RESEARCH METHODS
PSYC 3340 (CRN 26237) Spring 2023
Experimental Psychology for Psychology Minors
Physical Sciences Building, Room 208
Mondays & Wednesdays 12:00 pm to 1:20 pm

Instructor: Lawrence Cohn, Ph.D.
Office: 118 Psychology Building
Contact Info: E-mail: Lcohn@utep.edu; Phone: 747-6567

In-Person Office Hours: Mondays 3:00 to 4:40 p.m.
Virtual Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:30 to 11:50 a.m.
or by appointment

Teaching Assistant: To be announced


Note: To ensure that you don’t fall behind in your readings while ordering and obtaining the textbook, I have uploaded the first three assigned chapters to our Blackboard course shell. Just go to the Home Page of our Blackboard course shell, scroll down to the folder labeled “Initial Book Chapters”, and download the chapters in pdf format.

Additional Readings: I will provide ‘pdf’ copies of additional readings. These readings will be uploaded to the folder labeled “Weekly Readings” within our course shell in Blackboard. Readings include the following:


3. Memorandum Opinion (December 20, 2005): Case No. 04cv2688
   Tammy Kitzmiller, et al. vs Dover Area School District. [We will read selected pages of the Judge’s ruling regarding the ‘theory’ of Intelligent Design and whether this ‘theory’ can be taught in high school science classes]

WELCOME!!! This course will introduce you to many important concepts, research designs, measurement issues, and conceptual debates underlying research findings in psychology and the behavioral sciences. We also will discuss the distinction between science and pseudoscience, the alleged replication crisis in psychology, and the strengths and weaknesses of experimental,
correlational, and observational research. The material that we review in the course is quite exciting and has implications for many majors, disciplines, professions, and everyday decisions.

To help introduce key issues in behavioral and social science research methods, we will spend time discussing several extraordinary claims and phenomena, including the following:

1) a remarkable horse (named Clever Hans) that allegedly solved complicated math problems;

2) dowsing rods that are used to, allegedly, find hidden sources of water and minerals;

3) facilitated communication techniques that allegedly help autistic children communicate extensively with parents and teachers;

4) a world-renowned psychic (Uri Geller) who claimed to communicate telepathically and bend spoons using mental powers (and we will watch videos of Geller and other individuals allegedly displaying these feats);

5) a world famous magician's million dollar commitment to pay anyone who demonstrates paranormal ability under controlled scientific conditions;

6) a fascinating court case involving claims that 'intelligent design' should be taught in high school science classes as an alternative to Darwin's theory of evolution (and we will read a portion of the judge's legal 'opinion').

We will design studies to test several of the latter remarkable claims and phenomena. We won't conduct the studies themselves but we will identify the necessary experimental design features that would have to underlie rigorous tests of each claim. The latter exercises and discussions will lay the foundation for much of the course. We will also discuss key principles guiding the ethical conduct of research with animals and humans.

The course has several goals, including 1) increasing your knowledge of key research design issues in the psychology and the behavioral sciences, 2) increasing your empirical orientation towards knowledge, and 3) increasing your ability to draw connections between research and your everyday life. More generally, the course should increase your ability to think in terms of evidence, and 'quality of evidence', when evaluating claims about human behavior and mental processes.

**Class Format:**

This course will be a mixture of lectures and discussions, in-class tasks, and readings. Please complete all assigned readings and tasks before coming to class each day! The tentative topics and reading assignments for each class are provided on the following pages. We may deviate from this tentative schedule, so the dates and topics are intended as rough guides for where we will be throughout the semester.
**Writing Assignment and ‘Hands-On” Writing Exercises:**

A writing assignment has been incorporated into the course (described below). Learning to write clearly is a skill that should benefit you in almost every profession or professional pursuit. Thus I have also incorporated into the course two in-class, hands-on, fun writing exercises that will help you practice several easy-to-adopt tips for writing clearly.

**Class Participation and Attendance (5% of course grade)**

Attending our weekly classes is required and critical for you to master the course material. If you miss four (4) or more classes then you will earn no credit for class attendance. Please arrive to class on time. Class attendance has been shown to improve grades and graduation success. So don’t skip-out on class….for lots of reasons!

**Quizzes (30% of course grade):**

Five quizzes will be administered during the semester. The quizzes will be based on reading assignments and material discussed in class. I will drop your lowest quiz grade when computing your final course grade. Thus each of your four highest quiz grades will contribute 7.5% to your final course grade.

