

# Information for PSY 100 Students about the Research Participation Requirement

## Overview

### Course requirement

One of the overall goals of PSY 100 Psychology: The Science of Behavior is for you to increase your understanding that psychology is a research science. Although this theme runs throughout the entire course, it is especially addressed through a research participation requirement. The goal is to have students become an active part of the research process, see what it is like to participate in psychology research, and learn what it is researchers on campus are doing. In the end, we hope you will have a better understanding of the process and understand several research projects in greater depth. The research participation requirement is worth **approximately 5% of your overall grade** in PSY 100. Failure to complete the research requirement will result in a lower course grade.

### The studies

The studies you will participate in are designed and run by psychology faculty and upper level students. All studies are reviewed and approved by the Psychology Department and the College's Institutional Review Board to ensure that they do not violate ethical guidelines set by the American Psychological Association. For example, no identifying information about you will ever be used in connection with the information you provide.

Your instructor will tell you the total number of study credits you need to complete. The majority of the studies take less than ½ hour to complete and earn 1 credit. Studies that take between ½ hour and 1 hour earn 2 credits. Please note: Instructors sometimes offer extra credit for participation in additional research studies (more than the minimum requirement). Be sure to check with your instructor.

## Procedures

### How to sign up for studies

Information about studies needing participants will be posted on an online system known as SONA. The system makes it possible for you to sign up for studies and keep track of your research credits from any computer anywhere. There is even a free app you can download for your phone.

During the second week of the term, you will receive an email at your North Central address from the "Participation System" with your SONA login information. If you do not receive the email or lose it, email [researchadmin@noctrl.edu](mailto:researchadmin@noctrl.edu) for assistance. (Please see **SONA Participant Documentation** for more information).

- To sign up for studies, log into SONA at <https://northcentralcollege.sona-systems.com/>. **DO NOT** sign up for studies during your class time! Studies are not an excuse for missing class.

- Check SONA regularly for new timeslots and new studies. Usually, there are a few studies at the beginning of the term, many during the middle, and almost none at the end. Don't procrastinate!

You will receive a reminder email the day before the study with the DATE, TIME, and LOCATION. If you need to cancel, you must do so at least 2 hours before the study begins; just go to SONA and remove your name from the online sign-up sheet. You can also contact the researcher to cancel if something comes up closer to the experiment time.

### **Participating in studies**

Please be a few minutes early for studies. If you are late, they may start without you. If that happens, or if you miss a study entirely, you'll be counted as a no-show (see below).

- If a researcher doesn't show up within 15 minutes of the scheduled start time, you **will** receive research credit. However, you must report the researcher no-show by sending an email to [researchadmin@noctrl.edu](mailto:researchadmin@noctrl.edu).

When you participate in a study, you will be given a CONSENT FORM to sign. The consent form advises you of your rights as a participant in the study and gives you a little information about the study's purpose. In many cases, it may not be possible for researchers to inform you fully about the nature of the study before you participate. In some cases, you may even be given false information about the purpose of the study. These deceptions are only used when knowledge of a study's purpose may influence your behavior and invalidate the research.

- If at any time during the study session you become uncomfortable with the topic, methods, etc., you may stop participating. The experimenter may offer you an alternative task to complete during the session. Regardless, you will be dismissed with the other participants at the end of the session and receive full credit.

All research studies are required to provide you with a written DEBRIEFING when you complete the study. This debriefing will tell you the nature of the study, why it is being conducted, whether there was any deception and why, and some information about what the researchers expect to find. You may request to receive the results of the study upon completion of the study, but this will NOT include any information about your own performance in the study.

If anyone associated with a study behaves inappropriately (e.g., asks you for a date, requests that you participate beyond the scheduled time, etc.), please contact the Psychology Department chair immediately (Dr. Mary Jean Lynch, [mlynch@noctrl.edu](mailto:mlynch@noctrl.edu), 630-637-5363).

### **Receiving credit**

The researcher should give you the participation credit within 2 days of the session. If you are in a multiple-session study, you will be given credit for the study at the end of the last session. Please remember that you will need to attend all the sessions to get credit.

At the end of the term, your instructor will download a report from SONA that indicates how many credits you have earned. Your instructor will add the research points to your final grade.

### **Losing credit – Not showing up for a study**

If you do not show up for a study OR do not notify the researcher or delete your name from the SONA sign-up list at least 2 hours in advance of the study, you are a **no-show**. You will be required to participate in an ADDITIONAL study to make up for it. For example, if your initial requirement was 6 study credits, you will now need to complete 7 credits to make up for missing a study; if you miss two studies, the requirement becomes 8 credits; etc. You may sign up again for the study you missed (if it still has timeslots available). If all studies have been completed for the term, you may not be able to make up the additional study.

Keeping track of your research participation is YOUR responsibility. It is not your instructor's responsibility to notify you that you have missed a study. Be sure to check your North Central email regularly so that you see the SONA "Participation System" reminders about the studies you signed up for.