PSYCHOLOGY STUDENT GUIDE TO FULFILLING THE RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

Students registered for Cognition, Personality and Social Psychology courses are required to fulfill a research requirement by participating in 2 hours/credits of research studies OR completing a written assignment. This requirement applies to these courses because many studies in cognition, personality and social psychology use data from undergraduate participants and having experience with empirical studies can provide insights into the nature of psychological science. This guide has been prepared to give you all the information you need to fulfill the research requirement for your course(s). PLEASE READ THIS GUIDE CAREFULLY!

ALTERNATIVE TO RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

Participation in studies is completely voluntary. Even after a participant has signed-up for a particular experiment and has provided informed consent, he/she is still under no obligation to participate. Participation can be withdrawn at any time. If you are not comfortable participating in any experiments, you should speak to your Instructor at the beginning of the semester regarding the alternative written assignment, which will fulfill the research requirement for your course.

The written assignment entails the following:

- You identify 1 significant article in psychology published in the last 5 years that reports findings from studies that collected new experimental or survey data. The article must be approved by the course Instructor before you begin the next steps.
- You read the article and write a two-page critique (1 two-page critique).
- The critique should discuss the significance of the study; the validity of the instruments and the data collection methods; the method of analysis, the conclusion, and the direction the results point to for future research.

NOTE: Both research participation and the written critique are evaluated pass-fail rather than graded. If neither is completed by the end of the semester, you will not receive a grade for your course. Please read the section on “Unfulfilled Research Requirement.”

HOW TO SIGN-UP FOR PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH STUDIES ON SONA

To experience firsthand how knowledge in psychology is acquired through research, students registered in cognition, personality and social psychology may fulfill their research requirement by participating in two hours of research studies over the course of the semester. The research studies are being conducted by NYU Department of Psychology faculty and their students. Most students find participating in research studies to be educational, interesting, and a high point of the course.
Study Sign-Up

You may sign-up for research studies to fulfill a research participation requirement for a course on the NYU Sona System, https://nyu-psych.sona-systems.com. You will be able to sign-up for studies from the first day through last day of classes.

Please keep in mind that you CANNOT receive research participation credit by signing up for studies through other NYU Department or university sites. Before you start signing up for research studies, make sure that you are on the correct website! There have been cases of students who have signed up for research studies through the NYU Paid Psychology Studies Website or through certain labs only to find that those studies did NOT count toward their course! So please make sure you are signing up for studies on https://nyu-psych.sona-systems.com.

Types of Available Studies

Many of our studies are lab studies that require you to come in for an in-person session. For these studies, which typically last between 30 minutes to an hour, you will be instructed to go to a room in the Meyer building (4 Washington Place) and engage in various tasks, such as viewing images on a computer screen, responding to visual/auditory stimuli, and completing surveys.

Some studies are online survey studies and will involve you completing an online questionnaire. These online questionnaires usually take between 30-60 minutes to complete and can generally be accessed on the Study Information Page on Sona once you’ve signed-up for the study. It is worth noting that some studies require a greater time commitment, requiring multiple in-person lab sessions or completing more than one survey at different times.

NOTE: Ideally, you should participate in a variety of studies, both in-person and online, so that you can get a broader perspective on the various methodologies used by psychology researchers.
Instructions on Creating a Sona Account

The first thing you will need to do in order to sign-up for research studies is to create an NYU Sona account. An NYU Sona account will allow you to participate in available research studies and check the number of credits you have earned. The account also allows the Coordinator of Psychology Research Subjects to keep track of your earned credits and provide your Professors with “end of semester reports” on your research participation at the end of each semester. Please note, if you already have a Sona account that was created in a previous semester, you do NOT need to request another account. Simply use your User ID (Net ID) and password to login to your account. If you have forgotten or simply do not have your login information, you will need to reset your password.

To create your Sona account:
2. On the right side of the page, below the “Announcement,” click on the purple button “Request Account.”
3. Enter all requested information, including your first name, last name, your User ID (which is your NYU net ID that can be found on the back of your NYU ID card), and your Student ID number (also can be found on the back of your NYU ID card. An “N” precedes the 8-digit ID number). At this point, select the course(s), you are enrolled in.
4. You will receive your login information including your password via your NYU e-mail address.
5. Once your login information is received, you will be able to login to your Sona account using your User ID and password on the left hand side of the Sona systems page (https://nyu-psych.sona-systems.com).

Resetting Your Password

If you have forgotten or cannot find your Sona account login information, you can reset your password by clicking on the grey button “Forgot Password?” on the SONA login page. If this does not work, contact the Coordinator of Psychology Research Subjects for assistance at brenda.woodford@nyu.edu or at 212-998-7874.