**Examinations (40% of course grade):**

Two exams will be administered during the semester. The tentative exam dates are provided on the next pages. **The exam dates are tentative, so please do not plan business trips or other obligations around the latter dates.** Each exam contributes 20% to your course grade. Exams will be a combination of essay, short answer, and multiple-choice questions. If you miss one exam then you will be permitted to take a comprehensive make-up exam to replace the grade of zero that was assigned to your one missed exam. Note: the comprehensive make-up exam will be administered during final exam time slot scheduled by UTEP (Friday May 12th 2023 at 1 p.m.).

**Mini-Term Paper (20%):**

Students will be required to write a 4-5 page paper (see attached Mini-Term Paper Assignment Instructions). Papers must be typed and double-spaced. The paper contributes 20% to your course grade. **The paper is due by 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday April 12th 2023. Please submit your paper to me as a WORD file, along with two of your drafts (the drafts can be submitted as hard copies if you wish).** Note that we will meet on Monday May 1st to review some of your papers and discuss easy-to-adopt strategies for improving your writing. The latter ‘writing session’ should help you succeed in many courses and professional pursuits. Submitting your papers by April 12th will give me sufficient time to initially review many of the papers by May 1st, when we will review writing issues associated with your papers. Thus please **DO NOT** ask for a deadline extension. I will not give extensions unless you are hospitalized or subject to some other extreme emergency. **Late papers will have their grades lowered by one letter grade (e.g., an “A” paper become a “B” paper).**
Choose a term paper topic by Wednesday February 15th 2023. Submit to me a 5-6 line typed description of your term paper topic by February 15th. I will then discuss your proposed topic to ensure that the term paper topic is appropriate. All term paper topics must be finalized and approved by me by February 27th 2023.

Your mini-term papers should be well thought out and clearly written. Unclear writing often reflects unclear thinking. To help you develop your professional writing skills, we will spend part of two class sessions during this semester reviewing writing tips and completing hands-on writing exercises that should improve your professional writing skills. You must submit two drafts of your paper along with your final ‘paper’, so please save your drafts!

In-Class Projects (5% of course grade):
Throughout the course I will ask you to develop research designs that test a variety of hypotheses related to human behavior. These projects will usually be completed in-class. These small projects are usually quite fun to work on, and the tasks are a bit like solving puzzles. We will work together to help solve each puzzle (that is, design a specific research study to help answer an interesting practical question). These puzzles and tasks will sometimes be completed in class but some tasks may require briefly working together outside of class (either via Zoom or phone or other means of communication (excluding mental telepathy!).

Extra Credit (Optional)
You can earn an extra credit by participating in four (4) hours of research conducted in the Psychology Department. Your participation will help you learn more about the research techniques and procedures that are used in behavioral science research. Three (3) percentage points will be added to one exam score for each hour of participation (maximum research credit: 12-percentage points). Three points will be deducted from an exam score for each hour of research that you sign-up to participate in but fail to attend without notifying the experimenter sufficiently in advance. All research credits must be completed by Dead Day, May 5th 2023.

The attached sheet (“SONA System Policies – Spring 2023 Participant Guide”) provides instructions for identifying and signing-up for studies that are conducted in the Psychology Department this semester. If you are unable to participate in these research studies but still want to earn extra credit then you can write four (4) short research papers (each paper should be 2-pages in length, typed) based on research articles that I have selected for you. Each 2-page paper should briefly summarize the research question that was addressed in the article, the research methods that were employed in the study, and the main findings. Please write your name, student ID number, and course number (PSYC 3340) at the top of each paper that you submit. Each research paper requires about one hour of work. Three (3) percentage points will be added to one exam score for each paper submitted (maximum research credit: 12-percentage points). Please contact our Teaching Assistant if you want copies of the research articles. Request for articles must be made by Tuesday May 2nd 2023. Your 2-page papers summarizing each article that you request must be submitted to our Teaching Assistant by Dead Day (Friday May 5th 2023).
Note: Students who complete 3 of the extra credit hours by March 10\textsuperscript{th} 2023 will be given an additional credit hour. This means that students can get credit for completing four hours of research by only completing 3 hours of research studies, as long as they complete 3 hours of research credit by the March 10\textsuperscript{th} deadline. It is very important that students go into their SONA accounts no later than one week following these dates to confirm the additional credit was granted to them and to assign this credit to the appropriate class.

**Strategies for Success in this Course**

1. **You can increase your likelihood of success in the course by identifying a ‘backup-buddy’;** that is, someone who you can contact via email or phone to get the class notes for any day that you miss class due to illness. The ‘backup-buddy’ strategy has been useful to students in past semesters. **Each student in the class must identify a ‘backup buddy’ by the end of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} week of classes. Please do not contact me for class notes if you miss a class. Instead, contact your study-buddy. I will be happy to review with you any material that you want to discuss after you get the notes from your study-buddy.**

2. Many talented students stumble in Research Methods because they do not invest the time needed to succeed in the course. **Remember this rule of thumb:** For every three (3) credit hour course that you take during a regular (fall or spring) semester, you should spend 3 hours attending class each week and 7.5 hours studying outside of class! **Thus you should plan to devote approximately 10.5 hours each week to mastering the material in this course.** I have designed the course, the readings, and the assignments with the latter time commitment in mind.

