**Students’ Guide to the Research Exposure Program**

**Department of Psychology, University of Oklahoma**

What is the Research Exposure Program?

Psychology is the study of scientific behavior and as such, we use a variety of research methods to help understand human behavior. In the classroom, you will learn about the research process, but exposure to research helps you to truly understand the process. We believe that there are two key ways to be exposed to research at this level. One way involves being exposed to the research process first-hand by participating in research experiments. The other way to become exposed is by reading through journal articles that detail the research process. However, you may encounter both throughout your academic career.

As part of the course, students who are enrolled in PSY1113 can earn research credits by participating in experiments conducted in the Department of Psychology at OU or by completing an equivalent assignment (i.e., research summaries).

What if I am not yet 18 years old?

To participate in research, you must be at least 18 years old. If you are not yet 18 years

old, you can get a form signed by your parent or legal guardian, granting permission for you to

participate in most experiments. You must have this signed form on file in order to participate in research. You can find this form on the course website.

When will opportunities to participate in research be available?

There are two windows of time (Session I and II) during which students can complete the

research credits and earn points toward their grade in the class. To obtain these points and earn full credit in the course, students must meet the research exposure deadlines.

Session I (Weeks 4-9 Deadline): Starting on Week 4, students will have the opportunity to

complete up to 6 research credits. Five of these credits will count as points toward the grade in

the class (up to 5% of the grade) and one research credit will count as extra credit (1

percentage point added to the final grade in the class). To receive grade points, students must

complete these research credits by the end of Week 9. After this time point, any participation in research will count towards your Session 2 research credits and grade. In other words, you will not be able to complete any more research credits that count towards your grade for Session I.

Session II (Weeks 10-16 Deadline): Starting on Week 10, students will have the opportunity to

complete 6 additional research credits. The same as in Session I, five research credits will

count as points toward the grade in the class (up to 5% of the grade) and one credit will count

as extra credit (1 percentage point added to the final grade in the class). Once again, to receive

points toward the grade in the class, students must complete these research credits by the end

of Week 16 – last day of classes.

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| Session 1  Weeks 4-9 Deadline | Session 2  Weeks 10-16 Deadline |
| 5 regular credits (5\*10 = 50 course points) | 5 regular credits (5\*10 = 50 course points) |
| 1 extra credit (5\*1 = 10 course extra credits, only if you completed the 5 regular credits) | 1 extra credit (5\*1 = 10 course extra credits, only if you completed the 5 regular credits) |

Opportunities to participate in experiments and earn research credits decrease at the end

of each session. **You are strongly advised not to wait until the week prior to the deadlines to**

**complete your research credits as many students will be wanting to participate in a limited number of experiments.** If studies are not available at this point in time, you will have to complete research summaries. Check throughout the semester for research opportunities that work with your schedule.

In what type of research studies will I participate?

All studies you will participate in have been reviewed and approved by the University of

Oklahoma’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) and by the Department of Psychology. Studies

vary widely. Many involve completing questionnaires or carrying out tasks on the computer.

Some are even fun, and you’ll learn something from all of them.

What are my rights as a research participant?

Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw from any study at any time. Your data will be

kept confidential, and your instructor will not have access to any study data you provide. If you

have any further questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the

Administrative Officer of the Norman Campus IRB at 325-8110, contact the SONA Coordinator at [psychresearch@ou.edu](mailto:psychresearch@ou.edu), or speak to your instructor.

How many research credits may I complete?

In order to obtain full credit in the course, you must complete five research credits between Weeks 4 and 9 (Session I) and five more credits between Weeks 10 and 16 (Session II). **While you can participate in as many studies as you wish, you will only receive extra credit for 2 additional research credits (one in each session)**. For example, if you complete 7 research credits in Session 1, only 1 research credit will be counted as extra credit. The other additional research credit will not be counted as extra credit.

Each research credit is worth 10 points (1% of your course grade). Thus, you can earn up to 100 points (10% of your course grade) through research credits. In addition, you can complete up to 2 research credits for extra credit for an additional 2% (20 points) added onto your course grade. **You may not work ahead. You will only receive up to 6 credits for Session I and 6 credits for Session II.** **In other words, if you try to complete all 12 credits in Session 1, you will only receive credit for 6 credits and the extra credit will NOT roll over to Session 2. The same goes for applying Session II credits to Session I.**

How will my research participation credit be calculated?

Research participation is based on the time associated with your participation, with a minimum

of ½ credit being awarded for each experiment. An experiment worth ½ credit will take 30

minutes or less. An experiment worth 1 credit will last between 30 and 60 minutes. Some

experiments are worth more than 1 credit. Hours of participation are rounded to the nearest ½

hour. Some experiments even require that you return for one or more sessions on subsequent

days. Read and understand carefully the time commitment required for each experiment for

which you sign-up.

