Revised 08/14/2020

School of Communication Studies Research Participation System Guidelines for Researchers

CSRPS/Sona Website: http://ohio-coms.sona-systems.com/
Research Participation Information: https://ohio.edu/scripps-college/comm-studies/undergraduate/research-participation
Alternative Assignment Details: https://ohio.edu/scripps-college/comm-studies/undergraduate/research-participation/alternative-assignment
Research Pool Administrator: coms-research@ohio.edu

Introduction
Students enrolled in COMS 1010, 1030, 1100, and 2020 are required to participate in a research study or complete an alternative assignment (journal article summary) to earn 2% of their course grade. Instructors of other courses may voluntarily include their students in the research pool for either course credit or extra credit. These students make up the School of Communication Studies Research Pool (hereafter the research pool).

This pool is administered via the Internet using Sona-Systems Human Subject Pool Management Software (http://ohio-coms.sona-systems.com/). Relevant documents—including instructions for students, researchers, and instructors on using the software—are available on the School of Communication Studies website (https://ohio.edu/scripps-college/comm-studies/undergraduate/research-participation).

Research participation by students is intended to be a learning experience for them. The research participation requirement (whether it be participation in research or summarizing research articles) is intended to familiarize students with current communication research topics and techniques.

Students who are not yet 18 years old will need to complete the alternative assignment.

All users of the system must treat research participants with courtesy and consideration. Care should also be taken to ensure that the students' participation is a learning experience (e.g., by sending a brief explanation of the study to participants after the study has ended). **Investigators who fail to observe the guidelines described in this document will be denied access to the research pool.**

This policy is this School's review and administration procedure for research conducted with the Research Pool under the School's auspices. This review supplements, but does not substitute for, review by the Ohio University IRB. If the IRB has denied approval of a research project, the decision of the IRB may not be overturned at the School level.

Student Research Experience Requirement
All students enrolled in 1010, 1030, 1100, and 2020 are required to participate in a research study or complete an alternative assignment (journal article summary) to earn 2% of their course grade (0.5% for the prescreen and 1.5% for research participation or the alternative assignment). This requirement will be listed in the syllabus. Students are not required to participate in a

Communication Studies research project to receive credit; they may choose to complete the alternative assignment, which is to summarize a research article. Both options are worth 1.5% of the course grade. This requirement is explained in detail in the document "School of Communication Studies Research Participation System: Guidelines for Students," which is accessible via the COMS website (https://ohio.edu/scripps-college/comm-studies/undergraduate/research-participation).

During the first three weeks of the term, all students in the pool will access the Communication Studies Research Participation System (CSRPS) and complete a prescreening questionnaire. The prescreen helps researchers determine who is qualified for their studies. For example, some researchers may only want female-identifying participants and others may only want participants who have smart phones. Students earn 0.5% by completing this prescreening questionnaire and deciding whether they want to participate in a research study or complete the alternative assignment.

During the fourth week of the term, the Research Pool Administrator will randomly assign students to studies for which they qualify. If there are requests for more participants than exist in the pool, the Research Pool Administrator will prioritize requests in the following order: 1) COMS graduate students conducting dissertation research, 2) COMS untenured faculty, 3) COMS graduate students conducting non-dissertation research, 4) COMS undergraduate students conducting research, 5) tenured COMS faculty, 6) non-COMS College of Communication students and faculty, 7) all other requests.

To ensure equitable effort for the same credit, all studies should last approximately one hour (including informed consent, study procedures, and debrief). Longitudinal studies should take one hour for all data collection points in the study if data is being collected from the same students. Studies that are substantially shorter than one hour may be combined by the Research Pool Coordinator or supplemented with IRB-approved general questions about the COMS experience, pilot testing of a survey instrument, or other appropriate research.

For in-person studies, students will sign up for data collection times using the CSRPS/Sona Sytem. Researchers will send students an e-mail reminder 24 hours before their appointment. Students may cancel their appointment one hour before the study session is to be conducted, or longer period of time as designated by the researcher. There is no penalty for cancelling appointments or failing to show up for appointments. However, if students fail to show up for appointments three times, they will no longer be able to complete the research study and must complete the alternative assignment. For Fall 2020, all studies must be able to be conducted remotely (e.g., interviews via the Internet, online studies, etc.)

Each research participant is entitled to credit in one COMS course for which he or she is currently enrolled. Students may not receive credit in multiple classes for participation in one study. Students registered in multiple research pool courses will complete multiple studies to earn credit in all the research pool classes in which they are enrolled.

Researcher Requirements
Researcher obligations are in five parts: meeting requisites for using the Research Pool, appropriately recruiting participants from the Research Pool, conducting data collection, communicating with the Research Pool Administrator, managing alternative assignments, and recording participation in the CSRPS.

Requisites
Prior to conducting research, prospective investigators must:
   (a) Receive approval from the Ohio University Institutional Review Board (IRB).
   (b) Submit a Research Pool Access Request form to the Research Pool Administrator **two weeks prior to the start of the semester in which they are collecting data**. The form is available on the School of Communication Studies website and is also available from the Research Pool Administrator. Forms may be submitted via e-mail or in hard copy. For Fall 2020, all applications must be provided electronically.
      a. Researchers must attach the IRB approval letter to the form
      b. If they wish to limit participation in their study (based on gender, age, etc.), eligibility requirements and prescreening questions must be provided.

Researchers will receive approval or denial of their request from the Research Pool Coordinator.

