LSU Psychology: Research Participation System

Researcher/P.I. Guide

General information
- **Contact information**
  - Website: [https://lsuhumanresearch.sona-systems.com/](https://lsuhumanresearch.sona-systems.com/)
  - System administrator: psycexp@lsu.edu
- **Logging in/requesting an account**
  - LSU uses SSO (single sign-on) which requires users to log in with their myLSU credentials
  - If you do not have a researcher account, you will have to email the Sona administrator to request one

Setting up studies
- **Add a study**
  - You will need to email your approved IRB to the Sona administrator and complete the “Application for Sona System Study Approval” which is a Google form – please request a link from the Sona administrator
    - Note: The system requires you to add your IRB# and the IRB expiration date
  - If you are ready to collect data, make the study active so that the study will be visible to participants once the Sona administrator approves
    - Note: Studies must be active and approved to be visible to participants
- **Naming your study**
  - Be sure to include the prefix “PSYC - “. This allows participants to differentiate PSYC studies from CMST studies
- **Duration/Credits**
  - For every 30 minutes of participation, participants earn 1 credit
  - If the student can earn money or credit, they cannot earn full credit and monetary compensation for the same amount of work.
    - For example: If a study is 2 hours long and they can earn $5/hour, the student can earn $10 and no credit, 4 credits and no money, or $5 and 2 credits.
    - The study should still be set up as for credit study, but the study description should be clear as to what is being compensated.
- **Study types**
  - Online or Lab
    - Studies conducted over Zoom are considered online studies.
    - Note: Once you set-up a study, it cannot be changed to a different format. In other words, once you set-up a laboratory study, you cannot change it to an online study. In these cases, you will need to create a new study and let the Sona administrator know.
- **Course restrictions**
Course restrictions is a listing of courses that are allowing extra credit and allows students to choose which course their credits will be applied to

- **Note:** Make sure your course restrictions are correct for the current semester

- **Participation deadlines**
  - There are two participation deadlines each semester (i.e., mid-term & final) - these deadlines are the Tuesday before mid-term grades are due and the Tuesday before the last day of class
    - Online studies should initially have one timeslot with a participation deadline of the mid-term credit deadline. Once the mid-term deadline passes, a new timeslot should be added with the final participation date as the participation deadline
    - Lab studies only need to use the final participation deadline

**Other information**

- **Prescreen**
  - The prescreen is a brief survey built into the Sona system that each participant must complete each semester and allows researchers to identify and recruit qualified individuals for studies that have special requirements - you can do this by using the “Prescreen Restrictions” option
  - Each lab can have up to 3 questions on the prescreen
    - **Note:** Additional question(s) may be requested but we cannot guarantee they will be included because the prescreen is uncredited

- **Participant information**
  - All PSYC 2000 students are required to participate in research; however, other psychology courses may offer extra credit for Sona participation
    - **Note:** The research participation system is shared with the Department of Communication Studies, however, psychology students may only earn credit for participating in psychology studies
  - Participants who are under the age of 18 must obtain written parental consent before participating. Participants should send the completed form to the Sona administrator, but also provide a copy of the completed form to the researcher for each study they participate in
    - **Important:** The consent form does not allow students under 18 to participate in studies that are approved for ages 18+ it only waives the need for in-person parental consent in studies approved for minors.

- **Granting Credits**
  - Credits should be granted as soon as possible after participation; however, credits MUST be granted by 5:00 pm the day after the mid-term and final participation deadlines so that the Sona administrator can send credit reports to instructors
  - If an experimenter is at fault for a cancellation, the researcher should first offer to reschedule and if this is not possible they should offer credit to the student.
    - Additionally, if participation in a study is dependent on a certain number of students attending one session and that number is not reached, the students that did attend should be offered credit because they are not at fault.
Excused vs. Unexcused absences
- Participants may cancel within the participant cancellation deadline without penalty
- If a participant needs to cancel after this time period, they should contact the researcher directly. In general, an absence is considered excused if they notify the researcher in advance
- A “no-show/unexcused” should be assigned if participants do not contact you before their scheduled timeslot

Important: Participants can choose to withdraw from a study at any time and credit must be granted (this includes online studies as well).

Important: If a participant needs to reassign credits, please direct them to the Sona administrator and they will take care of this!

Credit Limits
- It is important to note that the participant pool is limited. In the study approval process, you will be approved for a certain number of participants/credits. The Sona administrator monitors credit usage; therefore, if you are close to exceeding your limit, you may be contacted and requested to scale back your timeslot usage
  - Note: The number of time slots opened should be commensurate with the number of participants/credits approved – if you have a study that may need to exceed the approved credit limit, please contact the Sona administrator as soon as possible