MTSU Psychology Department Policy Governing Use of the Psychology Research Pool
Revised Spring 2023

I. Research Pool Users & Accounts
  A. The research pool is maintained to facilitate student and faculty research within psychology.
    1. Faculty and students from Psychology may be granted access.
    2. Researchers from outside of Psychology may be granted access by a majority vote of the committee. This is typically granted only in cases of excess pool capacity and is done after the mid-point of a semester.

  B. Researcher Approval Process and Account Duration
    1. Student researchers must complete a pool policy quiz and submit it following the proper procedure before receiving a researcher account on SONA.
    2. All student user accounts are deleted from the system after each academic year (not faculty accounts, they remain).
    3. New studies and new accounts cannot be added for an academic year until the end-of-year clean-out is complete.

II. Studies on the SONA System

   A. Start and End Dates
       1. The first day to collect data is the first day of classes
       2. The last day to collect data and turn in papers is typically the Monday of the last full week of classes. The research pool director will set this date in advance of the coming semester and inform the faculty by email

   B. Approval Process and Duration
       1. Researchers must first obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board
       2. Studies are approved and activated by the pool director when the SONA system forms have been completed
       3. All studies are deleted at the end of each academic year.
       4. Researchers who wish to continue a study longer than an academic year must request by email to the pool director continuation on SONA before the last day of the Spring semester.
   C. Posting Timeslots and Assigning Credit
       1. ALL sessions must be run through the sign-up system. Even if you are calling students to make appointments, you MUST enter those appointments into the system BEFORE the research session. After ALL appointments, one of the following must be entered.
           a) Credit Granted
           b) Unexcused No-Show. This locks students out from participating in a study subsequently. Students who fail to attend or cancel an in-person or online appointment should be marked as unexcused no shows. Students who experienced personal emergencies can appeal this decision to the researcher and/or the research pool director.
           c) Excused No-Show. Students can appeal an unexcused no-show to the experimenter or research pool director when they have experienced an emergency that did not allow them to keep their in-person or online appointment or cancel within the designated time period.
       2. Failure to run studies through the research pool system that target the research pool participants can result in sanctions against the researcher and research supervisor.
       3. If participants choose to withdraw, online or in-person, they must receive credit earned up to the point of withdrawal. Researchers should make it clear that students withdrawing from online studies must click through to the end of the survey instruments (without answering further questions) to receive credit.
       4. Online Studies should be set to automatically grant credit upon completion.
       5. Credit for in-person studies (and online studies that do not automatically credit students) must be entered within seven (7) days of a research session. Failure to enter credits in a timely manner can result in sanctions against the researcher and the research supervisor.

D. Cancellations and Participant No-Shows
   1. Participants may cancel up to 2 hours before a study appointment through the SONA system.
   2. Participants who fail to attend or cancel an in-person or online appointment should be recorded as *Unexcused No-Show* in SONA.
   3. Students can appeal an unexcused no-show to the experimenter or research pool director when they have experienced an emergency that did not allow them to keep their in-person or online appointment or cancel within the designated time period.
E. Researcher No-Shows
   1. Researchers should try to never miss a session.
   2. In the event of a researcher no-show, contact the Research Pool Director (Research.Pool@mtsu.edu) as soon as possible. The Research Pool Director will issue credit to students after a researcher no-show; contacting the director will facilitate this process.
   3. Researchers with two or more no-shows will be referred for sanctioning (see section VI).

III. Sanctioning Procedures
   A. Use of the research pool by researchers should be viewed as a privilege, not a right. Whereas research may be an important part of a person's graduate work or teaching load, and may be required for promotion or tenure, access to the research pool to conduct said research is neither guaranteed nor implied. Use of the research pool can be terminated or suspended at any time following a minimum of due process.
   B. Any violation of research pool procedures that leads to one or more complaints from students, 1410 instructors, or other researchers can trigger committee action toward a warning, suspension, or termination of access.
   C. For written warning and suspension decisions, the voting members of the committee will include the three researcher representatives and the three 1410 representatives. If one (or more) of the voting members is subject to action, the accused member(s) will be excluded from the voting process.
   D. Written warnings may be issued by the voting members. Such warnings will be kept on file for two years and may be brought to bear (but are not required) in a later decision to terminate or suspend. The process for administration of an official warning will proceed as follows:
      1. Violations of procedure that warrant action (in the view of any member of the committee) will be brought to the attention of the committee.
      2. The responsible researcher will have an opportunity to present their side of the complaint.
      3. The committee will vote to serve a warning to the researcher. A warning will be issued if a simple majority of the committee members so vote.
   E. The process for termination or suspension will proceed as follows:
      1. Violations of procedure that warrant action (in the view of any member of the committee) will be brought to the attention of the committee.
      2. The responsible researcher will have an opportunity to present their side of the complaint.
      3. The committee will vote to terminate or suspend. If the offending researcher(s) is/are on the committee, unanimous agreement of the remaining committee members is required for termination or suspension. If the offending researcher is not a committee member, agreement of all but one member of the committee is required for termination or suspension.