3. You should read all of the assigned material, and you should read the material more than once. Most importantly, interact with the material!! Write comments in the margins of the chapters and articles, type up your notes, discuss the material with friends (or even enemies), or just close the door to your room and review the material aloud! Actively engaging material is absolutely critical for your success in any course. Passively reading a chapter or article just once is useless. At the university level, you are expected to master material in a non-trivial way. Hence the need to genuinely commit the type of time and energy described above in order to get the payoff that you desire. The material that we will read and review this ‘semester’ is very exciting and has numerous practical implications. So please make sure that you give yourself sufficient time to read and digest the material.

**A NOTE REGARDING ACADEMIC HONESTY, INTEGRITY, AND DISHONESTY**

Please make sure that you are the sole author of your ‘term paper’. **Do not plagiarize or ask a friend or company or artificial intelligence program to write your paper.** To help you avoid plagiarism I have attached two brief documents handouts from UTEP’s Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution that describe plagiarism and how to avoid it. In addition, when discussing research findings please use your own words. Do not cut and paste a montage of quotes from the authors themselves! Your task is to express the ideas in your own words.

Academic integrity and academic honesty are highly valued at UTEP. The Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution ([http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/](http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/)) notes the following: “…students are expected to maintain absolute integrity and a high standard of individual honor in
scholastic work undertaken at the University. At a minimum, you should complete any
assignments, exams, and other scholastic endeavors with the utmost honesty...

"Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic
dishonesty includes, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of
any work or materials that are attributable to another person.

"Cheating: Copying form the test paper of another student; communicating with another
student during a test; giving or seeking aid from another student during a test; possession and/or use
of unauthorized materials during tests (i.e. Crib notes, class notes, books, etc.); substituting for
another person to take a test; falsifying research data, reports, academic work offered for credit.

"Plagiarism: Using someone's work in your assignments without the proper citations;
submitting the same paper or assignment from a different course, without direct permission of
instructors

"Collusion: Unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic
assignments

_________________________________________________________________________________

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

**NOTE 1:** Do not fall behind in your readings or your class attendance. If you have questions about
the readings or class material then please come see me during office hours- I enjoy meeting with
students!!

**NOTE 2:** March 30th is the spring 2023 Drop/Withdrawal Deadline. Student-initiated drops are
permitted after this date, but the student is not guaranteed a grade of W. The faculty member of
record will issue a grade of either W or F.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignment (complete before class)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 18</td>
<td>Introduction &amp; Fundamental Issues in Research Methods</td>
<td>Chapter 1 in Morling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 23 &amp; 25</td>
<td>Fundamental Issues (con't) &amp; In-Class Aphorism Task</td>
<td>Chapter 2 in Morling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 30</td>
<td>Simple Experiments I</td>
<td>Chapter 10 in Morling (pp. 273-286)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>Testing the Validity of Dowsing: Videos &amp; In-Class Research Designs</td>
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Feb. 6  Puzzle: Clever Hans  
In-class Research Design  
Rosenthal: Clever Hans (pdf chapter)

Feb. 8  Puzzle: Facilitated Communication  
Videos & In-class Research designs  
Chapter 3 in Morling

Feb. 13  Quiz #1 (all material assigned or discussed thus far)  
Facilitated Communication (con’t)

Feb. 15  Ethical Issues in Research;  
Tuskegee, Milgram, and the Belmont Report  
Chapter 4 in Morling

Feb. 15  Submit Mini-Term Paper Topic  
for discussion and approval

Feb. 20 & Feb. 22  Interesting Measurement Issues in Research  
Chapter 5 in Morling

Feb. 27  Exam #1: All Material Assigned thus far  
Finalize Mini-Term Paper Topic

March 1  Puzzles in Survey Research (con’t)  
Chapter 6 in Morling

March 6  Is the 'theory' of Intelligent Design a scientific theory? And who cares!  
Legal opinion of Judge Jones (selected pages)

March 8  Quiz #2 (all material since Exam #1)  
Intelligent Design (con’t)

March 13 & 15  SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS
March 20
Magic, Uri Geller, and Psychic Ability: Videos & In-class Research Designs

"Introduction" Popular Myths in Psychology Lilienfeld et al. (2010)

In-class writing Task:
(Finding Waldo in a Crowd of Sentences")

March 22
Research Samples & Research Populations

Chapter 7 in Morling

March 27 & 29
Correlation, Causation, & Other Tricky Issues

Chapter 8 in Morling

(March 30
Spring Drop/Withdrawal Deadline
"Student-initiated drops are permitted after this date, but the student is not guaranteed a grade of W. The faculty member of record will issue a grade of either W or F.")

