

**RULES, PROCEDURES, AND POLICIES GOVERNING THE
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY SUBJECT POOL
(Version 5/20/2017)
UIC Research Protocol # 2004-0162**

This document describes the rules, procedures, and policies governing the Department of Psychology Subject Pool.

Part 1 focuses on those rules, procedures, and policies that affect researchers only (i.e., those that do not bear on the treatment of human subjects per se). These include policies concerning access to the subject pool, rules and procedures for reserving and returning subject hours, and instructions for gaining access to the Department's online subject sign-up system.

Part 2 deals with departmental rules, procedures, and policies that pertain more directly to the treatment of human subjects. These include policies concerning how students are to be credited for participating in research, the various alternatives to participating in research that are available to students for earning credit, sign-up procedures for participating in research studies, participation cancellation and withdrawal policies, the consequences of missing a research participation appointment, the use of minors as research subjects, providing an educational benefit to students who participate in research, the use of deception, and the mass testing procedure. Note that Part 2 is reviewed annually by UIC's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

It is essential that all faculty and graduate students read and understand both parts of this document prior to using the subject pool.

PART 1

Definition

The Department of Psychology subject pool consists of all students enrolled in Psychology 100. As part of their course requirements, these students are expected to earn 8 Psychology Experience Credits (PECs). Like any other course requirement, these credits are factored into the students' final course grade (typically accounting for 8% to 10% of the grade). Students may earn PECs by (1) participating as subjects in IRB-approved research studies conducted under the supervision of Psychology Department faculty, by (2) writing summaries of published research, and/or by (3) participating as simulated clients in one or more professional training sessions conducted by advanced undergraduate or graduate students in psychology. Students have the option of earning all 8 PECs by any one of these methods, or they may earn some PECs by each method.

Access

The subject pool may be used by any faculty member or graduate student from the Department of Psychology. On occasion, researchers from other departments within UIC, and from other universities, may be allowed to use the subject pool, but only if sufficient subject hours are available to meet departmental needs first. In general, subject pool hours are not allocated to undergraduate researchers, whether from the Department of Psychology or elsewhere.

For approximately the first two-thirds of each semester the subject pool operates on a reservation basis only. Researchers who have not reserved subject hours in advance (see below) will not be permitted to use the subject pool during this period. During the remainder of the semester the subject pool is open to any faculty member or graduate student from the Department of Psychology who wants to use it, whether or not subject hours were reserved in advance. During this latter period,

researchers who were given a subject hour allocation at the beginning of the semester may exceed that allocation if they wish. Researchers who were not given a subject hour allocation at the beginning of the semester must still request authorization to use the pool from the Subject Pool Coordinator, must have an IRB-approved protocol, and must follow all of the standard rules for using the online sign-up system.

The subject pool closes each semester at the end of the last day of instruction. This means that no subjects may be run after that time. Attendance for all sessions must be recorded via the online sign-up system no later than two days following the last day of classes so that end-of-semester reports can be compiled.

IRB Approval

All researchers must have their research protocols approved by UIC's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before being authorized to use the online sign-up system. IRB approval must be obtained before the end of Week 5 of the fall and spring semesters, or Week 2 for the summer semester. If approval is not obtained by then, your allocation of reserved subject hours (see next section) will be rescinded and redistributed, and you will likely have to wait until the subject pool opens to all researchers before gaining access to the subject pool. Instructions for obtaining IRB approval can be found at the website of the University's Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS).

Reserving Subject Hours

To reserve subject hours, you must submit a **Subject Pool Request**. These forms will be distributed to all faculty members and graduate students prior to the start of class, and will be due back no later than the end of the first week of class. The specific due date will be announced by the Subject Pool Coordinator. It is important that these requests be returned by the indicated due date. Researchers who miss this deadline cannot be guaranteed a reserved subject hour allocation. Researchers are notified by departmental mail or email of their reserved subject hour allocation.

Reserved subject hours will be allocated on a "fair share" basis according to the total number of researchers (not studies) requesting them. This means that if the demand for subject hours exceeds the number of hours actually available (and it often does), thus necessitating a fractional allocation, all researchers will be on equal footing with respect to their total subject hour allocation, regardless of the number of separate studies they are running.

Additionally, subject hours will be allocated by subject gender. In recent years the gender composition of the subject pool has been approximately 40% male and 60% female. Researchers must indicate in their Subject Pool Request the male/female ratio they require, or else be assigned males and females according to the needs of the subject pool (which could mean an all-female allocation, an all-male allocation, or any combination of the two). Male and female subject hours will each be distributed on a "fair share" basis. Researchers who run more than their allocation of male or female hours prior to the subject pool becoming "open" to all researchers (typically 2/3 of the way through a semester) may be denied access to the subject pool during the next semester of the regular academic year, plus the summer if the infraction occurs in the spring.

