Required Research Participation Assignment

PSYC 2, 4, & 8 students are required to serve as a research participant for research being conducted by Psychology Department faculty and students. Review the following instructions.

Signing Up to Participate in Research Studies

All research for subject pool credit is managed through the Psychology Research website.

Once you are logged in you can sign up for studies and view a summary of your research credits and requirements.

What happens if I don't complete my required hours?

If you don't complete your required hours, you will receive an *"Incomplete"* grade in your class.

When you receive an *Incomplete*, you will have one year to complete the required research participation assignment, or the University will automatically change the Incomplete grade to an "F". Once you complete your hours you should contact your course instructor and ask them to submit a grade change form to replace the *Incomplete* grade. There is no automatic notification system to instructors. If you can't locate your instructor, contact the research website administrator at stk28@csus.edu for assistance.

I do not want to participate in research. Do I have other options?

The purpose of the participation requirement is to learn about research methods first-hand, through direct experience as a research participant in current research projects going on in our Department. However, you cannot be forced to participate in research against your will. It is a completely voluntary process where you give informed consent to serve as a research participant.

If you do not want to participate, you have the option of carrying out an alternative research assignment. This alternative assignment is also intended to demonstrate your learning about research methods, even if only second-hand, by reviewing reports of research studies that have recently been completed and published in Psychology research journals. You can find instructions for the alternative research assignment on the Psychology Research website.

How can I check how many hours I need, and how many I have already completed?

Log in to the Psychology Research website and click on *My Schedule/Credits* for a summary of your credits and study signups.

What is the 5-digit participant ID code?

As extra protection for your privacy, we have opted to assign a unique 5-digit ID code to each student.

This code is separate from your student ID and login information; it is used in place of your name when researchers view their lists of sign-ups for their projects and assign credits to you as participants. They will not see your name, only your 5-digit ID.

You can find your 5-digit ID code when you view your profile in the research website, and in e- mail confirmations and reminders that are sent to you for upcoming sessions.

IMPORTANT: Bring your 5-digit ID code to all research sessions so you can be assigned credit for your participation! If you need to communicate with researchers about your participation in a study, they will not have a record of your name in their participant lists, so you will need to tell them your ID code if they need to make any credit adjustments to the website.

When should I sign up?

Some of the larger, continuation studies will be available early in the semester. After mid-semester, newer projects will start to become available.

Availability of research will diminish drastically after the 14th week of the semester. During the last week (Week 15), there may be few studies still running. Availability will be much more limited, so we strongly recommend getting most or all hours completed prior to the last week.

What are the studies like, and what should I expect when I show up?

Many studies are made up of paper-and-pencil (or occasionally on-line) surveys that you are asked to complete. Others involve more active procedures where you are asked to perform a task of some sort and perhaps complete some questionnaires.

Regardless of the type of study, you should expect the following. This list is motivated both by your ethical rights as a participant and our goal of your research experience having educational value to you:

- Courteous, professional researchers.

- A sign-in sheet to document your attendance (so you get credit).

- An informed consent process before the study, giving you basic information about the study and allowing you to opt-in or opt-out without penalty (other than forfeiting the credit you would have received).

- The option to refuse answering any questions you are not comfortable with, or to discontinue your participation without penalty (although depending on timing, you may not receive full research credit).

- A debriefing session afterwards to explain the study to you, so that you can learn from your experience.

- Contact information for the researchers.

- Prompt (within 1 – 2 days) assignment of research credits in the Psychology Research Website so you can keep an accurate assessment of your progress.

How do I Prepare to Participate in a Study?

Make sure you know your 5-digit participant ID number that is assigned to you by the Research Website. It is your responsibility to make sure the researcher gets your number so that you will receive credit for your participation.

Beyond that, the most important thing you can do is show up on time, ready to take the experience seriously and put forth your best effort. After all, you would hope for the same if you were in the researchers' shoes—and you may be in those shoes if you continue to study psychology!

Please do keep in mind that researchers put a LOT of time, effort, and planning into preparing their research studies and they have a genuine interest in obtaining high-quality and meaningful results. Please be helpful and courteous to them.

Can I participate in a study that I did not sign up for in advance?

While it is strongly preferred that you sign up in advance, researchers do have a mechanism for assigning credit to drop-ins, at their discretion. However, they are under no obligation to accept drop-ins or to show up to a session that nobody had signed up for by 6pm the prior evening.

I signed up for a study, but something came up and I can't attend—what do I do?

As a good CSUS citizen and student of psychology, it is important that you take your appointments and participation seriously.

You may cancel your appointment through the Psychology Research Website any time up through 6pm the evening before the study.

After 6 pm you will not be allowed to cancel so you should contact the researcher with as much prior notice as possible, so that they can plan accordingly for your absence.

If you do not cancel and do not contact the researcher, you will be assigned as a "no-show".

I signed up for a study, but I am running late for my appointment—what do I do?

Show up and talk to the researcher, possibly to reschedule for a later day or time.

Do not disrupt the research session. Do not open doors that are closed. Studies have strict procedures and interruptions throw the session off.

If the researcher is in the hallway or doorway then they may be willing to quietly discuss the situation. Be prepared to wait until the end of the session to avoid disruption.

What happens if I miss an appointment that I had signed up for, and did not cancel or contact the researcher ahead of time?

You most likely have been marked as a "no-show" on the project. If your absence was due to an emergency and you contact the researcher quick enough, you may be able to have it designated as an "excused" no-show, which means it will not count

toward your "no-show" tally that is kept in the system (see below). If possible, please reschedule with the same researchers so they don't lose a participant entirely.

I missed several appointments that I made, and now the system won't let me sign up for more studies. What can I do?

If you have multiple no-shows, displaying a pattern of making appointments but then failing to show up for them, the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee and your course instructor(s) will be notified. If the problem continues, your subject pool privileges may be revoked, meaning you will not be able to participate in any more research during that semester.

You may complete the **research alternative** to satisfy your requirement and avoid the "Incomplete" grade—otherwise take the incomplete and do your hours next semester.

If you feel that you have a compelling reason to have your subject pool privileges reinstated, explain yourself clearly in writing and submit your request to the research website administrator at stk28@csus.edu for consideration. Be prepared to submit documentation of any emergencies or situations outside of your control that led to your excessive no-shows. Allow approximately one week for a response.

The researcher did not show up. What do I do?

Researchers put a LOT of time, effort, and planning into preparing their research studies and it is very rare that you will experience a missing researcher.

If you were signed up in advance for a session, and you did not cancel through the website, and you showed up for the study but found the researcher to be absent (not late, but absent), then you are entitled to receive credit. Contact the researcher. Contact the research website administrator at stk28@csus.edu for further assistance if the issue is not resolved in a timely fashion.

Credit will NOT be granted automatically to participants who do not contact the researcher within a reasonable amount of time (usually the same or next day). We will assume that those who do not contact the researcher were also no-shows, and they have already benefitted by avoiding a "no-show" mark in the Research Website.

I'm in two classes that require research hours and/or provide extra credit for participation—what do I do?

You are required to complete separate hours for each class. The Psychology Research Website will allow you to divvy up your earned hours across your different classes. YOU must make sure that each class has the required number of hours.

Instructors will ONLY see their own class rosters, so if you have allocated too few hours to a particular class, you will receive an Incomplete grade when participation is required or reduced extra-credit earnings for classes giving extra credit.