April 3
Quiz #3 (all material since last quiz, including writing exercises)

Correlation & Causation (con’t)

April 5
"Simple Experiments II"

Chapter 10 (all pages) in Morling

April 10
Those darn 'confounding' variables!

Chapter 11 in Morling

April 12
Quiz #4 (all material since last quiz)

MINI-TERM PAPERS DUE TODAY BY 11:59 PM!!!

Confounding Variables (Con’t)
April 17, 19, 24  Quasi-experiments  (they’re all around you!)  Chapter 13  in Morling

April 26  Quiz #5 (all material since last quiz)

May 1  What is the ‘replication crisis’ and am I in danger?!
2nd hands-on in-class writing task: Finding Waldo in your own term papers  Chapter 14  in Morling

May 3  Exam #2  (all material assigned & discussed this semester)

May 12 (Friday)  Comprehensive Make-Up Exam  (only for students who missed a prior exam)
A wide variety of behavioral interventions and clinical techniques are used by practitioners in Counseling, Criminal Justice, Education, Medicine, Psychology, & Rehabilitation Sciences. The validity of some of these techniques and interventions has not been established. For example, experts have questioned the validity of using 1) polygraphs to detect lying, 2) facilitated communication to interact with autistic children, 3) the Feldenkrais Method for improving body movement, 4) subliminal advertising for increasing consumer purchases, and 5) applied kinesiology for diagnosing illnesses. Such techniques are sometimes referred to as 'pseudoscientific' because the alleged benefits of the techniques have not been rigorously tested or, worse, the techniques have failed the test of scientific scrutiny but the techniques are still claimed to be supported by research evidence.

Please identify a clinical, behavioral, or educational technique or intervention that is used in your own discipline but not yet supported by rigorous research. Describe the technique or intervention, its history and alleged benefits, as well as some of the criticisms of the clinical technique or intervention. Finally, design a rigorous study to test the validity of the technique or intervention. The description of your proposed research design should be as detailed as possible. Specifically:

1) state your hypothesis,
2) describe your participants (e.g., patients attending a pain clinic, ages 22-29, who have not been prescribed pain medication),
3) describe the materials, tasks, or manipulations that you would employ (e.g., a 20 item pain scale developed at Harvard University),
4) provide evidence supporting the validity and reliability of your proposed assessments (e.g., validity of your pain scale),
5) summarize your overall experimental procedure.
6) indicate if your study uses random assignment? If not, why not?
7) indicate how the results of your study help to confirm or disconfirm the validity of the clinical technique or intervention?

Perhaps devote the first 2 – 2.5 pages of your paper to a description of the intervention or technique that you are investigating, its history, and the alleged benefits and associated criticisms, and then devote the remaining 2 – 2.5 pages to a description of your hypothesis and study design.

Your paper should be 4-5 pages long, typed (double-spaced) and include a bibliography (which is not included in the page count). Your name should be at the top of page 1, along with
the title of your paper on the next line, followed by your introduction (and, on subsequent pages, your hypothesis and research design). Our textbook provides an example of a paper written using this format on pages 527 to 531. I want your paper written using your own words, so do not include quotations from other authors or sources.

Choose a term paper topic by Wednesday February 15th 2023. Submit to me a 5-6 line typed description of your term paper topic by February 15th. We will then discuss your proposed topic to ensure that the term paper topic is appropriate. All term paper topics must be finalized and approved by me by February 27th 2023.

Mini-term papers must be submitted to me by 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday April 12th 2023. Late papers will have their grades lowered by one letter grade, no exceptions (e.g., an “A” paper become a “B” paper, and a “B” paper becomes a “C” paper). Thus please plan accordingly!
AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

In writing, we draw upon others’ words and ideas and the intellectual heritage underlying human progress. Scholarship entails researching, understanding, and building upon the work of others, but also requires that proper credit be given for any “borrowed” material. UTEP students are responsible under the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) for Academic Integrity and for knowing what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?
Plagiarism means using another’s work without giving credit. You must put others’ words in quotation marks and cite your source(s) and must give citations when using others’ ideas, even if those ideas are paraphrased in your own words.

