Research Participation as Part of a Psychology Course

Students who provide their time and willingness to participate in research should receive a positive experience in which they expand their understanding of psychology. The research experience should not be designed simply to provide the researcher with an easy or guaranteed pool of participants. Rather, any research experience that is part of a course should be created with the student’s benefit as the goal. In general, participation in research provides students with exposure to how psychology research is conducted.

A fundamental characteristic of a research pool is that students trust the system. This means that it is imperative that researchers show up for their scheduled appointments or provide a substitute researcher. Researchers should be at their research lab 15 minutes before the scheduled beginning of their experiment.

No-Show Policy

The failure of a participant to show up for a scheduled research session often imposes a substantial cost on the researcher in terms of lost time and effort. For example, researchers may make a special trip to campus in order to conduct their study or have deadlines for funded research or theses or dissertations.

Because of this, we treat signing up to participate in a study as a serious obligation, and track and impose sanctions on unexcused “no-shows.” A “no-show” is defined as a failure to show up within 15 minutes of the start time for a scheduled session, unless the appointment has been cancelled or rescheduled as described below. The names of participants who sign up for a study and fail to show up will be reported to their relevant course instructors. If a participant has two “no-shows,” he or she will be blocked from participating in any more research projects for the remainder of the semester and will lose the privilege of accumulating any additional research credits from that point on in the semester.

In sum, it is the responsibility of research participants to:

- Note the time and location of studies in which they have agreed to participate (a reminder containing this information will be emailed to participants prior to the study, and, the computerized scheduling system may be accessed to check this information at any time).
- Show up at the correct location, 5 minutes prior to the starting time. In the rare event that the researcher has not shown up by five minutes after the start time, please notify the receptionist in the main office of the Psychology department (by the elevators, room # 341).
- In the case of an emergency, cancel or reschedule the appointment for another time as soon as possible but at least one hour prior to the research session start time. This can be done either through the computerized scheduling system, or by contacting the department receptionist by phone, at 330-972-7280.