THE PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCHER'S GUIDE TO HUMAN SUBJECTS
REGULATIONS, THE PSYCHOLOGY SUBJECT POOL AND INTRODUCTORY
PSYCHOLOGY BATTERY
Updated July 2016

All researchers are responsible for knowing and following the rules in this guide. P.I.'s and faculty
sponsors are also responsible for ensuring that all students and research assistants know and follow
these rules. Give them this Guide -- particularly section III.
Copies are available at http://www.psych.nyu.edu/research/recruit.pdf. The online version of the Guide
has live hyperlinks that can be helpful.

Note: The Psychology Human Subjects Administrator's office is in Room 402. The best way to
get in touch with her is through her e-mail for this purpose psych.subjects@nyu.edu. Please contact
her if problems arise, such as if you need additional subject hours.

I. OBTAINING ETHICS APPROVAL FOR THE USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

All research involving human subjects requires formal approval from the Institutional Review Board
(IRB) of the University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects (UCAIHS) before the
research begins. Helpful information about the process is provided in detail at the UCAIHS website
and is summarized here. Researchers should know the difference between projects that are a) not defined
as research, b) research studies that are exempt from detailed review, c) research studies that warrant
expedited formal review, and d) research studies that require full board formal review. These
distinctions, along with other information about Humans Subjects research, can be found at the
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) web page. Before submitting an application to the
UCAIHS Institutional Review Board (IRB) an investigator and all colleagues and assistants must show
evidence of mastery of human subjects knowledge by passing an examination associated with a tutorial on
human subject’s regulations.

Effective February 1, 2016 all IRB applications (exempt, expedited and full board) must be
submitted through the Cayuse IRB system, which is associated with the Research tab of home.nyu.edu.
The online brief guide to this system explains that first time investigators must register for Cayuse and wait
at least 24 hours for the account to be established.

With rare exceptions, the application for IRB approval must include customized Informed Consent
Documents, which are displayed on NYU Psychology Letterhead and include language about the
investigator, the faculty sponsor and contact information for UCAIHS. Examples of informed consent for
participants who are from the Psychology Subject Pool (recruited using the Sona system), from postings,
flyers or advertisements, or from online services are available online.

Participants recruited via Sona for the subject pool should include younger students (e.g. 16 to 17
years of age) unless there is a strong scientific rationale for excluding them. However, participants under
the age of 18 require parental consent. The parental consent forms are based on the Informed Consent
forms. Examples are available online. These must be prepared before the online Cayuse IRB submission.

Participants recruited through Sona need to be debriefed with customized forms that explain the
purpose of the study and provide some scientific details for the advanced student. Examples of debriefing
forms are available online for studies with mild deception and for studies with no deception.

If the study involves any explicit deception then a special debriefing form must be included that
explains the purpose of the study and provides a clear rationale for the use of deception. This form must
include a section on re-consent, which allows a participant to withdraw the initial agreement to consent.
Examples of these special variations of debriefing forms are shown at (url here). If debriefing forms are needed, they must be prepared before the online Cayuse IRB submission.

Finally, before the IRB application can be prepared, investigators must prepare documents that explain how participants will be recruited, list the potential measures or procedures to be used with the studies. These documents can include more measures and study designs than will be used in the current studies, thereby allowing for flexibility in minor modification of study designs. An example of a general set of procedures will soon be available.

When the documents are prepared, including a) documentation of human subjects training, b) informed consent, c) relevant parental consent and debriefing forms, and d) documents detailing the measures and procedures, the Investigator may complete the Cayuse IRB form and upload the needed files. Before this draft is sent to UCAIHS, researchers from the Department of Psychology are asked to arrange for a pre-review of the application by Psychology IRB member, Patrick Shrout, in one of two ways: 1) Temporarily list Patrick Shrout (net id: ps6) as a co-investigator of the application and send a note to pat.shrout@nyu.edu informing Dr. Shrout that the pre-review is ready. 2) Leave Shrout off the application, but save a pdf version of the application and email it, along with all documentation files, to Dr. Shrout at pat.shrout@nyu.edu. Shrout will attempt to review your application within 24 hours and suggest simple changes that can make the formal review go faster.

When the review is complete, you will receive email confirmation, as well as copies of your submitted documents (informed consent, parental consent, debriefing and any recruitment flyers) that have a dated UCAIHS approval stamp on them. These dated stamped forms are the official documents for your research and copies of them should be used in the actual studies.

CONTINUING Sona STUDIES OVER SEMESTERS

Once your study has been entered in Sona, you may continue to run subjects in the fall semester, spring semester, and both summer sessions until your UCAIHS approval needs updating on Sona. It is not necessary to submit a request for subject hours each semester.

