

# General Psychology Research Experience

## Spring 2012

One of the goals of PSY 2012 -- General Psychology -- is to familiarize you with the research process in psychology. To meet this goal, we have designed two options. As a student in PSY 2012, you must complete one (and only one) of the two options listed below. Deadlines for the selection and completion of the two options are listed below.

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### DESCRIPTION OF THE OPTIONS

**Option 1:** Earn **11** credits by participating in experiments. One credit is given for every half-hour you spend in an experiment, and you need to earn 11 credits in total. (This is equivalent to 5.5 hours of participation in research.) When you complete the research experience by completing 5 hours (11 credits) of research, you will receive 50 points that are added into your PSY2012 grade. If you do NOT complete the full number of credits by the deadline specified by your section instructor, you will receive points at a rate of 4 points per credit completed. Please note that completing all your research hours will receive a 10 point bonus to your grade (for a total of 50 points overall).

Some other important points about selecting Option 1:

- **You must be at least 18 years old** to complete Option 1. If you are not 18 years old then you must complete Option II. Students who will turn 18 during the semester may choose to complete Option 1 after their birthday but are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** to complete Option 2 to insure they complete the research requirement.
- If you are an online student, **you must be living in Alachua County** to complete Option 1. If you are living outside of Alachua County, you **MUST** choose Option 2.
- Students are allowed to receive 6 of the 11 study credits from online (survey) studies; the remaining credits **MUST** be earned through participation in lab-based studies.

**Option 2:** First-hand experience in research is a valuable component of understanding the science of psychology. However, students who prefer not to participate in research or do not meet the requirements for selection Option 1 can select Option 2 as an alternative. For this option, you must read three scientific research articles from the approved list of peer-reviewed professional journals in the area of psychological science. In addition, you must submit one critical analysis paper per scientific article for a total of **3 papers**.

If you select OPTION 2, you must email both your instructor and the participant pool coordinator by the deadline specified in class. To email the participant pool coordinator, please use the following address: **psy2012@grove.ufl.edu**.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

### Option 1: Research Participation

Research is a fundamental component of psychological science. Learning about psychology involves learning about the research process, and research participation provides a hands-on opportunity to become familiar with how research is conducted. This option gives you experience as a participant in actual psychology experiments. You will also have the opportunity to learn more about yourself and your behavior in these studies. There are many different kinds of studies conducted in our department. For example, you might be asked to complete questionnaires, to view videos, to listen to music or conversations, to interact with others in a group, or to make judgments on a computer.

All studies are reviewed and approved in advance by the University of Florida Institutional Review Board. When you arrive at each study, the investigator will explain that particular study to you and you will have a chance to ask any questions you may have about participation. If you do not wish to participate, you will receive 1 credit for the time required to get to the location of the experiment and be allowed to leave. If you decide to participate in the study, you will be given a written explanation of the study and asked to give your consent to participate. Even after you have consented and have started to participate, it is always up to you to decide whether to continue—you can discontinue your participation at any time.

### HOW TO REGISTER FOR PARTICIPATION

The sign-up procedure uses a web-based system called **Sona Systems**, which means you will sign up for studies on-line. The procedure for signing up for experiments is detailed below. If you are still confused after reading this document, check the **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** document below. The FAQ is also on the Sona Systems Webpage.

#### I. Setting up an account and password.

The first time you use Sona Systems, follow the steps below to set up an account for yourself and indicate your course section:

**Step 1:** With any Internet browser, go to: <http://ufl.sona-systems.com>. Under the New User section on the left side of the screen, click on the “request an account” link. Next, enter the following information:

**First name:** enter your First Name as it appears on your Gator1 card

**Last name:** enter Last Name as it appears on your Gator1 card

**User ID:** enter your Gatorlink username

**Re-enter User ID:** enter your Gatorlink username again

**Student ID:** enter your UF ID

**Select course:** Select your course

**Step 2:** A logon and password will be sent to your email account within 24 hours, although in most cases it will be sent in less time. The email will contain a link to the Sona Systems

website, so that you can immediately login. If you do not receive a logon and password shortly after you have signed up (wait at least 24 hours for the email to arrive), it is most likely due to complications with the email address you provided.

