As part of the course requirements, students are required to participate in on-going research investigations. Participation in research allows students to better understand how behavioral science research is conducted, as well as to learn about current research in different areas of the behavioral sciences.

**Which classes require participation in research?** All undergraduate research and statistics classes have a research requirement, specifically PSYC/SWRK 2301, 4370, 4371, and PSYC 6037. Additional classes may require participation or allow participation for extra credit, depending on the instructor.

**What does “participation” entail?** Depending on the class, students are required to complete 1 to 6 hour(s) worth of research participation in the Psychology Research Participant Pool.

**What if I’m enrolled in more than one class in the same semester that requires research participation?** For example, what if each class requires 3 hours worth of participation? Normally, you will not be in more than one class with this requirement. However, if by some chance you are, you must complete assigned hours of participation for each class (e.g., 3 + 3).

**How do I participate in experiments?** Students must sign-up online for available experimental sessions. Students should go to [http://uhcl.sona-systems.com](http://uhcl.sona-systems.com) and log into the system. Students logging in for the first time should log in using their ID and the password that has been emailed to their UHCL email account. Once logged into the system, you can edit a range of personal settings (password, email, etc.) by clicking on the My Profile icon.

When you are ready to begin your research participation, there may or may not be a short set of questionnaires to complete before you select specific studies in which to participate. If so, you will receive research credit for completing these questionnaires. (Some semesters, there may not be a set of questionnaires to complete first). To view available studies, click on the Study Sign-Up icon. A list of studies for each day will appear. You can then click on Timeslots Available to view open time slots for that study or you can change the date and see which studies are available on different days. Every attempt will be made to offer experimental sessions at times that are convenient for our day and evening students that coincide with when students are already on campus for their classes. We encourage students to participate in both lab-based studies and online studies.

Once you have found a study and time slot that you are interested in, click Sign Up.

Show up for the study. If you do not show up for a timeslot that you have signed up for, you will receive a penalty (see next section). If nobody is at the study site, check your email for any notifications. If there is still a problem, contact the Participant Pool Coordinator, Dr. Steven Bistricky ([Bistricky@uhcl.edu](mailto:Bistricky@uhcl.edu); 281-283-3404) to make sure that you receive credit.

**What if I can’t make it to an experiment that I already signed up for?** When you sign-up for a study, you should write down the date, time, and place of the study. Students are responsible for canceling experiments that they cannot attend before the experiment actually begins (often 24 hours notice). If you have to cancel, click My Schedule/Credits at the top of the screen. A list of your studies will appear and you then have the option of canceling. Please note that each study
has its own specific cancellation policy and requirements. Please cancel as soon as you know that you will not be able to make the appointment so that other students could fill the open slot.

If you do not cancel the time within the period of cancellation for that experiment and you do not show up for the session, you will be assigned a penalty for that session. The penalty will be a negative credit on your profile that is equal to the number of credits you would have received if you had attended the session. For example, if you did not show up for an experiment that was worth 1 credit, you would receive a penalty of 1 credit and your profile would show -1 credits. Now, you would have to get an additional credit to make up for the credit you lost.

Also note: If a student incurs three or more penalties in a given semester, that student will lose the privilege of participating in the participant pool and will need to earn his or her credits through alternative methods.

When can I start participating in the experiments? Experiments should be offered about four weeks after the semester begins (Fall, Mid-September; Spring, Mid-February). It is in the student’s best interest to do experiments throughout the semester rather than waiting to complete all of the experiments at the end of the semester. There is no guarantee that there will be enough experiments offered at the end of the semester to complete all experimental credits.

The final day for participation is the last day of classes for each semester (note that there is no guarantee that experiments will actually be offered this late in the semester. As stated earlier, it is in the students’ best interest to check the participant pool website regularly during the semester).

What happens after I participate? After participating, the researcher of the study will award you credit through the participant pool. You can log into your account to see that you have been awarded credit. If credit is not awarded within a week, email the listed researcher. Your professor will also be able to access your credit total online.

If there is only one experiment being offered for a couple of weeks, can I just sign up for that one experiment more than one time? Unless directly stated otherwise, you cannot participate in the same study more than once. Also, you cannot receive credit for the same study in more than one class.

What if I don’t want to do the research? If you, for ethical or personal reasons, decide to not participate in research studies, you can instead read academic psychology research articles provided to you through your instructor’s blackboard site a few weeks into the semester. You will also be asked to write and submit a brief (about 1 page) report, in APA format, over what you have read. For each article that you read and write a report over, you will receive 1 hour of credit. For example, if you are required to complete 3 hours worth of research and have completed two hours of experiments but cannot participate in any further research, you would need to read and write reports for 1 article to fulfill your 3 hours of research requirements. If you opt to not do any of the experiments, you must write reports for 3 articles. The last day to do a reading assignment will be the last day of classes. After submitting your report to your professor, he/she should record your credit earned; however, if you would like the credit to be posted to your sona-system account, please have your professor send a brief confirmation that the
alternative assignment has been met via email to: the Sona administrator at mailto:uhcl.participant.pool@gmail.com.

*What happens if I don’t do the research or the paper requirements?* Students who do not complete the research requirements (or the alternative options) will be penalized. A typical penalty is one-third of a letter grade for each hour they did not complete after final grades have been calculated. For example if a person was assigned 3 hours but participated in 2 hours, they will be dropped one-third of a grade (e.g., A- to B+). If a person is missing all three hours, the person will be dropped one letter grade (e.g., A- to B-). Please consult your instructor for any penalties you may incur for lack of participation.

*Is it a problem if I talk to other students about the research studies I participated in?* As you will learn in your methods and research classes, if someone has prior knowledge of the experiment/study this will likely change the way that participant responds. Thus, it is VERY important that you NOT DISCUSS studies you have participated in with other students. **Note:** The first time a student is discovered actively sharing information about studies he or she has participated in, that student will receive a warning. The second time this occurs, the student will lose the privilege of participating in the participant pool and will need to earn his or her credits through alternative methods.