Recruitment
Once a researcher has been assigned students from the pool, the researcher must contact the students to let them know to which study they were assigned. In addition, the researcher must indicate when data collection will occur (e.g., the 6th and 7th weeks of the term) and what the study's closing date is. The study closing date must be no earlier than the end of the 4th week of the term and no later than the end of the 13th week of classes. Students who do not complete the study or the alternative assignment by the end of the 13th week will not receive credit.

For in-person studies, researchers must create their studies in the CSRPS and provide sufficient timeslots and variety in dates/times to allow all students to participate. Researchers must post timeslots at least seven days in advance of data collection. For Fall 2020, no in-person studies will be conducted.

For online studies, researchers must keep the study open for long enough to reasonably allow students to participate (e.g., not less than two weeks).

For most studies, researchers may not use incentives other than the designated 1.5% course credit. This includes monetary compensation and the use of lotteries. If a study requires more than 1 hour of participation (either in one time period, over the course of the term, or over a time beyond the term), researchers may use supplemental incentives as approved by IRB.

Researchers must have started their studies no later than the 11th week of the term and must end their research by the 13th week of the term.

Data Collection
For in-person studies, researchers must send students an e-mail reminder at least 24 hours before their data collection appointment. For online studies, researchers must send students an e-mail reminder at least 48 hours prior to the close of the study.

Researchers must keep appointments with research participants. If for any reason the researcher cannot keep an appointment with a research participant, it is the researcher's responsibility to contact the research participant **at least 24 hours in advance**. If the researcher is unable to contact the research participant directly (sending an e-mail without receiving a reply from the participant or leaving a telephone message is not considered contacting the student), the researcher must have a proxy keep the appointment to sign in the participant and to award the participant credit for attending.

Students have the option of not participating in a study or terminating participation at any point during the session. If a student refuses to participate prior to completing the consent process, the researcher should have the student complete the alternative assignment to earn credit. If a student withdraws after completing the consent process, the researcher must give this student the full 1.5% credit for participation.

Researchers must follow data collection procedures outlined in their approved IRB application. Unless IRB waived consent or allowed implied consent, each research participant must sign a legally effective informed consent statement that has been approved by IRB **before** participating in a study. The researcher must also provide the student with a copy of the consent form.

Researchers must provide all research participants with a clear post-study debriefing approved by IRB. This debriefing must constitute a learning experience for the research participant. This usually consists of a full explanation of everything that happened during the session, what was being studied, and a summary of your hypotheses. Phrasing of the debriefing must be in the manner understandable to the student (i.e., should be worded in simple, everyday language that is free of jargon), and questions should be encouraged and answered. The researcher may provide the debrief in-person at the end of the timeslot or via written electronic form at the end of the study period. Please note that the debriefing is a School requirement, not a requirement of IRB (unless deception is used), but they need to be included in the IRB submission.

Communication with the Research Pool Administrator
If something in the research protocol changes such that the study no longer has IRB approval, the researcher must inform the Research Pool Administrator within 24 hours of this event. The Research Pool Administrator will deactivate the researcher's study. The researcher may attempt to regain IRB approval. Upon IRB approval, the Research Pool Administrator will reactivate the researcher's account. However, if IRB approval is not regained by the halfway point in the term (week 8 for semesters), subjects that have not participated will then be reallocated at the Research Pool Administrator's discretion.

In the event that a researcher is unable to use all of their participants for any reason, the researcher should inform the Research Pool Administrator immediately. The Research Pool Administrator will have final word regarding the reallocation of those participants.

Alternative Assignment
If students do not wish to participate in the research study to which they were assigned, they may complete the alternative assignment. The researcher must direct students to the alternative assignment website (https://ohio.edu/scripps-college/comm-studies/undergraduate/research-participation/alternative-assignment). The alternative assignment is a standard, IRB-approved part of the research pool. To complete the alternative assignment, students will review a journal article and answer standard questions.

Students must submit the alternative assignment to the researcher to whom the student was assigned. Students who are not yet 18 years old must submit the alternative assignment to the research pool administrator (coms-research@ohio.edu). Researchers must review and provide students assigned to them credit for alternative assignments. There is no partial credit for alternative assignments. Unless there are concerns about plagiarism, all completed assignment will be awarded 1.5% credit. Alternative assignments must be completed by the original study end date.

Participant Reporting
Within 24 hours of a data collection timeslot (or daily for online studies), researchers must access the CSRPS and assign credit for students who participated in the research or completed the alternative assignment. All credit must be assigned by the end of the 14th week of the semester.

If a research participant fails to show up, he or she is not awarded credit for participation. There is no additional penalty for failure to show up. Research participants who arrive to a session after human subject forms have been completed are not given credit for participation and must sign up for a different time or complete the research alternative.

Additional Requirements for Student Researchers and their Faculty Supervisors
Both undergraduate and graduate researchers are required to have a faculty supervisor to use the research pool. The faculty supervisor must review the research design and instruments prior to submission of the Research Pool Application form and certify that no additional changes are needed. In addition, the faculty supervisor is responsible to ensuring that the student adheres to the research pool policies and guidelines.

Enforcement
Researchers who fail to observe the guidelines described in this document will be denied future access to the Research Pool for a period of no less than two academic terms.

Students who have a complaint concerning a researcher's use of the research pool may fill out a Research Participant Complaint Form. This form is available on the School of Communication Studies website. Generally, these complaints involve researcher's failing to keep appointments or researcher's failure to report credit for participation in a timely manner. If a researcher receives more than three separate complaints during a one-month period, the study will be suspended until the researcher meets with the Research Pool Administrator and/or an ad hoc Research Pool Committee and is granted permission to continue the study.