

# GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT SUBJECT POOL

These guidelines are for all researchers who use the Psychology Department Subject Pool. The policies and procedures exist to assure that human subjects are treated with respect and that departmental educational goals are met.

All researchers must abide by the guidelines and procedures governing the use of the Psychology Department Subject Pool. They also must comply with all University policies, procedures and guidelines relating to the use of human subjects in research. Investigators who violate any policies and procedures will lose the privilege of using the Psychology Department Subject Pool for a period of time determined by the Subject Pool Committee, and also may be subject to sanctions imposed by the Institutional Review Board.

Questions, comments, or suggestions may be directed to the Subject Pool Committee.

## I. THE ASSURANCE OF VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION BY HUMAN SUBJECTS

A. Instructors who include in their course designs opportunities for students to participate in research experiments as human subjects must make such participation voluntary by providing the students with at least two other "equitable alternative activities" which satisfy similar learning objectives.

B. Examples of "equitable alternative activities" include, but are not limited to:

- \* preparing a brief paper on a research topic
- \* preparing a report on observations made in a natural environment
- \* submitting a journal prepared in a systematic way
- \* developing and submitting a simple research proposal
- \* participating in a special project

C. To qualify as "equitable" (to participating in a research experiment as a subject), alternative activities must involve similar time, effort and benefit to the students.

D. To monitor compliance with this standard, the Subject Pool Committee will review the course syllabi of those instructors including voluntary human subject opportunities in their course designs. This review will occur the first week of each semester.

E. Instructors bear the responsibility for creating two or more additional "equitable alternative activities" in their course designs if an out-of-class activity is required and the opportunity to participate in experimental research as a human subject satisfies the requirement.

## II. OBTAINING SUBJECTS FROM THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT SUBJECT POOL

A. Research conducted by BSU faculty, staff and students involving the use of human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the BSU Institutional Review Board prior to the initiation of such research. Copies of the Guidelines & Procedures: Research and Research Related Activities Involving Human Subjects and the appropriate protocol forms can be obtained from the Office of Research Administration (B-319).

B. Only full-time faculty in the Psychology Department have routine access to the Subject Pool. With the co-sponsorship of a Psychology Department faculty member, adjunct

investigators outside the department may address requests for the use of the Subject Pool to the Subject Pool Committee after their research has been approved by the IRB.

C. Early each semester, researchers estimate the number of subject hours they will need during the semester. The Subject Pool Committee coordinates these estimates with the anticipated number of students who will likely volunteer as human subjects.

D. Requests for subjects can be made only through Experimentrix. If exceptional circumstances indicate any other method of recruiting subjects from the Psychology Department Subject Pool, researchers may petition the Subject Pool Committee.

E. The Psychology Department Subject Pool may not be used as an extra credit option for a course.

### III. ORIENTATION FOR STUDENT RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

A. The Subject Pool Committee provides an orientation for student research assistants. The session reviews the Guidelines for the Use of the Psychology Department Subject Pool.

B. All student research assistants must complete an orientation session to be authorized to conduct research and/or issue research participation credits.

C. Instructors and faculty researchers are welcome to review the orientation materials.

D. Research assistants are selected and supervised by faculty members.

E. Research assistants are generally sophomores, juniors or seniors who have successfully completed courses in statistics and research methods and show interest and aptitude in research.

F. All students who work on research projects involving human subjects will be required to complete the National Institutes of Health (NIH) online tutorial, Human Participant Protections: Education for Research Teams, and present a Completion Certificate to their supervising faculty member. The NIH course can be accessed on the WWW at:

<http://cme.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials/learning/humanparticipant-protections.asp>

G. Instructions given to students: At this web site and its subsequent pages, you will be required to register for the course, but there is no cost. It will take approximately 2 hours to complete the course. The course is organized in modules of instruction followed by tests. You need not complete all of the modules in one setting. That is, you can log off and restart at any time and your previous scores are maintained. When you finish you receive a Completion Certificate that you will need to print. A copy of that Certificate must be on file with the Psychology Department before you begin collecting data as a Research Assistant. Students should also keep a printed copy of the Completion Certificate.

### IV. SIGN UP PROCEDURES

A. The web-based software system Experimentrix is used for participant recruitment. Any information provided (e.g., the summary of study procedures displayed on the main Experimentrix page) should conform to item VI.B. Advertising for Subjects, of the BSU Guidelines & Procedures: Research and Research Related Activities Involving Human Subjects. Copies of such advertisements (recruiting tools) are to be submitted to the IRB, along with the research protocol, for review and approval.

B. Each Experimentrix study description should contain sufficient information to allow students to determine whether participating in the study is of interest to them. A brief description of the procedures and task should be provided.

C. Experimetrix should also designate the building, room, date, and time of an experiment, as well as how long the experiment will take and how many credits the students will receive in exchange for participation.

D. Finally, Experimetrix should display if there are any restrictions regarding students' eligibility for a particular study (e.g., "must be a commuter student"). Any restrictions must be submitted to the IRB in advance of posting the study on Experimetrix. In addition, no studies with restrictions may be posted unless there is an equal opportunity for students without the restriction to participate in studies. In other words, studies with restrictions may only be posted if there are other studies available without any restrictions.