Note: If you are unsure about when you will actually be able to start running subjects in your study in a given semester, you are strongly encouraged to be cautious about the number of subject hours you request. If you reserve subject hours and fail to run them all, you may not be allowed to use the subject pool during the next semester (but see also, "Returning Unused Subject Hours").

If you have not yet obtained IRB approval for your study, but otherwise are ready to run, you may reserve subject hours. However, you will not be authorized to use the online sign-up system until IRB

approval is obtained. Furthermore, in order to keep your allocation, IRB approval must be secured by the end of Week 5 during the fall and springs semesters, or Week 2 during the summer semester. If approval is not obtained by then, your allocation of subject hours will be rescinded, and will be redistributed to others. If you obtain IRB approval at a later date, notify the Subject Pool Coordinator immediately, and if there are still subject hours available, you will be given as many hours as possible. However, if no subject hours remain at that time, you will have to wait until the subject pool opens up to researchers without a reserved subject hour allocation.

Returning Unused Subject Hours

Any researcher who anticipates not being able to run his/her full allocation of reserved subject hours before mid-way through a semester (e.g., Week 8 of the fall and spring semesters) must return subject pool hours that will not be used. To return subject hours, contact the Subject Pool Coordinator directly. Researchers are responsible for using any subject hours not returned by this deadline.

Access to the Online Sign-Up System

All researchers who receive a reserved subject hour allocation will be able to use the Department's online system for recruiting subject pool subjects. Others may use the online system without a reserved subject hour allocation, but only when the pool opens up to users without a reserved subject hour allocation. The online system is called PECOLSUS (an acronym for Ppsychology Experience Credit Online Sign-Up System).

The URL for the PECOLSUS website is <https://uic.sona-systems.com/>. A link to this site is available on the Psychology department website.

The Psychology Department uses the SONA subject pool management system software for scheduling experiments and managing participation records. The SONA web site (accessed through the PECOLSUS link) provides instructions and help files for using the system. There is also a separate document that summarizes how to login to the system (see Researcher Instructions for Using the Department of Psychology Online Sign-up System). This document is available from the Psychology Department subject pool coordinator and on the Psychology department website (<https://psch.uic.edu/psychology/research/human-subjects/subject-pool/>). In the remainder of this document, references to PECOLSUS mean the SONA System software.

In order for you to use PECOLSUS, the Subject Pool Coordinator must first authorize you to use this site. Contact the Subject Pool Coordinator to get authorization to use PECOLSUS.

Verify Student PINs

Students are issued a unique 4 or 5 digit Participant Identification Number (PIN) by PECOLSUS at the beginning of the semester. They have the same PIN for the entire semester. At the start of each session you should verify student attendance by comparing the PINs of those students present with your list on PECOLSUS. Only students who have signed-up for the study should be allowed to participate. If a student claims to have signed-up for the session, but his/her PIN is not on your list, please have that student contact the Subject Pool Coordinator. Normally, such a student will not be able to receive credit, and so should not be run.

Recording Student Attendance

Student attendance is recorded online via PECOLSUS. Please read the online instructions for doing this. Researchers are expected to record students' attendance by the end of the week in which the session occurred. For this purpose, the end of the week is defined as midnight on Sunday. Therefore, by Monday morning, you should have recorded attendance for all of the sessions you ran during the

previous week. Note that credit is given in half-hour increments (e.g., a half-hour session is worth .5 PECs, a 1-hour session is worth 1 PEC, etc.).

No-Shows

If a student fails to show up for a study, or shows up so late that he/she cannot be run, that student should be marked as a “No Show” in PECOLSUS. No-shows forfeit the opportunity to earn 1 Psychology Experience Credit (PEC) via participating in experiments, regardless of the length of the missed session. Student who earn 3 no-show penalties are not permitted to sign-up for any additional sessions. Please **DO NOT** automatically record no-shows as “Excused.” This sends the wrong message, and encourages additional no-show behavior in the future.

Mass Testing

Early each semester Psychology 100 students are invited to participate in "mass testing" online. For mass testing, students complete IRB-approved questionnaires online or on paper. Students complete the questionnaires at their own pace. Students identify themselves on the mass testing questionnaires only by their PIN. Students who choose to participate in mass testing earn 1 Psychology Experience Credit for doing so.