“Work” includes “original ideas, strategies, and research,” art, graphics, computer programs, music, and other creative expression. The work may consist of writing, charts, pictures, graphs, diagrams, data, websites, or other communication or recording media, and may include “sentences, phrases, and innovative terminology,” formatting, or other representations.

The term “source” includes published works (books, magazines, newspapers, websites, plays, movies, photos, paintings, and textbooks) and unpublished sources (class lectures or notes, handouts, speeches, other students’ papers, or material from a research service).

Using words, ideas, computer code, or any work by someone else without giving proper credit is plagiarism. Anytime you use information from a source, you must cite it.

WHY SHOULD YOU BE CONCERNED ABOUT PLAGIARISM?
- If you plagiarize, you are cheating yourself. You don’t learn to write out your thoughts in your own words, and you don’t get specific feedback geared to your individual needs and skills. Plagiarizing a paper is like sending a friend to practice tennis for you — you’ll never score an ace yourself!
- Plagiarism is dishonest because it misrepresents the work of another as your own
- Plagiarism violates the Handbook of Operating Procedures and can result in Suspension or Dismissal.
- Plagiarism devalues others’ original work. Submitting a professional writer’s work as yours is taking an unfair advantage over students who do their own work.
- It is wrong to take or use property (an author’s work) without giving the owner the value or credit due. Further, copyright violations can result in fines or damages.

HOW TO CITE SOURCES
The most common citation method is to identify the source in the text, putting the author’s last name and the publication year in parenthesis, with the page number of the cited material (Hacker, 1995, p. 261). The author’s last name links the reader to the list of sources at the end of the paper where full publishing information is given:

References:
Hacker, Diana., A Writer’s Reference (St. Martin’s Press, 1995)

Two other methods are footnotes and endnotes, which use raised numbers at the end of an idea or quoted words to link the reader to the source given at the bottom of the page (footnote) or at the end of the paper (endnote).

For all three methods, you must include the source in a reference list at the end of the paper. Here, sources are fully identified by author’s name, title, publisher’s name, year of publication, and page number(s). For more information, see the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed., (Modern Language Assoc. 2009) or Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Ed., (American Psychological Assoc. 2009)

HOW CAN YOU AVOID PLAGIARISM?
Know what plagiarism is: ignorance will not excuse a violation. Intentional plagiarism is deliberate copying or use of another’s work without credit. Unintentional plagiarism can result from not knowing citation standards (“I thought the Internet was free!”), from sloppy research and poor note-taking, or from careless “cutting and pasting” of electronic sources.
Both intentional AND unintentional plagiarism are HOP violations!

Don’t FORGET!
GUIDELINES FOR AVOIDING PLAGIARISM:

• USE YOUR OWN WORDS AND IDEAS.
  Practice is essential to learning. Each time you choose your words, order your thoughts, and convey your ideas, you can improve your writing.

• GIVE CREDIT FOR COPIED, ADAPTED, OR PARAPHRASED MATERIAL.
  If you repeat another’s exact words, you MUST use quotation marks AND cite the source. If you adapt a chart or paraphrase a sentence, you must still cite. Paraphrase means that you restate the author’s ideas, meaning, and information in your own words (see examples).

• AVOID USING OTHERS’ WORK WITH MINOR “COSMETIC” CHANGES.
  Examples: using “less” for “fewer,” reversing the order of a sentence, changing terms in a computer code, or altering a spread sheet layout. If the work is essentially the same, give credit.

• THERE ARE NO “FREEBIES.”
  ALWAYS cite words, information, and ideas you use if they are new to you (learned in your research). No matter where you find it – even in an encyclopedia or on the Internet – you cite it!

• BEWARE OF “COMMON KNOWLEDGE.”
  You don’t have to cite “common knowledge,” BUT the fact must be commonly known. That Abraham Lincoln was the U.S. President during the Civil War is common knowledge; that over 51,000 Union and Confederate soldiers died in the Battle of Gettysburg.

• WHEN IN DOUBT, CITE.
  Better to be safe than not give credit when you should!

HOW TO CITE CORRECTLY

Citing a source for factual information:
In describing the role of the Los Angeles Times in the conflicts and events surrounding the diversion of water from the Owens Valley, I have relied upon the factual account given in Thinking Big – The Story of the Los Angeles Times (Bottleib and Walt, 1997).

Identifying the source “up front” means the student doesn’t need a page cite until the end of this paragraph, but additional page citations would be required to reference facts used later in the paper.

MORE EXAMPLES – How to Cite Correctly
The Original Source:

“In research writing, sources are cited for two reasons: to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas.”

Plagiarism (same words, no quotation marks):
In research writing, sources are cited to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas.