E. Students create a personal account for themselves using the Experimetrix system. They must enter a valid BSU email address and student ID number. The system will then generate a random temporary password for each student; this password may be changed by the students once they enter the system. Finally, students must designate which section of PSYC 101 they are in before signing up for any studies. This will allow reports to be generated at the end of the semester for all sections of PSYC 101. A student's signing up for a particular study session constitutes an agreement to appear.

F. Students must sign up for sessions at least one hour in advance of the study. Students are allowed to cancel study appointments in advance of the study, should they decide not to participate.

G. Study participation that takes any fraction of a half-hour should be rounded up. For example, a study that takes anywhere from 5-30 minutes will be worth 1 credit of participation, a study that takes between 31-60 minutes will be worth 2 credits, and so on.

H. All studies posted on Experimetrix are open to students whose instructors are including participation in the Psychology Department Subject Pool as an outside of class activity option.

I. Students may only participate in studies if they are 18 years of age or older, or if they provide written permission from a parent or guardian to their PSYC 101 instructor.

J. The Subject Pool is not available after the last full week of class in the semester, or during the examination period.

K. If students believe they should have received a credit for a study that does not appear on their account when they log into Experimetrix, they should notify their PSYC 101 instructor within one week of the study session for which they desire credit. This is to avoid PSYC 101 instructors being inundated with credit problems during the last few weeks of the semester. Students may always check their account credits throughout the semester, and are therefore responsible for checking the accuracy of their credit balance.

## V. PROCEDURES FOR ASSIGNING RESEARCH CREDITS

A. Research Assistants complete the following instructions after each study. Research Assistants should assign credits within 72 hours after the session has occurred.

B. As stated above (Section IV-G), for each half-hour or fraction thereof of research participation the student receives one research participation credit.

C. Each student may participate in only one session of a particular study. Indeed, Experimetrix prevents students from volunteering for the same experiment twice.

D. All participants must read and sign an "Informed Consent" form unless this has been deemed unnecessary for the experiment by the IRB. Should any student decline to participate in the experiment, he/she should be gracefully excused and given one credit, despite not having participated. This procedure is mandated by the American

Psychological Association. All students should also receive a copy of the Informed Consent form for their own records. This copy of the form should include a signature from the faculty member or Research Assistant in charge of the study.

E. Any participant has the right to withdraw from an experiment at any time without penalty. He/she should be gracefully excused from the experiment and given credit(s) for having participated until that time as described in Section V-B. This procedure is mandated by the American Psychological Association.

F. Researchers should strive to conduct their studies on the planned date and time; every effort should be made to avoid the necessity of rescheduling study sessions. Any of the following conditions will be considered as valid reasons for rescheduling a student participant in an experiment. In any case, the experimenter will notify the student's instructor and work with the student participant in rescheduling the experiment. If a mutually agreeable rescheduling time cannot be accomplished and if conditions 1-4 are the reasons for rescheduling, the student will receive research participation credits equal to the value of the study.

1. Equipment failure.
2. More participants than are necessary for a group experiment have arrived.
3. Experimenter has rescheduled session after giving participants appropriate notice.
4. Experimenter fails to appear within 5 minutes of the beginning of the scheduled session.
5. Student participant gives appropriate notice to the experimenter, at least one day before the scheduled session.

G. For experiments involving multiple testing sessions:

1. If after being instructed for the first session the participant declines to participate further, the subject is given one research credit.
2. If a participant participates in one (or more) session(s), but fails to appear for the remaining one(s), his or her instructor is notified of this fact (see I. below).
3. One research participation credit for each half-hour; participant should be given to each participant in an experiment.

H. Participants who fail to appear or are more than 5 minutes late for an experiment will be considered "no shows." Experimenters will cancel this person from Experimentrix without credit(s) assigned.

I. Experimenter "No Shows"

1. If an experimenter fails to appear within 10 minutes of the beginning of a testing session, student(s) who have arrived on time for the appointment notify the Department secretary and/or their instructor of the experimenter's absence. Upon notification and verification, the experimenter must complete issue credit for such students, thereby verifying research participation as would have been verified had the experimenter appeared. The experimenter should assign credits to all students who signed up for that study session.
2. If the experimenter is aware he/she cannot appear for a testing session, he/she should, if possible, leave a note for the participant(s) on the laboratory or classroom door and notify the Department secretary. The note should inform the student(s) that, as soon as possible, the experimenter will provide the relevant information to the appropriate instructor.
3. If the experimenter successfully reschedules the subject for the experiment, he/she must again give the participant a credit upon completion of the testing session.

J. At the end of the semester, the faculty administrator of Experimetrix will create Excel files for each PSYC 101 section and provide these to the PSYC 101 instructors. These will be sent to the instructors at the beginning of finals week each semester. Because studies may be run until the Saturday before finals week, it is imperative that any studies run the week before finals be timely in their assignment of credits. In other words, do not wait a few days before assigning credits, as this will cause problems at the end of the semester when the final Excel files are created.