What happens if I sign up for a study but then arrive late or fail to show up?

Because of the time and opportunities wasted (the researchers' and other students who could

have taken that spot), if you sign up to participate and then fail to show up for a study in three

or more occasions without canceling in advance or fail to provide the experimenter with a

reasonable excuse for not showing-up without cancelling the study, you will lose the opportunity to complete the research credit requirement by participating in studies. **After your third unexcused no-show, you will no longer be able to sign-up for studies.** You will still be able to utilize the alternative assignment option, writing research summaries (see below), to complete the research credit. Similarly, if you arrive late to a session, the experimenter may not be able to accommodate you and that would also count as an unexcused no-show.

**IMPORTANT:** If you change your mind about participating in a study for which you have signed

up, or if circumstances beyond your control keep you from attending, you must cancel in

advance of the session time (see “Canceling a Sign-Up” below). If you can provide a reasonable

excuse for not cancelling a study in advance of the session time, you must contact the

experimenter ASAP to avoid receiving an unexcused no-show.

What happens if I show up for a study, but the researcher is not there?

First, make sure you are at the right location. Provided you are at the right location, it is recommended that you wait 15 minutes. If the researcher does not show up after 15 minutes, then you can leave, and you will be granted 0.5 credits for your time spent waiting. Be sure to e-mail the researcher to let them know that you showed up for the experiment but no one was at the location.

What if I do not wish to participate in experiments?

If you do not wish to participate in experiments, you may utilize the alternative assignment

option. This option – the research summary option – involves reading an empirical article in the

academic journal, Psychological Science, and writing a one to two-page summary of the study

reported in the article. A summary of one article is worth one research credit. You must turn in

the first 5 summaries between Weeks 4 and 9 (Session I). You must turn in the second 5

summaries between Weeks 10 and 15 (Session II). As with the experiments, you have the

opportunity to complete an additional 2 summaries for extra credit (one during Session I and

one during Session II). A detailed description of the research summary option is provided on the corresponding Research Summary Option Handout.

If I choose to complete the research summaries, may I receive extra credit for

additional summaries?

Yes, if you are using the research summary option to earn research credits, you may do up to 12 reports: 10 to obtain full credit in the course and up to 2 extra for an additional 2% (or 10

points) added to your final course grade.

May I do a combination of research summaries and research participation to meet the

requirement?

Yes. You may do either research summaries, research participation, or a combination of both to earn full credit in the course; additional credits earned through either option will count as extra credit in the course.

How do I find and sign up for research participation opportunities?

Throughout the semester, researchers in the Psychology Department will post their research

experiments online using the Sona Systems (SONA) website. It is up to the students to check

SONA regularly to find and sign up for experiments (for which they qualify) that fit into their

schedules. Detailed instructions for how to use SONA follow. **If you have questions regarding availability of studies, credit, or login issues, do NOT contact your instructor as they are not in control of SONA.** Instead, first reference the FAQ page on our website (<http://www.ou.edu/cas/psychology/undergraduate-studies/sona-experiment-exposure>) and if your question cannot be found there then contact the SONA coordinator at: [psychresearch@ou.edu](mailto:psychresearch@ou.edu). One caveat – if you have questions about missing a research study or credit issues, you need to contact the experimenter directly.

**How do I use SONA?**

1. **Before you log on to SONA**

1. Learn to use your ou.edu e-mail account. The University of Oklahoma offers all students

an account on the OUNet System that entitles them to an e-mail account, WWW account, and Modem Pool access. These accounts are automatically activated at the time of enrollment. The combination of your OUNetID and your password allow you to access and control e-mail, browse the Internet and dial-in to the University from home. Your OUNetID is an account number that has been assigned to you. Your OUNetID (also

known as your “4x4”) is composed of two parts:

The first four letters of your last name (lower case)

+ The last four digits of your OUID number

= Your OUNetID (or “4x4”)

If your last name is Sooner and your OU ID number is 123456789, then your OUNetID is:

soon6789. If your name is Jane Quasar Public, your e-mail address is: Jane.Q.Public-

1@coursenet.ou.edu. To alias your e-mail address, bounce it to another e-mail account,

or change your password, go to <https://webapps.ou.edu/it/>. For other help involving your e-mail, go to <http://askit.ou.edu/customer/en/portal/topics/768382-office-365> or call 325-INFO.