Note that the UCAIHS also requires annual reports on on-going or recently completed studies. Their reporting year depends on when they originally approve your study, and is unlikely to correspond to the academic year. Therefore, it is important that you continue to use the same distinctive study title and unique short name for any study you conduct. It is also important for you to list your external grant title on your application (p. 1), so the IRB (UCAIHS) knows which grant is funding your study. The UCAIHS will send each investigator a letter requesting annual review approximately three months before the expiration date of the approval. The letter will include the instructions and forms for the review.

II. SUBJECT HOURS ALLOCATION

You will receive permission from the subject pool administrator to run a specified number of subject hours. Only studies approved by the UCAIHS by the last day of the spring semester may be run during summer sessions 1 and 2. Hours are generally allocated in batches of 200 credit hours at a time. When these hours are used, additional hours may be requested. Requests for additional hours must be made in writing, by email, to psych.subjects@nyu.edu.

PLEASE APPLY FOR ADDITIONAL HOURS WHEN YOU ARE NEARING THE END OF YOUR ALLOCATION. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THEY ARE COMPLETELY USED UP AND YOU NEED AN IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ALLOCATION.

III. RUNNING SUBJECTS

** Make sure all research assistants read this! **
SIGN-UP MECHANISM

1. After your study has been approved, it will be posted on the web site the department uses for scheduling studies: http://nyu-psych.Sona-systems.com. The subject pool administrator will notify you when your study has been posted on the web and will send you your user ID and password.

2. Once your study has been entered on the web, you must enter information about your study for students who want to sign up.

3. Study credits must be in 1/2 hour increments, rounding up. If your study takes 45 minutes, participants must be given 1 hour's credit. YOU MAY NOT SAY THAT THE STUDY TAKES LESS TIME THAN POSTED, which can only be in terms half-hour (0.5) and/or hour (1.0) credit units!

4. Your description of your study should include its NAME (the unique short name on your application form), a brief abstract and a detailed description. Be brief and informative, so students can sample different kinds of studies.

5. Flaszy descriptions of studies are PROHIBITED. The description of the study should be brief and informative. But we do not want to encourage fierce competition in subject recruitment. Examples of prohibited descriptives are, 'Fun!' “Easy!” “Sexy!” “Enlightening!” and “Thrilling!” You get the idea. We will monitor study descriptions and ask you to make changes, if necessary. If that does not work, inapropriately described studies will be removed from the list and your use of Sona for sign-ups will be temporarily suspended.

LOCATION OF STUDIES

All studies should be conducted in the Meyer Building (6 Washington Place). Only if there is an extraordinary need for facilities not available in this building should studies be conducted elsewhere. If a non-Meyer location is used, the necessity of conducting the study there must be reviewed and approved by the subject pool supervisor. When entering the location of your study on Sona, please be sure to include “Meyer” in addition to the relevant floor or room number, e.g., “Meyer 4th floor waiting area.”

TELEPHONE RECRUITING

If you wish to recruit subjects by telephone (a practice not allowed unless justified by a need to reach special subsets of students in our subject pool), you must receive explicit permission from the subject pool supervisor. If you do receive such permission, lists of participants who have given consent to be phoned, with their subject pool ID (which is not their SS#), battery and phone numbers, are available from the subject pool administrator. Even if you are not recruiting through the web site, you must enter your study's name, description, contact information, etc. on the web site. This way, subjects will know your study is legitimate. They will also be notified of appointments by email and reminded automatically the evening before.

OTHER MEANS OF RECRUITING

You may ordinarily recruit subject pool subjects only by the official Sona web site. As stated above, to recruit pool participants by telephone or email, you must get special approval from the subject pool supervisor and from the UCAIHS. Posting signs advertising for subject pool participants for subject hour credit is strictly forbidden. The only approved posting of signs must be for paid participants (whether they are also in the pool or not). Such signs must be submitted to the subject pool administrator, and must use the Paid Study form available in section A of http://www.psych.nyu.edu/research/recruit.html.
RECORD KEEPING
Two forms of records of subject participation are kept. Both records are important!

(A) SUBJECT'S PARTICIPATION AND FEEDBACK SHEET: Sign the subject’s own “Participation and Feedback Sheet,” which (s)he uses during the semester to document his or her research participation, and to give the department feedback on each study. This is both the subject’s own record and a receipt. If a participant does not have a sheet, write him/her a note that will function as a receipt. S/he can fill in the feedback part on their sheet later. Students need these records if there are any record-keeping errors. The Participation and Feedback Sheet is not optional. DO NOT TELL SUBJECTS THAT THIS DOESN’T MATTER!

