Instructor’s Guide to the Psychology Department Research Requirement

Many of the courses offered by the Psychology Department include a component of research experience. **Students in Psychology 1 are required to earn four points of research credit; students in Psychology 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 101 are required to earn three points of research credit for each of these courses in which they are enrolled.** Students in other psychology courses may earn points at the discretion of their instructor. In the latter case, the points may be required or treated as extra credit.

**How do students earn research credit?**

Students may earn research points in two ways: 1) They may write reports on research articles. For every acceptable (guidelines for reports are provided in the student instruction guide) report submitted at the end of the semester, the student receives one point of research credit. 2) They may participate in psychological research. Credit for participation in research accumulates in half point increments. For every half hour of participation, the student receives half a point of research credit. If a student participates for less than half an hour, the student earns half a point of credit. If a study requires attendance at multiple sessions, credit is assigned based on the total amount of time that is spent participating in the study. For example, if a study required attendance at two half-hour sessions and one forty-five minute session, a student would earn two points of credit for participating.

**What do I do at the beginning of the semester?**

If you are an instructor for Psychology 1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, or 101 please include a statement regarding the research requirement in your syllabus. Also, please refer students to the subject pool documentation that is posted on the web. A link will be created before the beginning of the semester from your Blackboard web page to the documentation.

In the event that you have chosen to include a component of research experience in your course, please make your policies in this regard clear to students. In particular, please make clear whether participation is mandatory or voluntary. If you are requiring students to participate, please make clear how many research points are required. If you are allowing students to participate for extra credit, please make clear how many points are maximally allowed. No student in any class may earn more then three points of extra credit, but you may set the point level lower than this for your class if you wish.

**What happens then?**

Each of the researchers wishing to tap the subject pool will be allocated a certain number of research points and given the go-ahead to start running their studies. Over the course of the semester, students will have their research experience. Those wishing to write papers should follow the instructions on the handout distributed at the beginning of the semester. Students should be aware that papers not following the guidelines will receive no credit. Students wishing to participate in research will be able to sign up for studies at the psychology department. They will sign up for those studies using the department’s web-based Experiment Management System. The URL for this system is [http://research.psychology.gwu.edu](http://research.psychology.gwu.edu). If you wish, you may check on the progress of your students.

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students using the same system. The operation of this system is explained in the document, Psychology Research Website Documentation (Instructor), which should accompany the present document.

**What do I do at the end of the semester?**

Prior to the end of the semester, you will receive a preliminary report of the students who have earned research credit in your class. You will receive this report with enough lead time for you to share it with your students during one of your last class sessions. Students will then be able to see what has been reported for them and to challenge that report if they see fit. When you share the report with students, you will be asked to announce a block of time during which the subject pool administrator will be available to handle challenges to the report. To guard against possible errors, each student who participates in a research study will have been given a receipt upon completion of the study. Students who argue that they have not been given credit for research participation will be expected to support their claims with the relevant receipts.

A final research credit report will be provided to you prior to the beginning of the grading period. At this point, ALL point discrepancies will have been settled and no further negotiation with students will take place.

Credit for research participation is integrated into course grades as follows. If participation is required: For each research point that a given student has failed to earn, one point should be subtracted from his/her final point total for the semester (assuming a perfect total of 100). If participation is for extra credit: For each research point that a given student has earned, a point should be added to his/her final point total.

It is our hope that this system will be essentially painless for instructors. The object is to lodge primary responsibility for the subject pool with the researchers who make use of the pool, the subject pool TA (psychres@gwu.edu) and the subject pool coordinator (Stephen Dopkins). Should you have any questions concerning the above information, please do not hesitate to contact us. We thank you for your participation.

**IMPORTANT DATE**

Monday, December 6, 2010  Last day for students to participate in research or turn in reports