

## THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY PARTICIPANT POOL

Your first or second year psychology class(es) have been enrolled in the Pool of Research Participants in the Department of Psychology at the University of Regina. The purpose of this memo is to explain to you the reasons: (1) to allow psychology students to participate in an application of the concepts being learned in psychology classes, (2) to allow for greater and fair access to research participants for students and faculty in the Department of Psychology, and (3) to formalize the process by which students are recruited for participation. In that spirit, the participant pool was approved by the University Research Ethics Board on the premises that (a) students would be rewarded for their involvement but not penalized for non-participation, (b) students would be educationally debriefed after participation, and (c) the department would evaluate the effectiveness of the pool. Most psychology departments in Canada have some form of a participant pool. All research involving human participants conducted by students and faculty in the Psychology Department at the University of Regina has received ethics approval. Access to the participant pool also requires the approval of the department's participant pool coordinator or department head.

Students are encouraged to participate in psychological research by earning participation credits. For each one hour of participation, you will earn one participation credit. The maximum number of credits you can earn for any one class in the participant pool is **three credits or three hours** of participation. Three credits translates into **three percentage points** toward your final grade. If you are enrolled in more than one psychology class that is part of the participant pool, you may earn three credits in each of the psychology classes. If you are a student in two classes that are part of the participant pool, for example, you could participate in three one-hour studies and earn the credits to be applied to one class, then you could participate in three different one-hour studies and earn the credits for the second class. When you register to participate in a study, you will be asked to indicate to which class you wish the credit(s) from that study to be applied. All first and second year classes are enrolled in the participant pool. No third or fourth year classes are permitted to be part of the participant pool.

For on-campus courses, you may earn a maximum of 1/3 of your bonus credits by participating in online studies. However, between September, 2019 and September, 2020 on-campus courses will provide the opportunity for students to earn 2/3 of your bonus credits by participating in online studies, on a one-year trial basis. For off-campus courses (e.g., televised, online), you may earn all of your bonus credits through online study participation. However, the online system doesn't have the flexibility to allow 1/3 of credits to be earned through online studies for some classes and all credits to be earned through online studies for other classes. As a way to get around this, I've set the number of credits for web-courses to 9, which allows students to do 3 online studies. Note that although web-courses and off-campus courses are set to 9, you can still only earn a maximum of 3 credits for each psychology course.

Participants who do not show up for their scheduled timeslot and have not provided an appropriate reason why they missed their scheduled timeslot will have one credit deducted from their total number of credits earned. For example, a student with two earned credits would lose one of those credits if he/she failed to appear for a scheduled participation.

Effective January 2018, researchers that must cancel a scheduled lab timeslot must provide participants with an email indicating this cancellation at least 24 hours in advance. In the event that a participant does not receive sufficient notification, that participant will be granted credit for the study they were scheduled to complete. Exceptions will be made in situations where it has

been determined that the researcher did not have knowledge of the need to cancel the timeslot 24 hours prior to the scheduled timeslot.

Your participation in studies is voluntary. You need not participate in any studies if you do not wish to do so. You might think of the study credits as “bonus marks”. You will not be penalized if you do not participate in any studies except that you will not earn the study credits.

The studies themselves cover a wide range of things such as perception, learning, memory, personality and social attitudes—many of the things you cover in your psychology classes. At the end of each study, you will get feedback about the purpose of the study.

Most researchers will ask you to read and sign (or click a box if an on-line study) a consent form at the beginning of the study. You are not required, however, to do anything you don't want to do in the studies. If you are pressured to do something you don't want to do, then contact the head of the University Research Ethics Board or the Head of the Psychology Department. If you are dissatisfied with some aspect of the participant pool experience, please feel free to contact the Participant Pool Coordinator. **In any e-mails to the Participant Pool Coordinator, please include your University of Regina User ID (e.g., smith23k). The coordinator's address is partpool@uregina.ca**

Our participant pool uses an Experiment Management System (EMS) to sign up for studies. Instructions for using the Experiment Management System are attached to this document. Please note that some studies are individual appointments meaning that the researcher will be waiting for you and only you to show up. Please be considerate and call ahead of time if you are unable to attend these sessions.

Do not panic if the term is half over and you have not participated in any studies. Some years it takes time for researchers to begin recruiting. Some studies have certain requirements such as being right-handed or having English as a first language. Again, do not panic. There should be enough studies for everyone. But do not delay in participating—sign up when the opportunity arises. During a slow semester I would advise that you simply check the pool approximately once a week to look for any new studies or timeslots in the pool or you can follow me on Twitter at @URPycPartPool to receive any updates on studies that go through the administrator.

Your participation in research is very helpful to the work of the individual faculty, graduate and Honours students in the Psychology Department, and we believe that you can learn something about the field of psychology from your participation. We encourage you to participate in research. If, for whatever reason, you are not comfortable participating in psychological studies but still wish to earn three bonus credits per class enrolled in the participant pool, an acceptable alternative to research participation is writing three 3-4 page papers (12 font, 1 inch margins) reviewing recent published studies. The Participant Pool Coordinator will assign the studies and will evaluate the papers. In your own words, you are to explain the research questions, methods, and conclusions of each study, and the strengths and limitations of each study's methodology. Accepted papers will count as research credit. Unacceptable papers will be returned for revision. If you elect to write the papers instead of participating in studies, you must notify the Participant Pool Coordinator in writing. Include in the note your name, your instructor's name, your student number, and your e-mail address. This note can be placed in the Participant Pool Coordinator's mailbox in the Psychology Department Main Office (AdHum 345). The Participant Pool Coordinator will contact you to make arrangements. You must make these alternative arrangements within two weeks after the beginning of classes during the term for

which you are enrolled in a class registered in the pool. Papers are due two weeks before the last day of classes of that term.

Your participation is much appreciated and is a contribution to the research endeavor. Someday you may be in the position of conducting research and recruiting participants for the participant pool. Please do participate. Again, feel free to contact the participant pool coordinator ([partpool@uregina.ca](mailto:partpool@uregina.ca)) or ask your psychology professor if you have any questions about your participation in the participant pool. The Twitter account [@URPsycPartPool](https://twitter.com/URPsycPartPool) may also be used for general inquiries, but all IT related questions and support should be directed to [partpool@uregina.ca](mailto:partpool@uregina.ca)