The student has used the author’s exact words, leaving out only a phrase, without quotation marks or a citation.

Also Plagiarism (incorrect paraphrase):
In research writing, we cite sources for a couple reasons: to notify readers of our information sources and give credit to those from whom we have borrowed (Hacker).

The student has made only slight changes, substituting words such as “a couple” for “two”, “notify” for “alert”, and “our”/”we” for “your”/”you,” leaving out a few words, and giving an incomplete citation.

A Solution (appropriate paraphrase):
A researcher cites her sources to ensure her audience knows where she got her information, and to recognize and credit the original work. (Hacker, 1995, p.260).

This student has paraphrased in her own words, while accurately reflecting and citing the author’s ideas.

A Different Solution (quotation with cite):
In her book A Writer’s Reference, Diana Hacker notes, “In research writing, sources are cited for two reasons: to alert readers to the sources of your information and to give credit to the writers from whom you have borrowed words and ideas.” (1995, p.260).

By introducing his source, the student signals that the following material is from that source. All verbatim words are in quotation marks, and the source of the quote is cited with a page number.

GETTING HELP
Read the syllabus and the assignment; ask your instructor how to cite sources; and get a book on writing and citing research papers. Use the UTEP Writing Center!

1 Brenda Spatt, Writing from Sources (St. Martins Press, 1983), p.438.
2 Id.
AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

SONA System policies – SPRING 2023 Participant Guide

Below is an outline of SONA policies which apply to individuals who participate in research studies for pay or course credits during the fall or spring semester. There are different policy documents for the Summer terms. We ask that you please read these policies and watch the tutorial video to get started as a participant in SONA. If more specific questions arise, please e-mail the SONA administrators at SONA@utep.edu.

Here is a link to a tutorial video which provides useful information about how to use the SONA system as a participant.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OnT2ZU6QQ&t=478s

You MUST be 18 years or older to participate in studies through SONA.

1. **Requesting an account in SONA**
   a. You must have a current UTEP e-mail address to request an account in SONA. If you do not already have a UTEP e-mail address, you may obtain a free e-mail account from the University. For details on getting an e-mail account or finding computer labs on campus for student use, contact the HELP desk at helpdesk@utep.edu or 915-747-4357.
   b. You will need to create an account on the SONA online psychology research participation system. To access the system, go to the following website: http://utep.sona-systems.com/. There is also a link from the Psychology Department website. If you go to the following page on the website https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/psychology/academic-programs/undergraduate/index.html and click on the “Participating in Research” link on the left side of the page it will take you to the SONA login in page. To create an account the first time you access the system, use the link marked “Request Account” on the right side of the page. Enter the information requested, including your name, your user ID (this is the username that is part of
your UTEP e-mail), your UTEP student ID number, and select the course(s) in which you are enrolled. Please check CAREFULLY to make sure that information you entered is correct. Then press the button marked “Request Account.” Be sure that when you enter your user ID (e-mail username) that you type it in correctly, otherwise you will not receive your password from the system and you will have to contact sona@utep.edu to help you reset your account.

c. Your log-on ID and password will be sent to your UTEP e-mail account within several minutes. You may then go to http://utep.sona-systems.com/ and log in using the information that was e-mailed to you. If you do not receive your login information within 24 hours, please email SONA@utep.edu as soon as possible so that we may assist you.

d. In order to ensure that your participation in SONA is recorded properly, do not set up more than one account per person and do not use someone else’s account.

2. **Logging in to SONA and signing up for studies**

   a. Once you have your account set up in SONA, you may go to http://utep.sona-systems.com/ and log in with your credentials. You should see a screen that looks similar to the one shown below:
b. However, upon logging in for the very first time in the semester and before seeing the screen above, you may be prompted to participate in a prescreen survey. This survey consists of some demographic questions that may help you qualify for studies looking for participants that fit specific demographic characteristics. If you choose to complete the prescreen you will receive 0.5 credits. Please remember the prescreen is not a requirement. You don’t have to participate if you don’t want to.

c. You can click on the green bar that says “View Available Studies” to find research studies with timeslots that are available. When you select a study, you can see more detailed information and sign up for the study if you wish. **Just be sure that you pay attention to the study eligibility requirements and make sure that you are eligible to participate.** For example, if the study mentions that it is only recruiting bilingual individuals, do not sign up if you are a monolingual.

d. Once you have signed up for a study, the system will send you an e-mail and the study will appear under “My Schedule & Credits.” You can use this feature to remind yourself of the time and location of the study. Within two days after your participation, your credit for the study should appear online. If you do not
receive credit for a study within two days of your participation, please contact
the researcher who ran your study session by e-mail or telephone to resolve the
problem.