(B) RESEARCHER’S SUBJECT USAGE REPORTS: Researchers are responsible for giving participants credit for participation on their study’s web page. This should be done at the end of each day, and certainly no later than the next day. You should also record no-shows. Students are advised to check their web site participation records frequently, to be sure their participation has been credited, and to notify the subject pool administrator if it has not been. A researcher’s chronic failure to record participants’ credits promptly can (and will) result in their study(ies) being cancelled, after one warning.

The subject pool administrator can generate a list of participants, credits, and no-shows for each study during the semester. But you should keep your own records of participation, because these will not be routinely provided to researchers.

If you have finished running subjects for the term, make sure to cancel any remaining open sign-up times.

PARTICIPANT CANCELLATIONS
Participants will automatically be notified of their appointments by email, and sent email reminders of their appointments early in the evening of the day before. They are able to cancel their appointments for a study on the web up to 8 hours before it is scheduled to begin. Any appointment cancelled 8 hours or more before the study will automatically become available to other students. If they have to cancel with fewer than 8 hours to go before the study, they cannot do this on the web. Instead, they are asked to contact the researcher as soon as they realize they cannot show up for an appointment, by phone or email. No penalties are assigned for no-shows. To avoid wasting many researchers’ time, if participants miss two studies that they signed up for, without being excused by the researcher, they will automatically be reassigned to the alternative option, the written critique requirement. If this happens, they will get partial credit for the studies they have completed.

LATE PARTICIPANTS
Each researcher decides how late to wait to begin an experimental session, and how long to wait for late participants. If you wait and start late, do not imply to participants that being late for other studies is all right. No penalties are assigned for late participants.

RESEARCHER CANCELLATIONS
Principal investigators are responsible for ensuring that the studies they advertise go on as scheduled. If you know you must cancel an appointment 4 days or more before the study is scheduled, and you cannot find a substitute researcher to run the study, you may cancel it. Students who have signed up will be notified of the cancellation automatically. Fewer than 4 days before the study, appointments should be canceled only under extraordinary circumstances (e.g., medical emergency, family tragedy), and only when no substitute researcher can be found. In such circumstances, the PI must give full credit to all subjects who signed up. As a courtesy, subjects who signed up should also be contacted and informed of the reason for the cancellation. PI’s may lose their subject pool privileges if a study is canceled for less serious reasons, less than 4 days before it was
scheduled. PI’s should please be sure that all researchers under their supervision are familiar with this cancellation policy.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

THE EVENING CLASS of Introductory Psychology, and other evening psychology courses, participate in the subject pool. You must schedule at least some of your studies during evening hours (i.e., after 6 PM on days when the evening Introductory Psychology class does not meet). If this is impossible for you, contact the subject pool administrator.

WEEKEND RUNNING of studies is possible and encouraged, to give students more opportunities to fulfill the lab requirement. Graduate and undergraduate students who are running subjects can be given access to the building through Veronica Holton (veronica.holton@nyu.edu). They will have to meet participants in the lobby and have them sign in and out. If you are running subjects during the weekend, please email the subject pool administrator at the beginning of the week with a list of the names of the participants, the dates and times of their appointments, the location of lab, and the name and phone number of the contact person in the lab. This information will be provided to Protection Services and the Lobby Security Guard in the Meyer Building.

THE LAST DAY to run subjects is the last day of classes.

RESPONSIBILITY OF P.I.

The principal investigator and faculty sponsor are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the obligations specified are properly fulfilled, regardless of whether a doctoral, masters, or undergraduate tutorial student is performing these obligations on a day-to-day basis. Only faculty members and doctoral students are ordinarily given access to the web site for scheduling appointments and giving credit.

IV. THE INTRO. TO PSYCH. BATTERY

The Introductory Psychology Battery (aka “Introductory Psychology Measures Demonstration”) is designed to give Intro. students on-line exposure to a variety of scales and (not incidentally) give researchers an opportunity to pre-test participants early in the semester. You must apply to have your measure(s) included in the battery in any given semester, usually 5-6 weeks before the semester begins. You must also agree to enter your measure into the web-based survey once it is approved. See the Battery Application form for details.

The Battery carries 1 of the 7 credits that students in Intro. to Psych. earn, and it is restricted to 1 hour. Applications for the Battery usually exceed this time limit, so some scales are reassigned to the Battery Supplement. This is run as a regular study, early in the semester so that it is useful for preselecting subjects. If you do not need to sample from real extremes of a scale’s distribution, or pre-select from most of the Intro. Psych. class, the Battery Supplement may work well for you. It is most suitable for giving scales to a smaller segment of the class in a setting dissociated from your study.