

Holy Family University Subject Pool Handbook for Faculty and Staff

About the Subject Pool

The primary goal in creating a subject pool at Holy Family University is to allow both students and faculty to be engaged in a research environment. The subject pool facilitates the process of research participant recruitment. The subject pool at Holy Family University utilizes the SONA, an online cloud based system which allows researchers and participants at Holy Family to sign up for and administer research studies. Holy Family University has its own SONA site which can be accessed by visiting: <https://holyfamily.sona-systems.com/>.

Information for Students in PSYC 110//322: Course requirement

Students who are enrolled in introduction to psychology courses (PSYC 110) and Research Methods (PSYC 322) are required to complete one study (or alternative assignment- see below for more information about the alternative assignment) for each course. Students who are under the age of 18 are still required to complete the research requirement, however, they will not be permitted to participate in research studies. Rather, students who are under the age of 18 are required to complete the alternative assignment. Students who do not complete one of the research requirements will receive an Incomplete until the research requirement has been fulfilled. For those students who are enrolled in online PSYC 110 courses (PSYC 322 is not offered as an online course) they will have the opportunity to complete their research participation requirement online via SONA either through an online study or the alternative assignment (see below for more details). If a student does not receive a passing grade in PSYC 110 or 322 they will need to complete the research requirement again when they retake the course. Additionally, if a student does not complete the research requirement a student will fail the course for not complying with this course policy.

The IRB and Alternative Assignments

Consistent with IRB policies at Holy Family University, students can elect alternatives to research participation. That is, students will be offered an opportunity such that they do not feel obligated or coerced into participating in a research study. Students will be offered the alternative to read a research article and answer a series of questions related to that article that will ask them to identify key components of current research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, major results, implications of the findings). This alternative assignment will reinforce material that students are learning about in PSYC 110 and 322. As experiment sign-ups occur on a first come first served basis, there may not be enough time slots available for the majority of PSYC 110 and 322 students to complete their requirement via research participation. However, as faculty have the opportunity to develop research projects that can utilize the subject pool, the opportunity to complete the research requirement via participation in an experiment should increase.

Administering a Study via SONA: Information for Researchers

SONA facilitates and streamlines the subject pool, allowing the University to use the software for participant recruitment. This cloud-based software permits the IRB to oversee the process of which studies are permitted to recruit participants. All proposals that request use of the subject pool will be reviewed, vetted, and evaluated for risk by the IRB, the standard operating procedure for the IRB. The Chair of the IRB would generate access codes for each IRB approved study. Codes will also expire after one year, consistent with the IRB's policies. Therefore, researchers would not be able to conduct their study without this approval code from the IRB. The addition of the subject pool would not create any additional consideration from the IRB, allowing the approval process to remain the same as it currently stands.

Granting/Receiving Credit for Participation

Following this approval process from the IRB, individual researchers (i.e., faculty) are responsible for granting credit to participants in their study. Instructors teaching courses in which participation in research is required will be given SONA accounts where they will only have access to information about whether the students in their course have completed their research participation. Additionally, researchers will be given accounts, which will provide them with the ability to conduct their research. Should a faculty member be both an instructor and an experimenter, they will have dual accessibility within their account (researcher and instructor privileges). Additionally, students utilizing the SONA system as experimenters (e.g., students who are participating in the Research Practicum course or Advanced Research Methods) will also be given an account where they can access the experiments they are coordinating only. The instructor for Advanced Research Methods would be responsible for granting credit to those who participate in the research conducted by students in the course. That is, students are not permitted to grant other students research credit.

SONA Administrator

The SONA Administrator can be contacted at researchadmin@holysfamily.edu. The SONA administrator is responsible for adding students each semester to the SONA system for PSYC 110//322 and removing students at the end of the semester. The SONA administrator is also responsible for creating instructor accounts and researcher accounts. SONA also has IT support service and can be reached at support@sona-systems.com.

Subject Pool Timeline Each Semester

1. Following enrollment verification (approximately three weeks into the semester) student accounts will be created in SONA by the SONA coordinator. (Sample instructions for students is attached)
2. Students will have until two weeks before the last day of classes to fulfill their research participation requirement. This timeframe will allow instructors to follow-up with students who have yet to complete their research participation requirement.

3. The SONA coordinator will notify instructors once the subject pool has closed that they can access information regarding whether the students in their section only have completed their research requirement. (Sample instructions for instructors is attached).
4. Students who have not completed the research requirement by the deadline may be permitted to complete the alternative assignment or other studies that are still recruiting participants by the last day of class. We have set up the timeline in this way to help reduce the number of students that would receive an incomplete. That is, we will use the last two weeks of class to encourage students who have not yet done so, to fulfill their research participation requirement.

Contact Information

- Jennifer DeCicco, Ph.D. (SONA/Subject Pool Coordinator)
researchadmin@holyfamily.edu
- Stacy McDonald, Ph.D. (IRB Chair): smcdonald1040@holyfamily.edu
- Counseling Services: counselingcenter@holyfamily.edu (267-341-3222); Campus Center Room 213
 - Counseling Services Website: <https://www.holyfamily.edu/current-students/student-resources/wellness-services/counseling-center>

Statements Required for PSYC 110/322 Syllabi

PSYC 110//322 Research Participation

This semester, each student will be required to participate in either a research study or complete an alternative research article-based assignment. Your participation will occur via Holy Family University's SONA Research Participation System. SONA is an online research participation system that is used by faculty at Holy Family University to conduct research. Approximately 3 to 4 weeks into the semester each student will receive an email from the SONA coordinator that will provide your username and password. Additional information about the SONA system is also available in the SONA handout (available via Canvas).

At different points in the semester studies that you are able to participate in will become available. **It is your responsibility to check the SONA website to sign-up for studies.** On the SONA website you can view study descriptions, schedule appointments, check on previously scheduled appointments, cancel appointments, contact the researcher in charge of a study, monitor the credit you have earned, and transfer credits from one course to another. Study sign-ups will occur on a first come first served basis. That is, at various points in the semester there may not be a study currently running, a study may have completed data collection, or all of the time-slots for a given study may be filled. In the event that there are no available time slots, it is expected that students would complete the alternative assignment via SONA.

The SONA system will close for participation on [xxx DATE]. You are required to complete your participation by this date. **Students who do not complete one of the research requirements will receive an Incomplete until the research requirement has been fulfilled. If you do not receive a passing grade in this class, you will need to complete the research requirement again when you retake the course.** If you have any questions about the SONA system or your participation status you can email Dr. Jennifer DeCicco (SONA coordinator) at jdecicco@holyfamily.edu.

The Holy Family University SONA website can be accessed by visiting the following site: <https://holyfamily.sona-systems.com/>