e. You may generally participate only once in each study. However, some studies
may involve multiple testing sessions. Some studies may have additional
restrictions on participation that will be displayed online. Be sure that you read
ALL of the requirements for a study BEFORE you sign up for it. If you sign up for a
study and it is determined that you have not read the eligibility requirements or
are not eligible for the study, you may not receive credits.

f. For studies offering credit, you earn 1 credit for each hour of participation,
rounded up to the nearest ½ credit.

g. At times there may be some studies offering pay or entry into a raffle for one’s
participation. This information should be clearly indicated in the study
information listed in SONA. Note that you will not earn course credit for
participating in these studies.

h. Pay attention to the type of compensation offered for the study you are signing
up for. If the same researcher offers the same study as either a paid or credit-
based study, you may only sign up for ONE compensation type. If you sign up for
one but later want to receive the other type of compensation, you are NOT
ALLOWED to make the switch.

i. For example, if you sign up for the paid version of a study, then later
want to switch to the credit option, the researcher cannot switch the
type of compensation they offer to you. You are responsible for signing
up for the version of compensation that you want. If you would like to
change the compensation type, then you would need to cancel your sign-
up before your participation and then sign up for the other version of the
study offering the alternative type of compensation.

3. Your responsibilities as a participant
a. When you sign up for a study you are agreeing to attend the scheduled time or to complete the study by the deadline listed. It is important that you attend all studies for which you sign up. Please don’t sign up for a session unless you are certain you can attend.

b. If you sign up to participate in an online study (these will be labeled as Online in SONA), please make careful note of the deadline for completion. If the deadline is several weeks or months in the future, please complete the study within 2 weeks of signing up for it. This will help prevent any issues with your credit being assigned in a timely manner.

c. When completing a study online, please work to find a location free of distractions so that you can focus on the task(s) at hand. This includes turning off or muting your phone, avoiding responding to texts or email while completing the study, and, if you are completing the study online, refraining from doing other tasks on the computer while you are completing the study.

d. Type of study – when completing studies, only a portion of required/accepted credit hours can be achieved through online studies. The rest of the credits must be in-person studies, which require that you sign up for a specific timeslot to meet with a researcher either face to face in a lab or via video conference or other communication software. Online studies will be labeled as “online” in SONA. Online studies typically require that you sign up for a timeslot but have an extended timeframe (e.g. several weeks or months) to complete the study. However, you should try to complete any online study within 2 weeks of signing up for that study.

e. Policy on Cancellations – We ask you to exercise professionalism and courtesy in keeping or canceling scheduled appointments. If you schedule a session and later find that you are unable to attend, please cancel such participation through the Sona system. If you cannot access the Sona system at that time, then you may cancel by sending an e-mail to the experimenter or calling to leave a message for the experimenter. Cancellation through the Sona system allows other students
who need credit to sign up for the cancelled session, which makes it the ideal method. Canceling by e-mail or phone lets experimenters know that they can either open a new slot for another participant or make other plans for their time. Remember that most experimenters are other students and are also quite busy, so they may not receive your e-mail or phone call immediately. If you cancel through Sona, your cancellation will be reflected more quickly.

f. **No Shows/Failure to Cancel** - Failing to show up for a scheduled experiment or failing to complete an experiment by the required deadline without appropriate cancellation/notification will result in an unexcused no show. If you receive three **unexcused no shows** during the semester, your access to SONA studies will be restricted. You will no longer be permitted to complete studies for the remainder of the term. In this case you will need to contact your professor to determine alternative ways to earn credit.

g. It is a good idea to try to complete your research credits early so that you don’t run into any issues trying to find available studies at the end of the semester.

4. **Your rights as a participant** - Participation in research is meant to be an enjoyable and educational experience. Therefore, specific steps are taken to ensure that your participation will be beneficial to both you and society (by the knowledge gained from the study).

   a. The Institutional Review Board (IRB), an ethics committee, screens each study before anyone is allowed to participate to ensure that volunteers are not in any way mistreated.

   b. Before participation, the researcher will give students information about what will take place during the study. Students will then be asked to sign or verify a statement of their consent to participate.

   c. After completion of the study, the researcher will debrief the participant as to the purpose of the study.
d. Students have the right to discontinue participation in the study at any time without penalty.

e. Student participants have the right to expect the researcher to be present and on time to conduct the study. If a participant is present on time and the researcher is not, the participant should first check to ensure that the date/time/location/online videoconferencing tool is correct. If that information is correct, the student should contact the researcher as soon as possible to resolve the error and receive whatever credit is appropriate. If this does not resolve the issue, the student should contact SONA@utep.edu so that the SONA administrators can help resolve the issue.

f. Students who feel that their rights have been violated during participation in any of the Psychology Department's research studies should inform their instructor. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved by the instructor, they should contact the Chairperson of the Psychology Department Undergraduate Program Committee at (915) 747-5313 and/or the Institutional Review Board (IRB) administrator at (irb.orsp@utep.edu) or (915) 747-6590.

