



**Syracuse University**  
Department of Psychology

**An Instructor's Guide to SONA and the Department of  
Psychology Research Participation Pool**

Updated 5/18/18

**Important Dates for the 2018-19 Academic Year**

**Fall Semester 2018:**

**Opens: Wednesday September 5, 2018**

**Closes: Thursday December 7, 2018 at 5:00pm**

**Spring Semester 2019:**

**Opens: Wednesday January 23, 2019**

**Closes: Tuesday April 30, 2019 at 5:00pm**

### **About the Psychology Research Participation Pool**

The Department of Psychology research participation pool exists so that students may gain first-hand experience with how research is conducted, as well as contribute to on-going departmental research. The research participation pool is an essential and valuable component of the department's teaching and research effort. We are grateful that you are contributing to that effort.

The online Psychology Research Participation System (SONA) will record credits automatically. The system, which is described below, issues credits via a direct experimenter interface.

### **The Psychology Research Participation System (SONA)**

The online system, SONA, will be used for managing many aspects of the research participation pool. The system functions in accordance with contemporary privacy laws and is in compliance with SU's institutional review board (IRB).

The system efficiently fulfills many needs of participants and researchers alike. For example, it allows potential participants to browse all currently approved experiments, it permits researchers to schedule/manage appointments with participants, and it issues e-mail reminders about upcoming experiments and appointments.

Students can access the SONA system by going online to <http://syr.sona-systems.com/>. There are detailed, easy-to-follow instructions on how to use the system. Please review the handout "Department of Psychology Human Research Participation Pool Student Guide for Participants" with your students. Students with questions about how to participate in the pool should be referred to this document.

We encourage you to create your own student account to see the system from the perspective of a student. This will help you better describe the system, answer questions, and even verify any student concerns about when studies are posted. Note: you cannot use your researcher or instructor account for this purpose. Instead, you must create a student account using a UserID in the format: USER ID\_student. To set-up an account click:

**Request Account**

on the right side of the SONA website <http://syr.sona-systems.com/> or follow instructions in the student guided posted on the lecture blackboard.

You will have an instructor account that allows you to check on the progress of your students at any time throughout the semester.

### **Alternative to Participation in Research**

As required by the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), students must be provided an alternate to participation in research. The following information describes alternative activity. You may include this information verbatim in your syllabus or other class materials.

## Research Participation

Research is an integral part of the Psychological Sciences. The purpose of this activity is to enhance your understanding of and appreciation for the science of Psychology. You may earn credit in one of two ways.

### 1) Participation in a Research Study

(You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in research.)

You may choose to serve as a participant in a research experiment conducted by the Department of Psychology where you will experience first-hand what it is like to actually participate in a research study. You may sign up for research experiments on SONA: <http://syr.sona-systems.com> or using the mobile app (look for Sona in your app store, the app is free). When you read about a study on SONA, you will see how many credits it is worth - individual studies are worth between ½ credit and 3 credits depending on their length. The SONA system will open one week after classes begin and close on the last day of classes at 5pm. Please note that new time slots are posted daily. If you do not find anything that fits your schedule, check back soon. Do not assume that checking once is sufficient to see all available studies. When you sign up for an experiment, be sure to record the pertinent information (when, where, experimenter's name and contact info). You will get an email confirmation of your appointment. Sign up only for those hours you can attend. If you realize later that you are unable to participate in an experiment you signed up for, you may cancel the experiment yourself using the SONA website. You must cancel within 24 hours of your appointment. If you cannot cancel using SONA, then please contact the researcher immediately. Canceling an appointment 24 hours in advance (or as listed in the study) is an excused absence, and it **will not** be considered a missed appointment. Failure to show up for an experiment without canceling at least 24 hours in advance is considered an unexcused absence. If you have more than FOUR unexcused absences, the SONA website will lock you out. You will no longer be able to participate in research studies. If you get locked out of SONA, any remaining credits that you have not earned must be earned by Reading and Summarizing Research Articles described next.

### 2) Reading and Summarizing Research Articles

You may choose to write short reviews of research articles that describe studies that other people participated in. You should read each paper and write a review [2 pages, typed, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, one-inch margins] containing the following information:

- a. **Hypotheses** – What was the hypothesis being tested by the experiment(s)?
- b. **Participants** – Who were the participants in the experiment(s)?
- c. **Results** – What did the author(s) find?
- d. **Conclusion** - What did the author(s) conclude?
- e. **Commentary** – What is your own impression of the findings? How does this relate to the material covered in class?

A 2 page review of a paper is worth 1 research credit. All reviews are due on the last day of classes at 5pm.

### Introducing Students to the Research Participation Pool

It is essential that you (the instructor) give a brief (10-15 minute) lecture on the research participation pool and student's participation rights. Doing so will minimize students' confusion about participation, credit, and the system in general. The presentation should be given during the first week of classes as the pool is scheduled to open the second week of classes.

For your convenience, we have prepared a power point presentation for this purpose (located here: <http://psychology.syr.edu/Resources/ResearchParticipationPool.html>)  
The slides may be edited to fit your specific course needs.

Be sure each student receives a copy of the "**Department of Psychology Research Student Guide for Participants**" which is located here: <http://psychology.syr.edu/Resources/ResearchParticipationPool.html> and is posted on the course lecture blackboard.

### How to View the Progress of Your Students

1. log on to <http://syr.sona-systems.com/> using the UserID and password emailed to you by SONA or provided by the research coordinator. Note: you cannot use your researcher account to view student information, you must use your instructor account. If you have a researcher account, your instructor account UserID is probably in the format: USER ID\_instructor)
2. Click **Course Reports** and You will see the following options:

  

3. Click on  to view students who chose your class when signing up for SONA.

Name	Overall Credits Earned	Overall Credits Required	Overall Unexcused No-Shows	Credits Earned for Course
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Two pieces of information are relevant. First, the column "**Credits Earned for Course**" tells you the number of credits each student has earned. Students may be enrolled in multiple classes using SONA. SONA has a nice way of handling this situation. Each time they sign up for an experiment, they must decide which of their classes are allocated that credit. Therefore, it is important to use the column "Credits Earned for this Course" to evaluate their earned credits.

Second, "**Overall Unexcused No-Shows**" tells you the number of unexcused no-shows. If this number is 0, then the student earned extra credit in accordance with PSY 205 policy. If this number is anything other than 0, then the student did not earn extra credit.

4. To save this information, you can either print it or download a file to your computer.

To print it, click [Display this Report in a Printer-Friendly Layout](#) and then click the print button on your computer.

To download, click [Download this Report in CSV Format](#).

### **Research Participation Pool Contacts**

Jennifer Bragg  
Research Coordinator

Lael Schooler  
Research Participation Pool Director

All email about the Participation Pool should be sent to: [syr.psy.rpp@gmail.com](mailto:syr.psy.rpp@gmail.com)