Sona Phone App

If you want to sign-up for research studies using your phone, you can download a Sona Systems Mobile app for iPhone in the Apple App Store or for Android in the Google Play Store. Please go to http://www.sona-systems.com/app-download.aspx.

Logging Into Your Sona Account for the First Time and Completing the “Prescreen”

When you login to your Sona account for the first time, prior to being able to sign-up for research studies, you will be prompted to complete 7 “prescreen” questions, which are general questions that will help researchers in describing the population of participants and may be used to make particular studies available to you. Once you are finished completing the prescreen questions and have saved your responses, you will be taken to the Main Menu Page.
Viewing and Signing Up for Available Research Studies

On the left hand side of the Main Menu Page, you will see a green button “View Available Studies.”

Click on this button to be taken to the Studies page. On the Studies page, you will see the names of available studies and any eligibility requirements listed. Please note, if there are no studies with available timeslots, there will be no studies listed on the Studies page.

If there are time slots available for a particular study, you will see a purple button “Timeslots Available” next to the study name. Click on this button or on the study name itself to be taken to the Study Information Page where you can review study details, eligibility requirements/special restrictions (e.g., only left-handed people), the researcher name and contact information, and to sign-up.

When selecting an available timeslot, always be mindful of your schedule. Select a date and time that works for you so that you don’t end up needing to cancel your appointment.

For online survey studies, there will only be one timeslot available for students to sign-up for. Once you sign-up for the timeslot, you will be given access to the survey link on the Study Information Page and you will have till the Participation Deadline Date given to complete the survey.
Some studies require a special password (known as an Invitation Code) to sign up. In this case, it will be noted. The researcher should have given you this invitation code. It is not the same as the password you use to log in to the system. You will need to enter the invitation code just before you click the Sign Up button to sign up for a timeslot.

Upon signing up for any research study, you will receive an e-mail confirmation including the date, time and location of the study. You will also receive a reminder e-mail the evening before the study is scheduled.

**Making it to your Study Appointment**

Make sure to go to your study, and please be on time! Most studies have to start exactly on time, because many students are scheduled around the same time. If you are late, you may miss the study. Although some studies can start late, these are the exception rather than the rule. Give yourself enough time to find the right place, to wait for the elevator, etc. You will receive an email reminder of your appointment the evening before the study is scheduled.

** Cancelling a Scheduled Appointment on Sona**

You may cancel a scheduled appointment on Sona by clicking on the “View or cancel my study appointments” option listed under “My Schedule & Credits” that appears on the left hand side of the Main Page. (Note: “My Schedule & Credits” is also on the top toolbar).

Studies you have signed up for that you are allowed to cancel will have a Cancel button next to them. You will not be penalized for canceling at this stage. There is a time limit before the study is to occur when it is too late to cancel through Sona. This restriction may be listed at the bottom of the page or can be found by clicking on the study name and viewing the study details.

Once you click Cancel to cancel your sign-up, you will see a confirmation page. You will also be warned if your cancellation might affect your ability to participate in other studies you have signed up for, due to pre-requisite restrictions.
Click “Yes” to cancel your sign-up. 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.

NOTE: You will receive an e-mail confirmation regarding your study cancellation.

Adding/Removing Courses on Sona

It is your responsibility when you request an account on Sona to select the correct course(s) in which you are enrolled. However, students have an opportunity up until the end of the second week of classes to either add or drop courses. In such cases, it is important for you to remember to update your Sona accounts with the correct courses. If you don’t update your course(s) on Sona, your earned research participation credits will not be allocated to the appropriate course and when your Professor receives his/her end of semester report, it will seem as though you did not meet your research participation requirement! You MUST assign the correct course(s) to your Sona account to ensure that your research participation credit is appropriately assigned! This is your responsibility.

If you have added or dropped a course(s) since first creating your Sona account, you will have the option to change courses by clicking on “My Profile” on the top toolbar on the Main Page. Once on your profile page, you will see your courses listed under “Credits” located on the right hand side of the page. Underneath your course(s), you will see a purple button “Change Courses.” Click on that button to add or remove a course(s).
RECEIVING CREDIT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

The credit you receive for participation in a study is dependent upon the length of the study. Please see below:

- 30 minutes = .5 credits
- 1.5 hours = 1.5 credits
- 1 hour = 1 credit
- 2 hours = 2 credits

Only researchers (NOT Professors/TAs) can grant you credit for participation in a research study. Typically, participants will receive credit shortly after their participation in a study. If more than 48 hours have gone by and you have not received credit, you should contact the researcher directly. If you don’t receive a response from the researcher after a few days and you still haven’t received credit, contact the Coordinator of Psychology Research Subjects at brenda.woodford@nyu.edu.