5. If you are enrolled in Introduction to Psychology (PSYC 1301) during the SPRING -

Introduction to Psychology (PSYC 1301) students who are enrolled during the Spring semester are required to earn a minimum of 8 credits by participating in research studies or completing alternative assignments. One credit is equivalent to participating in 1 hour of a research study. Students must be at least 18 years old to participate in experiments; students under the age of 18 should complete the alternative assignments provided by the instructor.

a. Information about how the research participation credit will be factored in to compute the final semester grade is included in your course syllabus. The instructor will also provide details on alternative assignments that can be completed to fulfill the research requirement without research participation.

b. Research credits and alternative assignments must be completed by the date and time listed on the course syllabus.
c. Students may earn an additional credit hour if they complete at least 6 research credits by a particular date each semester. In the Spring semester, if a student earns 6 credits by March 10th 2023, SONA management will assign them 1 additional credit hour to their SONA account. It is very important that students go into their SONA accounts no later than one week following these dates to confirm the additional credit was granted to them and to assign this credit to the appropriate class.

d. In order to assign the additional credit to the appropriate class, sign in to your SONA account and view your profile. Scroll down to the “earned credits” section and click the drop-box next to the non-study credit. With this drop-box you can assign this additional credit to the correct class.

e. If you think you qualified to earn an additional credit added to your account but do not see it listed under your earned credits by a week after the dates mentioned above, please contact the SONA administrators at SONA@utep.edu no later than March 24th 2023 in the Spring semester so that they can resolve the issue well before the end of classes. If you wait to email SONA until the end of the semester to correct this issue, there is a possibility that you will not get the additional credit.

6. **Last day to participate in research** – The last day to participate in research studies during the Spring semester is dead day at the end of the Semester. This is the Friday just after the last day of classes. The last day to participate in research studies is the last day of classes during that session.

7. **Checking on whether credit has been granted** – Researchers generally assign credits within 48 hours of the testing session. There may be some exceptions with some special studies, such as online studies that have a cutoff date where the researchers assign credits after that cutoff date for participation. However, if you see that you have not had credits granted for a study in which you participated within a few days of your
participation and the researchers did not indicate that credits would be granted at a specific time in the future, please contact the researchers who conducted the study to ask them to resolve the issue. If you still have problems or questions after talking with the researchers, then contact SONA@utep.edu so that the SONA administrators can assist you.

8. **Check at the END OF THE SEMESTER**

   a. On dead day, confirm that you do not have any unassigned credits. It would be difficult to change after this date.

9. **Multiple roles/accounts in SONA** - If you have more than one role in SONA (i.e. researcher, participant, etc.) and you have different passwords for these roles/accounts, please e-mail sona@utep.edu to let us know about the issue so that we can consolidate all of your roles under a single account and login.

10. **Common Student Issues and Questions**

    a. **Problems logging in to SONA** – this is by far the most common issue that students experience. Usually this issue has to do with students typing in the wrong username/user ID when they first create their account in SONA. Please contact sona@utep.edu to get assistance with this issue. It is best to try to resolve any issues of this sort at the beginning of the semester.

    b. **Not receiving credit from a study** – students should first contact the researchers associated with the study to inquire about the issue with receiving their credit. If they don’t hear back within 48 hours, then contact sona@utep.edu.

    c. **Completing research credits for more than one class** – it is possible that students may have more than one class during a semester for which they may complete research credit. Credits completed for a particular research study cannot be applied to more than one course at a time. When students earn credits from a
study, they will need to choose which course they want to assign those credits to in SONA.

d. **Credits from prior semesters** – sometimes you may see information about credits you earned in previous semesters where you completed research studies. You cannot apply credits that you earned in prior semesters to courses you are taking in the current semester.

e. **Trouble finding available studies** – only studies with open timeslots will be listed when students click the “View Available Studies” link. Students should keep checking back in SONA frequently to catch when new time slots get posted by researchers. Students should also start trying to earn credits early in the semester so that they don’t get caught at the end of the semester with fewer studies needing to recruit participants, and fewer sign-up options. If a student is having trouble finding available studies, they should talk to their instructor about any alternative assignment options. **Note also that if you earn 3 unexcused No Shows then you will be unable to sign up for studies in SONA and you will need to contact your instructor to learn about alternative options to earn credit.**