Any problems with your Gatorlink email should be directed to the UF computing help desk at (352) 392-HELP (4357). If you continue to have problems with the Sona Systems webpage, contact the participant pool coordinator at [psy2012@grove.ufl.edu](mailto:psy2012@grove.ufl.edu). NOTE: Do **NOT** use AOL accounts. Doing so will prevent you from receiving important emails.

**Step 3:** To login, navigate to: <http://ufl.sona-systems.com> using an internet browser and type in your Gatorlink username and the password you received. Under “My Profile,” you can change your password as well as any other personal information (e.g., your phone number). **If you forget your password**, go to <http://ufl.sona-systems.com/> and on the left side of the screen under “Your Password,” click on “Retrieve Password.” You will be sent your password via email.

### III. Signing up for experiments

After you have set up your account, you may sign up for research projects. The first study you will probably complete is an online prescreening study. You will receive 1 credit for this study, and it will appear on the screen after you login. The online survey will be available throughout the semester. If you do not complete this online study in the beginning of the semester, however, there is no penalty.

**Step 1:** Using an internet browser navigate to <http://ufl.sona-systems.com> and login with your username and password. To view available studies, click on the study sign-up icon. This will bring up a list of studies. You may view the schedule of available times by clicking on the specific study in which you are interested. You can then view the number of credits the study awards and amount of time required to complete the study. To view available time slots, click on the link provided, and you will see additional information including the location of the study.

**Step 2:** When you find a study that fits your schedule, simply click the “Sign Ups” button. Once you have clicked the button, you will be signed up for the study you selected. It is **very important** that you write down the day, date, time, and location of the experiment in your calendar

**Step 3:** You will receive a confirmation/reminder email about 24 hours before the scheduled time of the study. To receive a reminder, you need to make sure your email address is correct in the online sign-up system. To verify or change your email address, go to <http://ufl.sona-systems.com> and click on the “My Profile” icon at the bottom of the screen and adjust your contact information as needed. If your email address isn't there or is incorrect, you can type another address in the Alternate Email Address box. However, note that if you type in an alternate email address, all emails from the website will be sent to the alternate email address.

**Step 4:** On the date and time of the study, go to the location of the study. If you have any questions about the location of the study, please email the person listed as the Researcher under the study description. After arriving at the experiment, you will first be given a description of the experimental procedures and asked to sign a consent form. If you do not wish to participate in

the study at this time, tell your experimenter, and you will be given 1 credit for showing up for the study.

After you have completed the experiment, the researcher will assign you credit via the website. *Please allow researchers 1 week after the study has ended to formally assign you credit on the SONA website.* You can keep track of the credits you have earned by going to the website, clicking on “My Schedule/Credits” and logging in. The experiments in which you have participated and the number of credits you have earned, as well as any outstanding appointments, will be listed there.

**NOTE: There is a limit on the number of credits you can earn through online studies (not including the prescreening questionnaire).**

#### **IV. Canceling an appointment.**

If you must cancel your appointment, be sure to remove your name from the web sign-up page under “My Schedule/Credits” as soon as possible, so that another student may take your spot in the study. If you cancel more than 24 hours before the session is to begin, Go to the **Sona Systems** website and find your initials next to the date and time you signed-up. Click the "Cancel" button to the right of your initials. If you cancel within 24 hours before the session begins, **you must call the researcher**. Please do **NOT** call the Psychology office, your TA, or instructor with information about cancellations, as these people are in no way involved in this procedure.

#### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

1. If you forget the date, time, or room number for your session, go to **<http://ufl.sona-systems.com>**, log on, and click on “My Schedule/Credits.” Once you log in, you can see a list of any projects for which you are enrolled. You can then verify the date, time, and location, as well as the researcher's contact information.
2. You will be able to track the credits you have earned for participation in research studies by viewing the “My Schedule/Credits” page. Check periodically to make sure that your credits have been correctly applied. If you discover a problem, contact the researcher as soon as you can. If you think that the Sona system is incorrect, send an email to **[psy2012@grove.ufl.edu](mailto:psy2012@grove.ufl.edu)**.
3. Your section instructor will give you information related to the deadline for completing your research experience. Pay close attention to the deadline as once it has passed, you will no longer be able to earn credits, which will directly affect your PSY2012 grade.

