

Introductory Psychology Research Exposure Requirement

Research provides the foundation of much of what psychologists know about behavior. Therefore, the Psychology Department requires all students taking Introductory Psychology at TU's main campus to gain some first-hand exposure to research. This provides a unique and often interesting opportunity for you to participate in ongoing research. In addition to helping you learn about research in psychology, your participation in these activities will benefit student and faculty researchers who are completing scholarly research.

Please note that most research studies require participants to be at least 18 years old. In case you do not qualify for a study or would prefer a different way to fulfill the research exposure requirement, we offer two alternatives. Specifically, you can complete research reports and/or attend and report on research presentations. The research report option is always available; research presentations are only occasionally available.

All students in Introductory Psychology (PSYC 101 or PSYC 102) at Towson University must accumulate 6 research pool credits during the semester.

Regardless of instructor, this requirement will count for 6% of the final grade in PSYC 101/102.

The 6 research pool credits may be obtained by completing any combination of the following activities:

- (1) Participating in psychology studies: You will earn 1 credit for each 30 minutes of participation.
- (2) Completing research reports according to the guidelines specified on our research participation website. You will earn 3 credits for satisfactory completion of each research report.
- (3) Attending and summarizing approved research presentations or colloquia. You will earn 2 credits for attending a presentation and 1 credit for satisfactory completion of a colloquium report as specified on our research participation website.

All credits must be earned by the last day of classes for the semester. No credits can be earned during the final exam period.

Each of the credit opportunities will be posted on <http://towson.sona-systems.com>. Participation opportunities vary throughout the semester, so please check early and often. You will first need to create a Research Pool account. To do so, please go to the website listed above and click on "Request account". **All students must create an account by the end of the 3rd week of classes.**

Once you create an account, you will have the opportunity to complete an online prescreen survey for 0.5 research pool credits.

If you have questions about the research exposure requirement, please ask your course instructor.

If you need help using the Research Pool website, please email the Professor who is currently coordinating the Research Pool at researchadmin@towson.edu.

*All research studies posted on the Psychology Research Pool site have been approved by the Institutional Review Board at Towson University.

Furthermore, the researchers have all received training in ethical treatment of research participants. Your options for completing the research exposure requirement are reviewed in more detail below.

Option 1: Participating in Psychological Studies

How much credit do I get? One research pool credit will be awarded for each half hour (30 minutes or less) of participation.

How do I sign up? All available research studies will be listed on the following website: <http://towson.sona-systems.com>.

Can I choose which studies I want to participate in? Absolutely! When you log on to the website you will be able to view a list of studies that are available to you. Each study has a title, a short description of what is required, and a listing of the number of credits it is worth. Please check the eligibility requirements to make sure that you are eligible to participate. When you sign up, be sure to write down the location, date and time of the study.

I've never participated in psychological research before. What should I expect? Research studies in psychology vary widely. Some studies involve filling out questionnaires, others involve physical measurements such as heart rate, and others involve responding to stimuli on a computer. In all studies, at the start of the research session, you will be informed of what you will be asked to do during the session and given the option of continuing or not. Thus, participation in each session is voluntary. At the end of each session, more information will be provided concerning the date, theory, and/or research area under study; questions are quite appropriate at this point.

What are helping projects/interviews? You may notice some studies labeled "Helping project" or "Helping interview" listed in the list of studies in the Research Pool. Graduate students in the Counseling and Clinical Psychology tracks are learning how to conduct psychological interviews and provide psychological counseling. Your role is to be interviewed or to discuss a personal concern with a counselor-in-training. These are training sessions rather than research studies, but the credits count the same way as those earned for research studies.

How do I get credit? Within 24 hours after your scheduled time slot, the experimenter will log onto the website and give you credit. You should receive email notification of this. If you do not receive credit for your participation in a timely fashion, please contact the research pool administrator by email (researchadmin@towson.edu).

What if I have to cancel a scheduled appointment? The website allows you to cancel a scheduled appointment as long as you do so at least 2 hours prior to the appointment. To cancel, just log onto the Research Pool and go into the timeslot that you wish to cancel. You should see the cancel timeslot option.

In rare instances, it may be necessary for researchers to cancel scheduled appointments. In such instances, researchers must cancel at least 2 hours prior to the appointment.

What if the researcher does not show up? If a researcher fails to show up within 10 minutes of a scheduled session but the student does, the student will still receive credit for participating except in cases in which the researcher cancelled the session at least 2 hours prior to the appointment. Contact the research pool administrator if you experience a problem with this.

What is the deadline for completing Option 1? The last day of classes for this semester is the last day you may participate in studies. However, many studies will conclude well in advance of this deadline. Therefore, it is your responsibility to sign-up for studies while they are still available.

Option 2: Writing Research Reports

Students who choose this option will find, read, and summarize a psychological research article. Credit is based on writing a 3-4 page report about the article.

How much credit do I get? Three research pool credits will be provided for a satisfactory report.

How do I sign up for this option? Just go on <http://towson.sona-systems.com> and look for the Research Report option. It is listed along with the research studies.

How do I complete the report? Follow the guideline and form available on the following webpage: <http://www.towson.edu/researchpool/>

How do I get credit? Within 1 week of receiving your report, the research administrator will log onto the research pool website and, if your report is satisfactory, give you credit. You should receive email notification of this. If you do not receive credit for your report in a timely fashion, please contact the research pool administrator by email (researchpooladmin@towson.edu).

What is the deadline for completing Option 2? Research reports must be handed in by the last day of classes for this semester.

Option 3: Colloquia Attendance and Report

Credit is based on attending and writing about an approved psychology related research presentation. This option is not always available because it depends on the availability of appropriate presentations.

How much credit do I get? Two research pool credits will be awarded for attending a colloquium and one additional credit will be awarded for completing a colloquium report.

How do I sign up for this option? Just go on <http://www.towson.edu/researchpool/> and look for Colloquial if available, they will be listed along with the research studies. Make sure that you sign in at the colloquium so that your attendance is recorded.

How do I complete the report? Follow the guideline that are available at the following website: <http://www.towson.edu/researchpool/>

How do I get credit? Within 1 week of receiving your report, the research administrator will log onto the research pool website and, if your report is satisfactory, give you credit. You should receive email notification of this. If you do not receive credit for your report in a timely fashion, please contact the research pool administrator by email (researchadmin@towson.edu).

What is the deadline for completing Option 3? Colloquium reports must be handed in by the last day of classes for this semester.

Extra Credit

Introductory Psychology students may be able to earn extra credit points by completing additional research pool credits. The decision to offer extra credit resides solely with the course instructor. The amount of extra credit that students may earn is also at the instructor's discretion. Please check with your instructor to see if extra credit is available in your class.

The Research Pool Administrator

This is a professor who oversees the research pool, communicates with PSYC 101 instructors, and ensures that students receive proper credit for research exposure. The position is rotated among psychology faculty who frequently use the research pool. The research administrator can be contacted by email at researchadmin@towson.edu.

