PSYCHED
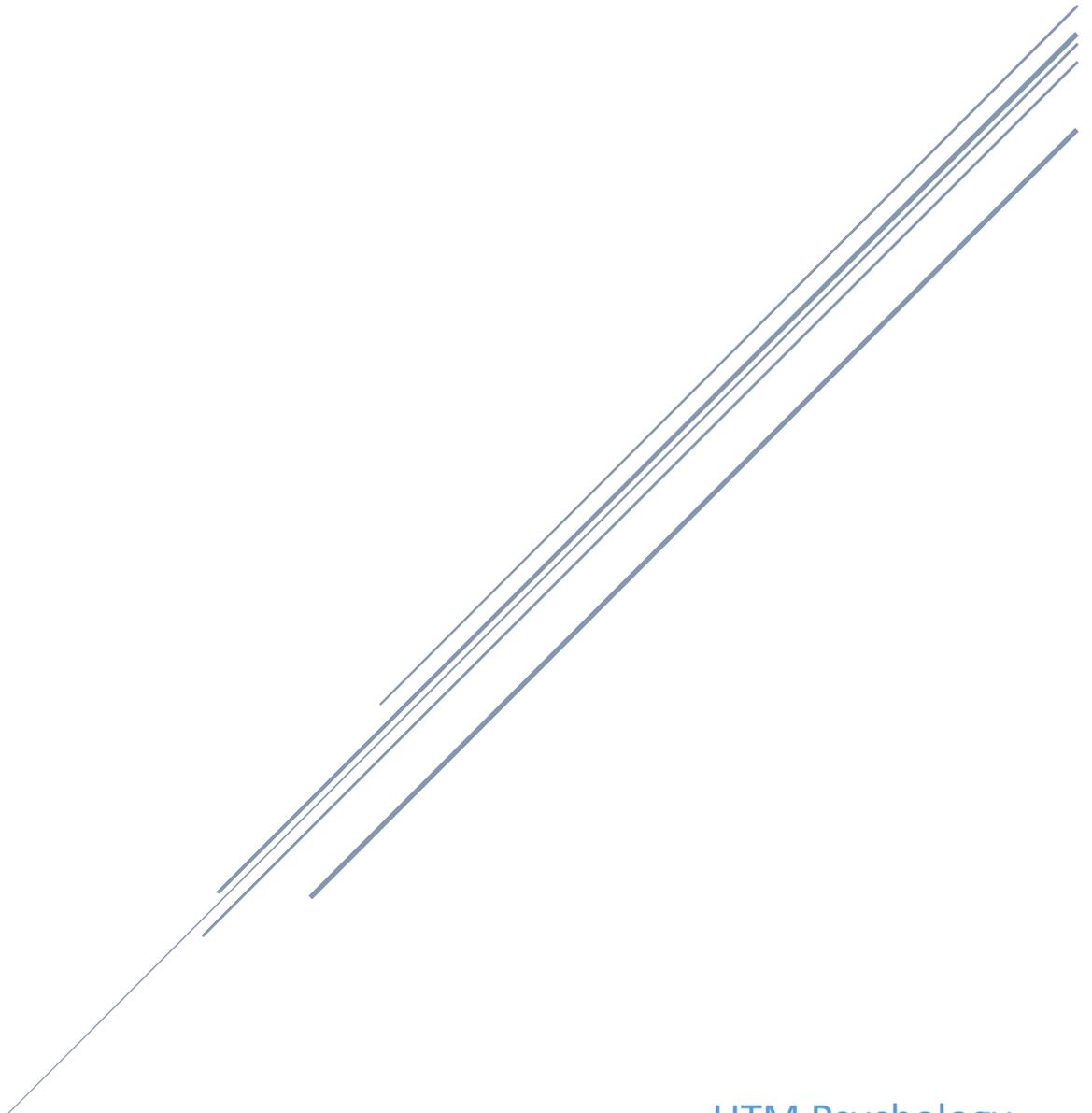
Psychology Experiment Database Guidelines and Procedures

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Psychology Experiment Database Overview

The Psychology Experiment Database has been designed to allow researchers to add experiments and have participants sign up through an online secure program PSYCHED. This application can have both Psychology students and paid participants sign up. UTORid and password are required for Psychology participants only. Paid participants sign up by submitting their contact information.

Psychology Participants

All students enrolled in the Psychology courses participating in Experiments for Course Credit are allowed to participate in experiments or complete substitute assignments to earn credit(s) towards their final grade.

Each hour-long experiment is worth 0.67% and a 30 minute experiment would be worth 0.33% of their final grade. Some experiments may be longer than an hour (max 3 hours).

Psychology students who elect to satisfy the research participation requirement by serving as volunteer subjects in ongoing research are required to sign up for experiments through the PSYCHED application program.

Paid Participants

Individuals wishing to participate in studies to receive financial compensation can sign up by going to the Paid Experiments webpage. Participants will be asked to provide name and contact information.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Psychology students participating for academic credit should NOT receive financial compensation unless participation is after the last day of term.

