

Instructions for Students Participating in the Subject Pool Whitman College Psychology Department

Research Requirement

One purpose of encouraging students to participate in research conducted through the Psychology Department is to provide exposure to the methods of psychological research. Such exposure is a critical element of understanding psychology as a discipline. For this reason, it is the policy of the Department of Psychology that each student enrolled in PSY 110 is required to participate in department-sponsored research. Students will receive 1 "research credit" for each half hour of participation. This semester (Fall 2018), you will need to complete 4 credits.

All of the studies included in the subject pool have been approved by the Whitman College Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB is responsible for ensuring that all studies conform to ethical guidelines. If you have any ethical concerns about a study you participate in or believe you have been treated unethically, please inform the chair of the Institutional Review Board at irb@whitman.edu.

Some studies will call for information—attitudes, demographic characteristics, behavioral history—to be provided by participants. Much of this information will be anonymously given, but in all cases it will be used only for the purpose of research, and it will be held in strict confidence. There may also be studies that involve some degree of stress. If you're in such a study, the researcher will inform you of this fact at the beginning of the study and, if you are uncomfortable continuing in the study, you have the right to refuse to participate. You also have the right to stop participating in the study at any time during its progress.

Students who do not wish to participate in research are not required to do so. However, such objections do not negate the importance of understanding research as it relates to behavior. Therefore, students who choose not to participate in research, for whatever reason, must inform their instructor sufficiently early in the course to enable the instructor to develop an alternative activity that has the same educational benefit as research participation.

Note: If you are 17 years old or younger, you must consult with the departmental assistant about obtaining parental permission before serving as a participant in research.

Instructions for Participants

Announcements seeking research participants will be emailed to PSYC 110 students each Sunday during the semester. The email will contain a googledoc link with subsequent links for each study (one link for information on the study and another for a sign-up sheet). Each posted study will contain:

1. Special conditions restricting participation (e.g. age, gender);
2. Information about the procedures of the study (i.e., what will be expected of participants);
3. The total time that will be required of participants;
4. Appointments for specific dates and times of participation, including the location of the study.

If you are willing to participate in a study, enter your name for an appointment and appear at the designated time and place. **It is extremely important that you are on time for the study.** "On time" means at or before the appointed time, not five or ten minutes after the appointed time. If you are late and find an "Experiment in Progress: Do Not Disturb" sign on the door, do not go in and do not knock on the door (you will be interfering with the research procedures).

When the session begins, the researcher will explain the procedures of the study, and then provide an informed consent form to be reviewed by you. Read the form, and ask the researcher(s) questions, if you have any. Then, if you have no objections to participating, sign the form and return it to the researcher. If you do not feel comfortable participating, do not sign the informed consent form. Instead, inform the researcher of your decision and the researcher will ensure that you receive some credit (no more than 1) for meeting your appointment. After returning the informed consent form to the researcher, you will be given a copy of the form to retain for your records and **keep as your receipt**. Treat this copy as you would any other copy of an important document you have signed.

Immediately after the session (in most cases), the study will be fully explained to you and any questions that you may have will be answered. However, in order for some studies to be valid, information about the study may be withheld until after the entire study is complete. In those instances, the researchers will send you information via email once the study is complete.

Green Forms

At the end of each research session, the researcher will give you a green form to fill out. On this form, you will need to include identifying information and your signature. You will then take the green form and **drop it in the box beside Maxey 338**. The subject pool administrator will collect these forms and maintain an updated spreadsheet of credit participation. **The green form is what gives you your credit; do not forget to place it in the box before leaving the building.** If for some reason you were not given credit for a research participation session (e.g., a green form was somehow lost), you may show your informed consent to the departmental assistant as proof of your participation.

Failure to Appear for a Research Appointment

It is the right of every research volunteer to refuse to participate at any point in the research process. However, it is also the responsibility of every research volunteer to appear, **on time**, for any appointments he or she has made. If, after signing up for a study, you discover you are unable to meet this responsibility, you must inform the researcher and cancel your appointment **at least 24 hours in advance**. This can be done by contacting the researcher via his or her email address which can be found on your reminder slip. Do not simply delete your name from the sign-up sheet as the researcher may already have a record of your scheduled appointment.

Students who sign up for a research appointment and fail to appear (or cancel with less than 24 hours notice) will be penalized for a "no show." The penalty will be equal to 1 research credit. Such a penalty means that 1 credit will be subtracted from the total number of credits you may have already earned. If you have not earned any research credits, for example, then a credit penalty would leave you with a -1 credit research participation accumulation; in order to meet the course requirement, you would need to accumulate the required credits plus the 1-credit penalty.

Summary of Student Research Obligations

1. Sign up for research appointments.
2. Show up for, or cancel prior to the appointed time, every appointment made with a researcher.
3. Complete and turn in each green form.
4. Accumulate the designated number of research credits through participation in research or a pre-arranged alternative.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if there are no studies available to sign up for?

Additional research opportunities are regularly posted on the googledoc sheet throughout the semester. If for some reason all of the slots are full when you go to sign up, wait for a few days and then check again. Although there are plenty of opportunities to participate in studies, it is important that you not wait until the last minute. Many of the studies will close before the last few weeks of the semester.

What if I had an emergency and couldn't cancel on time?

First, think about if it was an actual emergency. If your alarm didn't go off or your calendar didn't sync correctly, that's not an emergency. If there really was an emergency, please contact the subject pool administrator at subjectpool@whitman.edu. Do not contact your professor.

What if I show up for the study and no one else is there?

First, check your reminder slip to make sure that you went to the right place at the right time. If you did, please contact the subject pool administrator at subjectpool@whitman.edu. You will receive credit for the study. Do not contact your professor.

Is research participation safe?

Qualified researchers on the Institutional Review Board (IRB) review each study before it is cleared for use. Most (but not all) studies ask you to do some kind of simple task (e.g., paper-and-pencil task, computerized task, use a map, watch a video, express opinions). You will not be asked to do anything that is obviously harmful or dangerous.

Importantly, researchers **MUST** get your consent before beginning the study. Researchers are required to explain the procedures and give you the chance to ask questions before you participate. If they don't, or if you find the procedure objectionable, you can choose not to participate. You may also choose to stop participating at any time if you become uncomfortable with the procedures.

What if I have a question not addressed here?

Please contact the subject pool administrator at subjectpool@whitman.edu. Do not contact your professor.