

Policy on Research Studies Using Undergraduate Subjects

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Approved 12/7/94

Purpose

This policy applies to all research studies that recruit undergraduate subjects through Psychology classes or the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board. Studies that do not offer evidence of participation to students for the purpose of obtaining course credit (e.g., studies that only offer monetary payments to subjects) are exempted from the procedures for providing evidence of participation detailed below but must otherwise adhere to this policy and procedures. Studies that do not require Institutional Review Board approval or exemption (contact the IRB or the Department's IRB representative for information about studies that do not require approval or exemption) may not be listed on the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board, but may recruit subjects from classes with the permission of the course instructor.

The purpose of this policy is threefold: (1) to protect undergraduates by allowing instructors and student subjects to determine if studies have received appropriate institutional approval (i.e., IRB approval or exemption); (2) to minimize the effort of instructors in giving course credit for research participation; and (3) to minimize the effort of researchers in recruitment and in providing evidence of participation.

Overview of Procedure

Every study is "registered" with the Student Records Office. This consists of demonstrating IRB approval or exemption (usually by providing a copy of a stamped consent form or memo stating that the study is exempt), being assigned a study number, and having a Subject Recruitment Announcement (see attached sample) posted on the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board. This process allows instructors and potential subjects to determine that studies have received appropriate institutional approval.

Posting the Subject Recruitment Announcement states the *intention* to recruit subjects and provides information about currently active studies. Thus, all active, registered studies will be posted, regardless of whether the researchers use the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board for sign-up sheets.

The procedures that allow students to obtain course credit for participation in studies are based on the assumption that the responsibility for requesting such course credit lies with the *students* who wish to receive the credit, not researchers or instructors. Further, researchers do not give course credit, instructors do. The responsibility of researchers is to provide subjects with a Participation Record Slip (see attached sample) as evidence of participation, which the students can then give to their instructors to receive credit if available in a course. Although researchers are encouraged to provide subjects with information about their study in an effort to enhance the students' learning experience, researchers are not required to provide any particular type of information. Instructors who expect students to display knowledge about the purposes, procedures, findings, etc. of individual studies may wish to determine in advance which studies allow the students to obtain such information by contacting individual researchers. Instructors may then provide students with a list of appropriate studies for which they may obtain course credit.

Instructions to Researchers

The following steps are involved: (1) Register your study; (2) Recruit and test subjects; (3) Provide the students with evidence of participation; (4) Remove your Subject Recruitment Announcement when your study is complete. Please complete the attached Subject Recruitment Procedure Checklist to insure that you have followed all the steps.

1. Register the Study. Obtain and complete a Subject Recruitment Announcement form. Return two copies of the form to the Student Records Office along with evidence of IRB approval, such as a stamped consent form. The Student Records Office will assign a study number and post one copy of the form on the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board. The other copy of the form will be placed on file in the Student Records Office.
2. Recruit Subjects. There are several ways to recruit subjects from undergraduate classes, and several ways to have these subjects sign up. The most commonly used methods are described below.

There are two primary ways to recruit subjects from undergraduate classes:

- A. Recruiting in classes. Pending instructor approval, you can go to classes and recruit subjects. Usually, when recruiting, you should briefly tell subjects what the study is about, and make clear any limitations on participation.
- B. Recruiting on the Bulletin Board. You can post sign-up sheets under your announcement on the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board. The announcement clarifies limitations and other details already. It is recommended that you remove such sign-up sheets a reasonable time before the study session so that subjects can't sign up at the last minute, and you will be able to anticipate the number of subjects who will appear at the session.

There are two primary ways to have subjects from undergraduate classes sign up:

- A. Nonspecific sign-up. Subjects can simply provide their name, phone number, and the best time for you to call them. You should make it clear on the sign-up sheet (either posted or sent around a classroom) that students are only expressing their willingness to participate and that you can only guarantee to make your best effort to use them, but that some may not end up participating. These precautions are especially important if potential subjects are actually only applying to participate, or if particular subject characteristics are required.
- B. Specific sign-up. Subjects can sign up for specific times. If you have pre-set times for testing subjects, you can pass around a sign-up sheet that requests that subjects sign up for specific times. Be sure to provide clear details about location and times. If you use this approach, make sure to get subjects' phone numbers, so that you can contact them ahead of time if the session is canceled or postponed, or if you wish to call them to remind them of the session.