Participation Guidelines and Conditions

Departmental Guidelines for use of Psychololy Students as Research Subjects

The following guidelines and conditions apply to the use of Psychology students who elect to satisfy the research participation requirement by serving as volunteer subjects in ongoing research or students who may volunteer to serve as subjects for reasons other than for course credit (money, love of science, personal interest).

Any researcher who is found to be in violation of these guidelines will lose their Psychology Subject Pool privileges.

The Rules and Guidelines concerning the Experiment Database Participation are designed to:
- Facilitate approved research in the deparmtent that has rewceived prior ethics clearance
- Provide a valuable educational experiment for psychology students reinforced by earning academic credit for partipation
- Minimize complaints from participants

General Guidelines and Accountability

Use of the Psychology subject pool for research purposes is predicated on the assumption that all experiments, studies, or research programmes employing human subjects have been approved by the University's Office of Research Services (ORS) or by UTM's in-house Psychology Ethics Review Committee. Ethics approval is the responsibility of individual supervisors and is a requirement for all studies posted.

In order to have use of the Psychology subject pool, you must provide a substitute assignment. If you do not provide a substitute assignment you will be denied access to the Experiment Database.

Supervisors (PI's) are ultimately responsible for the conduct of subject pool users under their supervision. It is assumed that supervisors have examined the experiment debriefing and the questions to be asked of the student after the debriefing, and that they will continuously monitor the conduct of their researchers. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that all research personnel under their supervision who use the subject pool have received a copy of these guidelines and that they are familiar with the procedures described herein.

The subject pool is administered by the Subject Pool Committee. Membership on this committee consists of a Coordinator, and two or three additional members who will usually be full-time UTM Psychology professors selected by the Coordinator. Other individuals (e.g., students) may be appointed on the recommendation of the Committee. Current membership is viewable here.

Students are not, under any circumstances, required to participate in a specific study. They are free to select whatever studies they wish to participate in, at a time that is convenient for them (and coincides with a time offered by the researchers). It is not acceptable for researchers to contact potential subjects and reserve them for some undesignated time in the future.

Students must not be paid for research participation for which they receive academic credit. When subjects are paid for research participation, payment should be at a reasonable rate and in accord with ORS and/or University of Toronto guidelines (never less than Government regulated minimum wage).

All experimenters must have access to appropriate lab space and local office and phone where participants can meet them.

Eligible Users

The guidelines below have been developed in order to clearly determine who is permitted access to the Psychology participation subject pool set-up on our Experiment Database program PSYCHED.

The following people are eligible to use the Psychology participation pool:

- Full-time faculty appointees on the Mississauga campus Psychology Department
- Post-doctoral fellows affiliated with a faculty member at the Mississauga campus
- Psychology graduate students at the Mississauga campus, whose supervisor is on the Mississauga campus
- PSY400 students at Mississauga, in connection with their thesis work
- Third and fourth-year students who are doing a Psychology Independent Research Project for academic credit with UTM Faculty

Please note that there may be exceptions to the above guidelines when special circumstances arise. The Subject Pool Committee reserves the right to render decisions on a case-by-case basis in the event of exceptional situations.

Length of Experiments for Academic Credit

Psychology students registered in courses who have opted into the 'Experiment Participation for course credit' can earn credits towards their final grade by participating in psychology experiments.

A 1% grade credit is given for approximately 1.5 hours of subject participation including debriefing and a few questions (*or equivalent substitute assignment*). Researchers should plan experiment sessions with this provision in mind. It is not acceptable to advertise the time duration to lure students (e.g., "1% credit for only 68 minutes"). Subjects should not receive an "hour" for participation of less than 45 minutes (or a 30-minute credit for less than 23 minutes). Furthermore, students should not receive an additional hour for a study that exceeds one hour by less than 45 minutes. Students must participate for more than 1.75 hours in order to receive 2 "hours". **Students cannot receive more than three "hour" for a single experiment or research study.** See table below for breakdown.

Length of Experiment	Hours Earned (% toward final grade)
0.4 to 0.74 hours (23-44 minutes)	0.5 hour (0.33%)
0.75 to 1.24 hours (45-74 minutes)	1 hour (0.67%)
1.25 to 1.74 hours (75-104 minutes)	1.5 hours (1.0%)
1.75 to 2.24 hours (105-134 minutes)	2 hours (1.33%)
2.25 to 2.74 hours (135-164 minutes)	2.5 hours (1.67%)
2.75 to 3.24 hours (165-194 minutes)	3 hours (2%)

Experimenters may assign a score of -1 hour to "no-shows" who do not give at least 24 hour's notice of cancellation; however, it is to the discretion of the experimenter if they want to accept shorter notices. Experimenters are also required to provide a minimum of 24 hours notice of cancellation. If you have to cancel and cannot reschedule an appointment during the last 2 weeks of term, and if there are few studies posted that still need subjects, give the student credit for signing up for your study. If you don't show up for an appointment, give the student credit for your study. Experimenters' failure to show up repeatedly may disqualify them from accessing the Experimental Database.

