University of California, Riverside
Introductory Psychology
Research Participation Requirement

The course requirements for the introductory psychology classes at UC Riverside include research participation. The principal reason for this requirement is to give you the opportunity to see what lies behind the studies you will hear and read about throughout this course. When you see numbers or graphs presented in a textbook, journal, documentary, or lecture, it can be easy to forget that those numbers summarize the behavior of people who are just like you.

This is one of the benefits of taking psychology classes at a research university. Your professors are scientists who are actively engaged in advancing our knowledge of people’s behavior. Here, you have the opportunity to participate in research and gain a first-hand knowledge of how it is carried out. We encourage you to participate in a wide variety of studies so that you can get a feel for different kinds of research. This is a great opportunity to learn more about psychological research. If you have questions during or after your participation in studies, be sure to ask the researcher.

The purpose of this handout is to describe the procedures for participating in this research. Before describing these procedures, we note that your participation in research studies is voluntary. If, for any reason, you do not wish to participate in research, there is an alternative, which is discussed in Section 2. Whether you choose to participate in research, the alternative, or a mixture of both, the requirement is that you complete four credit hours of participation by the last day of classes (not the end of finals week).

You must complete this requirement to receive a grade. If you do not complete this requirement, you will receive an incomplete (I) instead of the grade you would have otherwise earned. All incompletes must be resolved by the end of the next quarter or they automatically become Fs. See the General Catalog for more information about incompletes.

1 Completing the Requirement

To fulfill the requirement, you need (1) to register on the research requirement tracking system, (2) to sign up for studies or the alternative lectures, and (3) to attend the studies or alternative lectures.

1.1 Registering

To register for the research participation you must be at least 18 years old or have the written consent of parents or guardians. If you are not 18 years old, please contact Renee Young in the Psychology Business Office in the Psychology Building to obtain a consent form.

To register go to http://research.psych.ucr.edu/, and click on the link that says, “Request an account here.” Fill in your first and last names, and select a User ID. Your User ID can be anything you like as long as it is not already registered in the system. If we notice any inappropriate User IDs, we reserve the right to change them and notify the user. Enter and reenter whatever email is best for getting important information to you. Then, enter your student ID number. Your student ID number should be the same one listed on the ilearn.ucr.edu website if you have access to that system. Enter all nine digits without spaces, dashes, or any other punctuation. In the next field, you may enter your telephone number if you wish. It may help your instructor or researchers contact you if they have questions about your participation. Finally, select the course in which you are enrolled. If you are enrolled in more than one course, you should select more than one by holding the ctrl or apple key while you click on your classes.

1.2 Updating your Class Information

Students who already registered in the system in a previous quarter do not need to re-register. If this applies to you, you should simply log in and select your new class. It is a little more complicated if you received an incomplete in the previous quarter. In that case, your account was maintained so that you could resolve your incomplete in the current quarter. If you are one of those students, you need to log in, go to your profile, and add your current class (by holding the ctrl or apple key while you click on your classes).

1.3 Signing Up

Once you have registered, you need to log in to the system to complete a pretest that determines your eligibility for certain studies. Answer these questions accurately. If you show up for a study for which you are ineligible, you will not receive credit. Eligibility is entirely at the discretion of the researchers and may not be completely determined by the pretest.

Once you have completed the pretest, you can click on the Study Sign-Up link to view studies for which you are eligible. Sign up for studies that fit into your schedule and for which you meet the requirements. Some studies may have special requirements for participation, and you may not participate in most studies more than once.
Once you sign up, record the name, the location, and the time and date of the study. If you are unsure where a study is located (the numbering schemes in Olmsted Hall and the Psychology Building can be quite confusing), figure it out before you need to attend your study. If you are more than 10 minutes late for your study, you will be considered a “no show,” which is the same as not attending at all. If you sign up for a web-based study, it must be completed by the deadline given or you will be considered a “no show.”

1.4 Attending

Show up to the correct place and at the correct time. If you are late, the experimenter and any other participants will be delayed. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you will be considered a “no show,” which is the same as not attending at all. If you accumulate two “no shows” (i.e., fail to show up to two studies), you will no longer be able to sign up for any additional studies, and will be limited to fulfilling your research requirement by attending the alternative lectures – see below “An Alternative to Study Participation.”

It sometimes happens that students show up for a study, but the researcher does not. If the researcher does not show up, the first thing you should do is to check your email and the research tracking system. Just like you, researchers can cancel studies as long as they give at least 24-hour notice. If the study still shows up in the research tracking system (meaning that the researcher did not cancel the study), you held up your end of the bargain by showing up, so you should get credit.

If the researcher fails to show up for a study, you must wait at least 15 minutes after the study is scheduled to start in case the researcher is simply running late. If the researcher still has not arrived, tell Renee Young in the Psychology Business Office in the Psychology Building right away. She will investigate the matter with the researcher and assign participants their due credit.

1.5 Canceling

If you wish to cancel a scheduled appointment, you must do so at least 24 hours in advance. You may not cancel less than 24 hours prior to a scheduled study.

2 An Alternative to Study Participation

As an alternative to participation in psychological studies, students may attend lectures presented by the researchers doing the studies. During the lecture the researchers present information about psychological research so students can gain a greater understanding of the range of research being done in the field of psychology.

At no time during these sessions will you be asked to participate in an ongoing research project. Students sign up for these lectures the same way they sign up for studies. Lectures are identified by the word, “Lecture,” before the name of the study.

If you are more than 10 minutes late for a lecture, you will be considered a “no show,” which is the same as not attending at all. Consequently, you will need to sign up for a different lecture. Each hour of attendance at these lectures counts the same as one hour of participation in a study.

3 Documenting and Tracking Progress

You will be given a receipt to verify your attendance at the end of any session in which you participate. You should not need this receipt because your participation is tracked online, but you should keep it in a safe place just in case.

You can also track your progress on-line. Within 72 hours after you have completed a session, you will be able to see that you have been given credit. At the end of the quarter, each instructor receives a print-out containing the total number of credit hours each student completed, and this will be used to determine whether or not you have fulfilled the requirement.

4 Resolving an Incomplete

If you fail to complete the required number of credit hours before the end of classes (not the end of finals week) while you are enrolled in this course and you do not fail the course, you will receive an incomplete (I). To receive the grade you earned, you need to complete your remaining credit hours by the end of the following quarter. You will use the same online system (http://research.psych.ucr.edu/) to sign up for experiments when resolving an incomplete as you use during the regular quarter. The difference is that when you are resolving an incomplete and you complete the required number of credit hours, you must contact Renee Young in the Psychology Business Office in the Psychology Building or send email to renee.young@ucr.edu so that a grade change form can be completed to let the registrar know that you have completed the course requirements.

5 Questions

If you have a question about your credit or other aspects of the research participation requirement, see Renee Young in the Psychology Business Office in the Psychology Building, or send email to renee.young@ucr.edu. Please be sure that your email includes your name, your student ID, your full email address, and the course for which you have the research participation requirement.