ALLOCATING/ASSIGNING CREDITS TO YOUR COURSE(S)

Each time you sign-up for a study, you will be given the option to assign the credit you will receive to a particular course. If you are only taking one course, credit granted to you for a study will automatically be assigned to that one course listed in your Sona account. However, if you are taking multiple courses in a semester, you will have the option of selecting the course for which you’d like the credit to be assigned. Please make sure that ALL of your courses are listed on your Sona account so that you may correctly assign credit to your courses!

MONITORING YOUR PROGRESS

You can keep track of how many credits you’ve earned, are pending and are required by looking at the “Credits Overview” section on the right hand side of the Main Page. For more details and to see whether you have received credit for a particular study, you should click on “My Schedule & Credits” on the top toolbar of the Main Page. When on the “My Schedule & Credits” page, at the top, you will see your overall credits earned, pending (if any) and required. You will also be able to see the names of any studies you’ve signed up for, whether you’ve received credit for the study, and what course you assigned to receive the credit. On this page, you’ll also have the opportunity to re-assign your earned credit(s) to another course by clicking on the purple button “Reassign” found under the course listed.
In reviewing the studies you’ve signed up for, if you notice that there is no course assigned to a study, you should immediately assign a course to that study so that the credit you will receive is not wasted! It is important that you fix this, because if not, the earned credit will not be assigned to any course and will therefore NOT count toward your research participation requirement.

The NO-SHOW POLICY

Everyone gets sick and special circumstances do come up from time to time for most people. However, if you’re not feeling well or something important gets in the way of you making it to your study appointment, please be responsible and courteous by contacting the researcher ASAP to let him/her know. Ideally, you should give the researcher at least a 24 hour notice. This gives the researcher the opportunity to open up your timeslot to other students. Do not waste the researchers’ time; their time is as valuable as yours.

If you fail to cancel your appointment on Sona or to notify the researcher directly that you will be missing your scheduled appointment, you will be marked as an “unexcused no show”. After 2 unexcused no-shows (two missed appointments that were not excused by the researchers), your Sona account will automatically be blocked/disabled and will remain blocked until you take one of the actions listed below. However, you will receive credit for those studies you completed or are pending sign-ups.

Once your Sona account has been disabled, you will need to do one of the following in order to complete the research requirement for your course:

1. Speak to your Professor/Head TA to inquire if you’d be able to do the alternative written assignment.
2. Contact the Coordinator of Psychology Research Subjects at brenda.woodford@nyu.edu and explain the reason for the two un-excused no-shows. In some cases a third chance may be granted.

UNFULFILLED RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

You should do your best to complete the research participation requirement or written assignment for your course(s) each semester! For those who choose to participate in research studies, the best way to do this is to start signing up for studies EARLY in the semester so that you do not miss any opportunities to participate in studies for which you may be eligible. The number of studies posted on Sona is continuously monitored to ensure that enough studies are available throughout the semester for everyone. However, there is no guarantee that there will be enough studies at the end of the semester. As the end of the semester approaches, it becomes increasingly more difficult to find available studies. A good guideline is to do at least one study per week. If you choose to do the written assignment, the same recommendation applies: start EARLY!

If by the last day of classes, you have not completed the research requirement for your course(s), you will receive a temporary “I” or incomplete grade till you are able to make-up the missing hours/credits or complete the written assignment. Please keep in mind that you only have till the end of the next semester to make-up the research requirement and to receive an actual grade. Under special circumstances, Professors may agree to give you an extension.
EXTRA CREDIT POLICY

Extra credit is offered at the discretion of each individual Professor. Your Professor will let you know during the first day of classes and/or on the syllabus whether extra credit will be offered as part of the course. If extra credit is offered, you may sign-up for additional studies upon completing your required hours at any time during the semester. If you decide to participate in additional studies, please make sure that your Professor has offered extra credit, because otherwise, those additional hours/credits you earn will be lost, as they will NOT be applied to any psychology courses you take in the future. Always be mindful of others. If you have fulfilled your required (and extra credit) research participation hours, please leave the study appointments open to those who may need them.

PARENTAL CONSENT

IF YOU ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 18, PARENTAL CONSENT IS REQUIRED FOR ALL RESEARCH PARTICIPATION AND CONSENT MUST BE OBTAINED PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN ANY STUDIES. STUDENTS WILL FIND THE PARENTAL PERMISSION FORMS AT http://as.nyu.edu/psychology/research/participate-in-research/parental-consent-forms.html.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit the FAQ section on the Main Page of your Sona account. Any questions you may have should be addressed in this section. If you are not able to find the answers to your questions, please contact the Coordinator of Psychology Research Subjects at Brenda.woodford@nyu.edu. For a detailed participant tutorial on how to use Sona, it is recommended that you visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1OnT2ZU6QQ.