## **OPTION 2: Writing summaries of research studies already completed.**

This option is designed to give you exposure to the research that psychologists conduct by reading and reporting on completed experiments that have been published in peer-reviewed, professional psychology journals.

Students who decide on Option 2 must declare their intentions via email to their section instructor as well as the participant pool coordinator (psy2012@grove.ufl.edu) by the deadline specified in class. During the spring and fall semesters, this deadline usually falls during the first two weeks of class. **After the specified time, the paper option CANNOT be selected.**

\* Option 2 must be declared to the instructor and participant pool coordinator by **January 18, 2012** and completed by **April 20, 2012**.

Students may receive up to 5 bonus points for turning in the Option 2 assignments early; bonus deadlines are below:

1<sup>st</sup> Bonus deadline, 5 points: March 23, 2012 by 4:00 pm

2<sup>nd</sup> Bonus deadline, 3 points: April 13, 2012 by 4:00 pm

### **Step 1. Locating a research article.**

The UF library has a variety of professional, peer-reviewed journals in the field of psychology. You can either go physically to Library West or the Health Center Library, or you can visit the library online at <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/>. If you are off campus, remember to click on the green “Off-Campus Access” button on the left side of the screen. (If you are on campus, this step is unnecessary.) Once you have access to the library resources, click on the “Online Journals” tab at the top of the webpage. Now you can search for relevant journals. Only professional journals in Psychology are acceptable. Here are some journals from which you can choose:

- **Psychological Science** (*recommended*)
- Journal of Experimental Psychology
- Journal of Personality and Social Psychology
- Developmental Psychology
- Cognitive Psychology

Select 3 articles from one of the above journals that describes one or more experiments. Be sure to choose articles that are empirical (i.e., a study was conducted). Do not select theoretical articles. Your instructor or TA can assist you in determining whether your articles are acceptable.

### **Step 2. Format of the critical analysis.**

Please have your reports conform to the following guidelines:

- a. Include a photocopy of each of the 3 articles, including the reference list provided at the end of the article.
- b. The written report of each article must be **typed, three pages in length, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins on all sides**. You must use **Times or Arial 12 point font**.
- c. Use headings within your paper to organize your critical analysis.

- d. Consider using a report folder to bind both the three articles and three critical analyses together.

### **Step 3. Coverage.**

Include information that responds to the following questions:

- a. What was this article about (i.e., briefly summarize the purpose, methods, results, and conclusions)? This part should be 1 to 1.5 pages in length.
- b. Why did you choose this particular journal or article? This part should be around half a page in length.
- c. How understandable or usable was the article to you? (If it seems vague or impossible to understand, feel free to say so.) This part should be around half a page in length.
- d. What did you learn as a result of your reading and how did this article relate (if at all) to class material? This part should be .5 to 1 page in length.

### **Step 4. Turning it in.**

The typed papers and complete articles should be turned in to mailbox #56 in the main office of the Psychology Department (room 114). The mailbox is labeled "PSY 2012 Participant Pool mailbox." Papers must be submitted by 4pm on the deadline specified above. They will be graded on a pass-fail basis. Be sure to include the following information on a cover page to your critical analysis packet:

- **YOUR NAME**
- **YOUR UFID NUMBER**
- **YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S NAME**

## **IMPORTANT DATES:**

• **Option 1** must be completed by Wed., **April 25, 2012** at 5:00 pm.

• **Option 2** must be declared by Wed., **January 18, 2012**, and completed Fri., **April 20, 2012** at 4:00 pm.

1<sup>st</sup> Bonus deadline, 5 points: March 23, 2012 by 4:00 pm

2<sup>nd</sup> Bonus deadline, 3 points: April 13, 2012 by 4:00 pm