1. Toward the end of the 2nd week of the semester, go to [https://ou.sona-systems.com/http](https://ou.sona-systems.com/)

* 1. Your User ID will be your OUNetID (your “4x4”) and your Password will be your

OUID number.

* 1. This takes you to a screen with the following three options:
* Study Sign-Up
* My Schedule & Credits
* My Profile

1. Click “My Profile” as soon as you enter the system for the first time to change your

password (if you want to) and to modify your e-mail address (if you have an e-mail account that you use more frequently than your OU e-mail account). This is the address that all reminders will be sent to by the system. Click UPDATE to save any changes.

1. You are now ready to use SONA to sign-up for experiments.

1. **Sign-up for experiments—access SONA as above**

1. Click “Study Sign-Up”. A list of all available experiments for which you qualify will appear. You can sign-up by clicking on either the study name or “Timeslots Available”, and you will go to a new screen showing more information about the study, with a link to View Time Slots for This Study.

Click the “Sign-Up” button to schedule your time. You should then write down or print out the study information (name, place, time, etc.) that appears in the final window. You will also receive an e-mail reminder the day before the study time you have selected.

**C. Canceling a Sign-Up**

1. If you need to cancel a timeslot you have signed up for, you can do this from the My

Schedule and Credits page. Choose the My Schedule and Credits option from the top

toolbar.

1. You will see listed all the studies you have signed up for, as well as those you have

completed (see the Tracking Your Progress section of this documentation for more

information).

1. Studies you have signed up for that you are allowed to cancel will have a Cancel button

next to them. If you cannot make the experiment session you signed up for, you need to

cancel it, either within the SONA system or by contacting the researcher directly prior to

the start of the study. **After your third unexcused no-show, you will no longer be able to sign-up for studies.** Thus, if you know you cannot keep the commitment, be sure to cancel the appointment. **Also, there is a time limit before the study is to occur, when it is too late to cancel.** This restriction is listed at the bottom of the page (it is often 24 hours before the study).

1. If you cancel the first part of a two-part study, the second part will also be cancelled. If

you cancel the second part of a two-part study, the first part will not be cancelled, but you will need to ask the researcher to sign you up for the second part again, if you would like to participate in it at a later date.

1. **Tracking Your Progress**

1. You may track your progress at any time by choosing the My Schedule and Credits

option from the top toolbar.

1. When you view this page, you will see at the top a list of the number of credits you are

required to earn, and how many you have earned so far. Below that, if you have signed

up for any studies, those are listed as well. In the list of studies, you will see information

about your credit status. This information will include any failure to show-up for a study

without canceling in advance of the session time.

1. Non-study credit is also listed, when applicable. Non-study credit is granted for writing a

research summary and is granted by your PSY1113 instructor. **If you have questions about the research summaries, please refer to the summary handout and then e-mail your instructor if you still have questions. The SONA Coordinator cannot answer questions regarding research summaries.**

Note: Your login session will expire after a certain period of inactivity, usually 20-60 minutes. This is done for security purposes. If this happens, you can always log in again. When you are finished using the system, it is better to explicitly log out, to prevent any problems that may arise if someone uses your computer before the session expires. This is especially important if you are using a public computer lab.

1. **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Please see our FAQ page on our website for the full list of questions, ranging from login issues to lack of available studies to issues receiving credit from researchers.**

* Immediately after I login, as soon as I click on any menu option, I am taken back to the login page and I see a message that my authentication has expired. What does this mean?

Your web browser is not properly configured to accept cookies. You should turn on cookies in your web browser, use a different web browser (for example, try Firefox if you are currently using Internet Explorer) or try a different computer. Detailed instructions can be found if you go to the site and enter the URL “cookie\_help.asp” in place of “default.asp” in the address bar of the browser, when you are on the front page of the site.

* I participated in a study, but I have yet to receive credit. How do I receive credit?

The researcher must grant you credit. This is usually done within one to two weeks after your participation. If it has been some time and you have still not received credit, contact the researcher (his or her contact information should be listed when you click on the study name within the system).

* How do I change the e-mail address where e-mail notifications from the system are sent?

You can change the e-mail address where notifications are sent by going to My Profile and editing the e-mail address you see there.

* I forgot where and when a study is that I signed up for. What do I do?

If you forget when or where your experiment is, check your e-mail for the SONA reminder, or logon to <http://ou.sona-systems.com>, login, and check your appointments.

* Should I keep some sort of record of my participation and credits earned?

The system will keep track of the credits you earn and your instructor will have access at the end of the semester to a report of credits earned by students enrolled in the class. It is a good idea, however, to occasionally print a personal copy of your credits earned and hold on to that printout as a back up to the system.