In addition, subjects may be recruited without a sign up procedure by announcing on the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board or in classes a specific time and place for testing to occur. Subjects may then present themselves at that time and place if they wish to participate.

Regardless of method of recruitment and sign-up, be sure to provide subjects with a phone number where they can reach the researcher in case they need to cancel their appointment. It is a good idea to list specific testing times and locations beneath your announcement on the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board so students can check there for information. Also, if you are calling subjects, treat them with respect and call only at appropriate times (e.g., before 10 p.m.). Sample formats for sign-up sheets are attached.

3. Provide evidence of participation. Researchers should give their subjects a signed Participation Record Slip in addition to a copy of their signed consent form (as required by the IRB). A page of Participation Record Slips is provided in this packet for photocopying. In no case should a student be given a blank Participation Record Slip. The Research Participation Slip must be completed in ink, including the student's name, by the researcher.

Researchers should also maintain a list of students who participated in the study, so that instructors can verify participation if they need to, and so that subjects who lose their participation slips can obtain another if needed. However, students may only obtain credit for participating in a study in one class; do not provide duplicate slips so students can submit them to more than one instructor.

4. Remove your Subject Recruitment Announcement when your study is complete. Also be sure to remove sign-up sheets regularly. The Student Records Office staff will regularly monitor the Bulletin Board and remove obviously outdated materials. If your announcement is inappropriately remove, please contact the SRO.

Information for Course Instructors

You are responsible for providing information to the students in your class(es) concerning the availability of course credit for participation in research and concerning the procedures students should follow to obtain course credit. Ideally, this information should be provided in the course syllabus.

Students should be told the type and amount of course credit they may obtain by participating in research. Specify whether participation can be used to meet a requirement of the course or to obtain extra credit. Indicate how much credit will be given for specific amounts or types of research participation (note that extra credit should not exceed 5% of the total points available in the class). You must also provide those students who do not wish to participate in research with an alternative means to obtain course credit. If you wish to restrict students' participation to certain studies or types of studies, you must develop a mechanism for reviewing studies and informing students about which studies they may participate in for credit.

You should be aware that not all researchers will provide students who participate in their studies with detailed information about the nature of the study. In some cases, subjects may not be debriefed about the study until after the end of the current semester or even later. If you expect students to answer questions or write reports about their research participation, you may need to determine which studies are appropriate for your students.

Students should be told about the location and function of the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board and the different methods that may be used to recruit subjects. They should also be told that they need to obtain and submit to you a Participation Record Slip to obtain course credit for research

participation. See the detailed explanation of these procedures above. Do not accept students' copies of consent forms as evidence of participation. Students should be encouraged to retain their consent form as it contains important information should they subsequently have questions about the study or their participation.

You should only give course credit to students who submit a Participation Record Slip to you. Retain the Participation Record Slips so they cannot be used by the students to obtain credit in more than one course. If you need further confirmation of a student's participation in a particular study, you should contact the researcher.

Finally, it would be appropriate to discuss either in your syllabus or in class the rights and responsibilities of researchers and subjects. Although for most studies students will be asked to sign a consent form that discusses many of these issues, the students may not carefully read these forms. Issues you may wish to discuss include the subjects' rights to provide informed consent, to withdraw from studies without penalty, and to be free from harm. Researchers would also greatly appreciate your emphasizing the students' responsibility to show up after signing up for a research session. Much time and effort is wasted waiting for subjects who do not show up.

Sample syllabus statement (details are invented; customize for your class)

You may earn up to 4 points of extra credit in this class by either participating in research studies or writing 1-page article critiques. You will earn 1 point for each hour spent in a study or for each article critique. To sign up for participation in a research study you should check the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board on the first floor of the Life Sciences Building to the right of the elevators. You will be able to sign up for some studies on the bulletin board; in other cases researchers will come to class to ask you to participate in their studies.

After you participate in a study, the researcher will give you a Participation Record Slip. You need to submit the slip to your instructor to be given extra credit. You can only get extra credit in one class each time you participate in a study.

You should also be aware of your rights and responsibilities as a subject. Be sure to carefully read the consent form you must sign for some studies and be sure that all of your questions about the study are adequately answered before you agree to participate. Some of your rights include the right to provide informed consent, the right to withdraw from studies without penalty, and the right to be free from harm. Your primary responsibilities include showing up promptly at the time you are scheduled and responding honestly and appropriately to the demands of the research study. The faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate research assistants in the Psychology Department devote much time and effort to the research studies you will be asked to participate in. They greatly appreciate it when you show up when scheduled and contribute to our knowledge about psychological functioning by participating in these studies.