Debriefing and Questions

All research participants must be given an appropriate verbal debriefing, as approved by the relevant Ethics Review Committee, and must be asked a few questions about the experiment in order to satisfy the academic requirements. Experimenters are required to make every effort to ensure that participation for course credit is an experience of academic value. They can do so by going beyond the ethical guidelines for debriefing subjects, by explaining in more detail what they are doing, and by clarifying, should the students not know the answers to the questions asked of them.

Student Partipation Timeline

Beginning early September and January experiments for student participation for academic credit can be posted on our secure system PSYCHED. (We have a small PSY100 summer class that runs from May-June if you still need participants).

The last day for students to participate in an experiment during the **Fall term is December 20**, and the last day of term in the **Spring** (click here for updated dates).

If you use a student after these dates, you must give compensation other than course credit. If your experiment ends with students still signed up, give the students credit for your study.

IMPORTANT NOTE:
All **PENDING** statuses will be changed to **PARTICIPATED** by the committee if Experimenter doesn't provide status update on or before the required dates (dates will be sent out via email to Experiment Supervisors). Experimenters are responsible for keeping up-to date with all experiment status.

Substitute Assignments

In order to have use of the Experiment Database you must provide a substitute assignment. If you don't provide a substitute assignment you will be denied access to the Experiment Database subject pool.

Students wishing **NOT** to participate in an experiment can complete a substitute assignment for credit. Reading requirements will have to be reserved in the library or provided by link to the required document. Make the assignment such that it would take a student about an hour to complete. 1 substitute assignment is equal to 1 hour of experiment participation.

If students choose this option, substitute assignments must be submitted to the committee by the last day to drop courses (click HERE for dates)

Experiment supervisors will be required to review substitute assignments emailed to them by the committee and advise if credit is merited. If it's not, the supervisor must provide feedback to the student and let them resubmit.

Records

All experimenters are required to give research participants a Student Participation Form upon completion of the experiment for their records.

Researchers must also keep a record of all students who participate in their research projects for credit, for at least 6 months after the academic year.

Psychology Experiment Database Program (PSYCHED)

The **Psychology Experiment Database** PSYCHED is designed to allow researchers to add experiments and have participants sign up through an online secure program. This program can have both Psychology students registered in courses participating in 'experiments for academic credit' and paid participants sign up. Paid participants sign up by submitting their contact information.

Gaining Access to PSYCED

The first step is to make sure your lab (*UTM Psychology Faculty only*) has been added to PSYCHED. If you need an account created send an email psyched.utm@utoronto.ca along with your UTORID. Research labs are listed by faculty last name and not actual lab name (*i.e. Andersen Lab*).

Once faculty members have an account they give experimenters access. Complete the fields under the 'add experimenter' tab to give individuals the ability to add/edit experiments related to your lab. You will need the individuals UTORid to do this. Adding an end date is optional, however we recommend you do.

Adding an Experiment

Use of PSYCHED for research purposes is predicated on the assumption that all experiments, studies, or research programmes employing human subjects have been approved by the University's Office of Research Services (ORS) or by UTM's in-house Psychology Ethic's Review Committee. Ethic's approval is the responsibility of individual supervisors and is a requirement for all studies posted.

- Login to PSYCHED using your UTORID and password
- Click '*Create New Experiment*'
- Complete all required fields including a brief description of the experiment
- Make sure to provide accurate Researcher contact information as this is how participants can contact you with any questions or concerns

Scheduled Appointments with Participants

Experimenters are responsible for all scheduled appointments. Experimenters are required to provide a minimum of 24 hours-notice of cancellation. This is done through PSYCHED. If you have to cancel and cannot reschedule an appointment during the last 2 weeks of term, and if there are few studies posted that still need subjects, give the student credit for signing up for your study. If you don't show up for an appointment, give the student credit for your study. **Experimenters' failure to show up repeatedly may disqualify them from accessing the Experiment Database.**

Students are also required to provide 24 hours cancellation notice. Experimenters may assign a score of -1 hour to "no-shows" who do not give at least 24 hour's notice of cancellation; however, **this is to the discretion of the experimenter if they want to accept shorter notices**.

Reporting Participation Credits

Participant credits are awarded by the experimenter through PSYCHED. Status change for participants should be reported as soon as possible after they've completed the experiment as students expect and deserve to receive their credit promptly. If you or your experimenters fail to promptly assign credits, the committee reserves the right to suspend your access to PSYCHED.

IMPORTANT NOTE:
All **PENDING** statuses will be changed to **PARTICIPATED** by the committee if Experimenter doesn't provide status update on or before the required dates (dates will be sent out via email to Experiment Supervisors). Experimenters are responsible for keeping up-to date with all experiment status.

Managing Experiments

It is very important to make available only experiments for which you are accepting participants. If you are no longer accepting participants for a particular study, close that experiment. Keep in mind this does not delete experiment and it can be made available at any time.