K. While the Experimetrix experiment display is mostly self-explanatory, here is a review of the windows you will be required to fill in the “edit header” section of Experimetrix:

- a. “Display experiment to students:” Check this box if you are ready to have your experiment displayed to the students. Until you check this box, your experiment will essentially be “invisible” to the students, and they will not be able to sign up for sessions.
- b. Faculty supervisor: Fill in the name of the faculty member responsible for this experiment.
- c. Experimenter: Fill in the name(s) of the people who will actually run the experimental sessions.
- d. Location of study: The building and room where sessions will occur. Note that if multiple rooms will be used, you will need to request a different Experimetrix study number for each room. You will then need to restrict the numbers such that they are mutually exclusive (participation in one will eliminate the possibility of participation in the other(s)).
- e. Selection criteria: List any restrictions.
- f. Default credit and duration: List the typical time used by participant (e.g., 45 minutes) and the credits they will receive for participation.
- g. Cancellation contact: If you wish, list a name, phone number, and/or email address of someone who would like to be contact if the participants wish to cancel. Keep in mind that participants may cancel themselves without permission up to 24 hours before the study session.
- h. Description of experiment: Explain briefly the procedure participants will complete, and if they need to know any additional information (e.g., they must bring a pen or pencil to the session). There is a maximum of 1000 characters allowed in the description, but it should be detailed enough that participants can decide if this particular study is of interest to them.

## VI. EXPLAINING THE PURPOSE OF THE EXPERIMENT

In order to maintain research participation as an educational experience, it is necessary that students be educated in some way about research in general and/or about the specific research in which they have just participated. Therefore:

- A. It is the experiment's obligation to explain clearly the specific purposes and procedures of the experiment to the subject at the end of the testing session.
- B. If, for the purpose of maintaining the experimental naivete of future subjects, a full explanation is not possible at that time, the experimenter must explicitly arrange to provide such an explanation at a later time. If such deception is needed to maintain the integrity of the study, the principal investigator needs to include this information in the protocol submitted for IRB approval, plus the procedure for the debriefing process.

C. All experimenters should always provide the subject with a general idea of what the experiment was about and why it is of importance (theoretically, practically, or both) at the end of the testing session(s).

## VII. MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY

A. The following principles are excerpted from the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles. For more information about these principles and to see the entire code, go to [www.apa.org/ethics](http://www.apa.org/ethics).

1. 4.01 Maintaining Confidentiality. Psychologists have a primary obligation and take reasonable precautions to protect confidential information obtained through or stored in any medium, recognizing that the extent and limits of confidentiality may be regulated by law or established by institutional rules or professional or scientific relationship.

2. 8.02 Informed Consent to Research. (a) When obtaining informed consent as required in Standard 3.10, Informed Consent, psychologists inform participants about (1) the purpose of the research, expected duration, and procedures; (2) their right to decline to participate and to withdraw from the research once participation has begun; (3) the foreseeable consequences of declining or withdrawing; (4) reasonably foreseeable factors that may be expected to influence their willingness to participate such as potential risks, discomfort, or adverse effects; (5) any prospective research benefits; (6) limits of confidentiality; (7) incentives for participation; and (8) whom to contact for questions about the research and research participants' rights. They provide opportunity for the prospective participants to ask questions and receive answers. (b) Psychologists conducting intervention research involving the use of experimental treatments clarify to participants at the outset of the research (1) the experimental nature of the treatment; (2) the services that will or will not be available to the control group(s) if appropriate; (3) the means by which assignment to treatment and control groups will be made; (4) available treatment alternatives if an individual does not wish to participate in the research or wishes to withdraw once a study has begun; and (5) compensation for or monetary costs of participating including, if appropriate, whether reimbursement from the participant or a third-party payer will be sought.

B. The following are guidelines that specifically apply to research in the Department of Psychology at Boise State University:

1. The informed consent form is approved by the IRB before a study begins.
2. Any violation of confidentiality beyond that to which the participant has agreed will result in loss of the privilege of using the Subject Pool. Such violations will also be subject to sanctions of the IRB.

## VIII. THE RELATION BETWEEN INSTRUCTORS AND THE SUBJECT POOL

Early in the semester the Subject Pool Committee contacts each instructor who has indicated an interest in allowing his or her students to participate in the Subject Pool to suggest the maximum number of hours of participation each student be allowed.

Revised: October 2000; August 2004; May 2006

## Research Assistant Signature Page

As a research assistant for the Psychology Department during the 2006-2007 Academic Year, my signature below indicates that:

- (1) I have carefully reviewed to the materials presented for Research Assistant Orientation;
- (2) I agree to adhere to the rules of the Subject Pool Committee as set forth in these documents;
- (3) I understand that failure to adhere to these rules will result in disciplinary action.
- (4) I have completed the NIH Online Ethics Training, attaching a copy of the Completion Certificate to this signature page.

PRINTED Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_