LSU Psychology: Research Participation System

Researcher/P.I. Guide

General information

- **Contact information**
  - Website: 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
  - Graduate students without "researcher" accounts set up on SONA should email the SONA administrator (psyexp@lsu.edu) to request one.
  - Undergraduate students who need a SONA Researcher account for their honors thesis must have their faculty advisor email the SONA Administrator to request an account. This access is subject to faculty approval.

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 (psyexp@lsu.edu)**
    - *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 - " before your study name. This allows participants to differentiate PSYC studies from CMST studies.
- **Duration/Credits**
  - For every 30 minutes of participation, participants earn 1 credit.
    - *Note: Studies that take longer than even increments of 30 minutes should round up to the nearest credit (i.e., 45-minutes = 2 credits).*
  - 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**
  - o 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 **(i.e. only including PSYC courses).***
- **Participation deadlines**
  - o 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. Faculty members are emailed before each semester with the opportunity to add/edit prescreen questions.*
- **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
  - ○ For online studies using external platforms (e.g., Qualtrics), projects can be configured to grant credits immediately upon completion. See this page for further instructions.
    - ■ *Note: If your survey is set up with any eligibility questions that may exclude a participant from completing the full survey and redirects them to the end of the*

> *survey, Qualtrics will still count that as a completed survey and grant SONA credits.*
- ○ 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 (typically ~200 credits prior to the midterm deadline). 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*