Subject Recruitment Announcement

Psychology Department Study # _____

Study Title _____

Researcher _____ Faculty Sponsor _____

Researcher's Phone _____ Researcher's Office _____

Other Researchers (please list all individuals who will be testing subjects)

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Location of Study _____ Length of sessions _____

Dates and times of sessions _____

Opportunity to earn money? YES NO Number of Sessions _____

Number of Subjects you plan to test: Males _____ Females _____ Either sex _____

Other Subject Characteristics Required:

Description of Study:

Note: See your instructor or course syllabus for details about getting extra credit

PARTICIPATION RECORD SLIP
(complete in ink)

I have participated in the following study conducted in the Psychology Department at West Virginia University.

Study Title: _____ Study # _____

Date of Participation: _____ Number of hours of participation: _____

Participant Name (printed): _____

Researcher Name (printed): _____

Researcher Name (signed): _____

PARTICIPATION RECORD SLIP
(complete in ink)

I have participated in the following study conducted in the Psychology Department at West Virginia University.

Study Title: _____ Study # _____

Date of Participation: _____ Number of hours of participation: _____

Participant Name (printed): _____

Researcher Name (printed): _____

Researcher Name (signed): _____

SAMPLE FORMATS FOR SIGN UP SHEETS

These are sample sign-up sheets for recruiting subjects. Use them as models in creating your own. Note that you shouldn't ask people to give any information other than this -- if you do, consider the appropriateness of asking for that information to be provided on a public bulletin board (e.g., although sex is usually obvious from a name, would you publicly post your name, age, sex, marital status, phone number, and *best time to call* you and harass you?)

If you are using these forms on the bulletin board, don't leave them up for long periods of time; protect the privacy of your subjects by *not* leaving their phone number etc. in public for days on end. If you are using these forms in a classroom, then include a description of subject requirements at the top, so that you won't get inappropriate sign-ups.

1. Non-specific sign-up sample

Subject Recruitment Sign-Up

<Study Name & Number>

Note that writing your name on this sheet indicates your interest in participation. A researcher may contact you to arrange your participation if possible.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Best Time to Call</u> (optional)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

2. Specific sign-up sample

Subject Recruitment Sign-Up

<Study Name & Number>

By writing your name in a time slot below, you are saying that you will show up at the location indicated. Treat this as an appointment, and remember that someone will be there waiting for you -- please be considerate of their time. Call me (*name*) at *xxx-xxxx* if you cannot make your appointment. Thank you!

Location of Study sessions: _____

<u>Sessions</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Your Phone #</u>
<i>Date and Time</i>	_____	_____
<i>Date and Time</i>	_____	_____

SUBJECT RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE CHECKLIST

Thank you for registering your study. Your study number is _____. Be sure to use this number when recruiting and on the Participation Record Slips.

This form will help you meet all departmental requirements for subject recruitment.

- ___ 1. Obtain IRB approval or exemption.
- ___ 2. Submit two copies of a completed Subject Recruitment Announcement to the Student Records Office. One copy will be posted on the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board and the other copy will be placed on file. Even if you are not recruiting from the Subject Recruitment Board, an announcement must be posted.
- ___ 3. If recruiting from the Subject Recruitment Board:
 - ___ a. post sign-up sheets (8 1/2 X 11 inch white paper only) below your announcement.
 - ___ b. remove the sign-up sheet 24 hours before the study time.
 - ___ c. do not leave students' names and phone numbers on the Board for extended periods of time.
- ___ 4. If recruiting from undergraduate courses:
 - ___ a. you must have approval of the course instructor.
 - ___ b. provide students with a brief verbal description of the study and requirements for participation.
 - ___ c. make it clear to the students whether sign-up is specific (student appointment time specified) or nonspecific (students interested in possibly participating).
 - ___ d. state if and when students should expect a phone call from the researcher.
- ___ 5. Following the study, provide students with a signed Participation Record Slip (completed in ink). Students are responsible for submitting these to their instructors. You should also keep a list of students who participated.
- ___ 6. Upon completion of the study, remove your announcement from the Subject Recruitment Bulletin Board.