** A copy of this form is sent via e-mail at the end of each semester and additional forms may be obtained from Donna Merwarth. Determine the number of credit hours you need based on the following formula: .5 credit hours per subject for studies up to 30 minutes in length; 1 credit hour per subject for studies 31-60 minutes in length; 1.5 credit hours for studies 61-90 minutes in length; 2 credit hours for studies 91-120 minutes in length; 2.5 credit hours for studies 121-150 minutes in length; 3 credit hours for studies over 151-180 minutes in length; and so on. On the *Request Form*, categorize the requested credit hours according to the type(s) of research being conducted (dissertation, thesis, first-year or competency project, faculty-initiated study, graduate student-initiated study, undergraduate student-initiated study, and other). It is imperative that you are as accurate as possible on the start date for your research. Allocation of hours will require that you start your research on the date you supply. If for any reason your start date needs to be adjusted, contact Donna Merwarth immediately! Generally requests from outside the Department will not be granted. **Return the *Request Form* to Donna Merwarth.**

**Do not request more credit hours than you are certain you will complete**, and please be as accurate as possible in your estimate of the credit hours requested. Failure to do so can have undesirable consequences, such as preventing graduate students from completing theses and dissertations.

### 3. Allocation of Research Credits

All PSY100 and PSY250 students are required to complete 6 research credit hours unless they choose to write six Option B papers instead. Students are also able to complete an additional 4 credit hours of research to earn extra credit. Based on the demand observed in recent semesters, this requirement should fill the Department's research needs. Note, however, that the number of students and the number of requested credit hours vary from semester to semester, so it is possible that requests will surpass the number of credits available. Should this occur, research credits will be allocated to projects first by study type prioritization, and then on a first-come-first-serve basis.

**Allocation and prioritization of credit hours will be based on *Request* and *Human Subjects Application Forms* turned in by the due date. There is no guarantee that research credits will still be available for projects whose forms have been turned in after the deadline.** For late submissions, requests will be filled on a first-come-first-serve basis, without consideration of the type of research being conducted, if and only if credit hours are available after the initial allocation.

**Do not complete more credit hours than you are allocated, or request more credit hours than you can complete.** You can request additional hours. Additional hours will be allocated on a first-come-first-serve basis AFTER all other allocations have been made. We expect a certain amount of students will not show up to scheduled research, so you may schedule up to 10% above your allocated hours. If you determine that you will not be able to complete the research hours that you have been allocated, please contact Donna Merwarth as soon as possible so that they can be re-allocated to other projects.

### 4. Recruiting Participants

**Once your project is approved, give a copy of the approval and a copy of the *Research Information Sheet* to Donna Merwarth on or before the due date listed above.**

**To put your study in the On-line database, contact Donna.** Donna will need the following information to input for you. The name and e-mail address of a researcher affiliated with the study. Time, Date, Building, Meeting Room, and limit of students for each meeting. **Donna will assign your study a project number, enter the information into the database, and send you any instruction you will need concerning the database.**

NOTE: Federal regulations now state that students under 18 years of age need not be excluded from a study unless there is good justification that has been approved by the Human Research Committee. Students less than 18 years old must obtain parental consent before participating in any study. Direct such students to the GTA responsible for Research Participant Pool for instructions.

**When using students as research participants, you must not engage in any recruitment or "advertising" practices above and beyond the standard protocol described above, or in any way attempt to promote your study over others.** This is to ensure that the process for soliciting participants conforms to the department-wide protocol that has been filed with the University Human Subjects Committee and to ensure that all researchers have equal access to research participants. Excluded activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Advertising or promoting a study in class
- Distributing sign-up sheets in class
- Having researchers or assistants recruit or encourage participants to sign up for a study
- Giving students extra credit points toward their grade
- Giving students more research credit than they are due (e.g., two credits for a one-hour study)
- Giving students prizes or other rewards for participation (unless this is part of an approved protocol; even in this case, however, the prizes/rewards may not be advertised)
- Promoting a study as "fun," "interesting," "easy," etc.
- Promoting a study based on the time required (e.g., "one-hour credit for just 25 minutes...")

**One exception is that students who are "pretested" on certain individual difference dimensions can be called by researchers who require certain blocks or ranges of scores to satisfy their research designs. An example would be soliciting participation from students who either score is high or low on anger potential, but not calling those with middle scores.**

## **5. Conducting the Study and Maintaining Credit Lists**

**You are required to maintain attendance records of all students who participate in your project as well as those students who sign up for your study, but who do not show. Records are kept within the online database, and instructions will be given to you to complete this process once your study has been put into the online database.**

Remember that a student has the right to terminate their participation at any time during the experiment without prejudice. If a student terminates their participation, they still get full credit. Likewise, if a student shows up for a study at the designated time and location, but the study can not be conducted (e.g., the study isn't ready, the researcher does not show up, there is equipment failure, etc.), the participant still gets full credit.

Students who do not show up for your study will be unable to earn extra credit for additional research participation. If a student contacts you in advance of your study and provides a valid excuse for canceling, you should excuse the student either when taking attendance or by contacting Donna Merwarth. (Students should not get credit for the study but should not be penalized).

## 6. Debriefing

**A written debriefing statement is required** as part of the *Application to Use Human Subjects*. The approved debriefing statement must be given to each research participant after they complete their participation in your study. The debriefing statement should summarize: a) the purpose of the study, b) the methods/procedures used, c) how the data will be dealt with, d) the implications of the results for psychology, and e) how this body of research fits with what students may be learning in PSY100. With regard to the last element, your debriefing form must include a reference to the most relevant chapter or section in Myer's textbook. A copy of Myer's textbook is available in the main office to facilitate this. Also include two outside references so that students can learn more about your topic area if they are interested. The debriefing form should conclude with a statement of appreciation for the student's participation and a willingness on the part of the researcher to share the results with interested students after the data has been analyzed and interpreted.

In addition to a written debriefing statement, some studies may require oral debriefings. Studies that involve deception, strong emotional arousal, possible learning of unwanted material about oneself, manipulations or assessments of attitudes or values involving sensitive topics, etc., may require more in-depth debriefings and interactions to help students satisfactorily deal with the research experience. Include oral debriefings where appropriate, and refer to various writings on ethical debriefings for guidance.

## 7. Completing the Project

Upon completion of your project for the semester, notify Donna that your project has been completed. Donna will then remove your *Study* from the database. **All data collection using students must be completed by the Friday prior to the last week of classes.**

### Violations of Procedures

Failure to adhere to the above procedures is serious, as this can result in unfairness and inequity for students and researchers, and can jeopardize the use of the participant pool by the University Human Subjects Committee. **Violations of the procedures--inappropriate recruitment of participants, inappropriate assignment of research credits, failure to turn in credit lists on time, etc.--may result in the suspension of a research project or removal of the study from the online database.**