Researchers who wish to participate in mass testing must submit a copy of their IRB-stamped questionnaire to the Subject Pool Coordinator prior to the start of the semester. A call for mass testing questionnaires will be sent out before the start of a new semester. The following points should be noted:

- (a) You **must** obtain an IRB-stamped copy of your questionnaire in order for your questionnaire to be included in mass testing. If you do not have an IRB-stamped copy, your questionnaire will not be included in mass testing.
- (b) Due to time and space constraints, only short questionnaires that can reasonably be completed in less than 10 minutes will be allowed in mass testing. Further, in most cases only legitimate screening questionnaires will be allowed. In rare circumstances pilot or other experimental materials may be allowed, but only if there is space for all legitimate screening questionnaires, and only if you have specific IRB approval to administer the materials in this way.

Information Provided to Students & Student Questions

At the beginning of each semester every student in the subject pool is given a document entitled **The Psychology Experience Credit (PEC) Requirement for Psychology 100: Information For Students** (<https://psch.uic.edu/psychology/research/human-subjects/subject-pool>). This document explains how students go about signing-up for research studies, how the credit they earn is recorded, the penalty for missing a research participation appointment, and how they can fulfill the Psychology Experience Credit requirement even if they choose not to participate in research. That document also advises students of their right to leave a study at any time should they wish to do so (e.g., because something happens that they feel uncomfortable about or that seems objectionable). All of these points are also discussed with the students in class by the Subject Pool Coordinator at the beginning of each term. Note, however, that because of the general nature of this discussion, it **does not** constitute an informed consent procedure, and does not substitute for obtaining students' informed consent when they attend your study.

All student questions about subject pool procedures (e.g., how to sign-up for research studies) should be directed to the Psychology 100 TAs. These TAs should understand how the subject pool works, and they should be able to handle most student questions. Questions may also be submitted via email to PECOLSUS@UIC.EDU. Note: If you are a Psychology 100 TA and you do not understand how the subject pool works, please contact the Subject Pool Coordinator. He/she will give you a crash course in subject pool operations.

Sample Key Dates for Researchers (based on a 15-week semester)

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| Before start of semester | Subject Pool Request is due; Notification of intent to participate in mass testing is due. |
| Start of Week 2 | Subject pool open to use by researchers with a reserved subject hour allocation and IRB Approval. |
| Week 2 | Mass Testing |
| End of Week 5 | Last day to secure IRB approval without losing reserved subject hour allocation. |
| End of Week 8 | Last day to return unused subject hours to the subject pool. |
| Beginning of Week 11 | Subject pool open to use by all researchers, with or without a reserved subject hour allocation. This date may be moved forward (e.g., week 10) if needed to ensure adequate availability of experiments for students. |
| End of Week 15 | Subject pool closed. Attendance for all sessions must be recorded by midnight on Sunday (i.e., just prior to the start of finals week). |

PART 2

Requirement. The Department of Psychology subject pool consists of all students enrolled in Psychology 100. As part of their course requirements, students are expected to earn 8 Psychology Experience Credits (PECs). Like any other course requirement, these credits are factored into the students' final course grade (typically accounting for 8% to 10% of the grade). Students may earn PECs by (1) participating as subjects in IRB-approved research studies conducted under the supervision of Psychology Department faculty, by (2) writing summaries of published empirical research, and/or by (3) participating as simulated clients in one or more professional training sessions conducted by advanced undergraduate or graduate students in psychology. Students have the option of earning all 8 PECs by any one of these methods, or they may earn some PECs by each method. These three methods of earning PECs are described more fully below.

Student Welfare. The first priority of every researcher who uses the Department of Psychology subject pool must always be the safety and well-being of participants. The Department of Psychology conducts all research and professional training in accordance with the ethical guidelines set forth by the American Psychological Association, and as appropriate, with the approval of UIC's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Departmental policies governing the use and operation of the subject pool are reviewed annually, and revisions that pertain to the participation of human subjects in research are submitted to the IRB for approval.

Research Participation

One way students may earn some or all of their PECs is by participating as subjects in IRB-approved research studies conducted under the supervision of Department of Psychology faculty.

Credit. Each hour of participation is worth 1 PEC. Credit for participating is given in 1/2 hour increments, according to the length of the session (e.g., participating in a session lasting 1 hr is worth 1 PEC, a session lasting 1.5 hrs is worth 1.5 PECs, etc.). Thus, students who wish to do so may earn all 8 PECs by participating in a total of 8 hours worth of studies.

Sign-Up Procedure. Students sign up to participate in research studies via the Psychology Department's online sign-up system. First-time student users are assigned a unique Participant Identification number (PIN) and log-in credentials to use the system. Access to the system is limited to UIC students currently enrolled in Psychology 100. When a student logs into the system for the first time, students are asked to enter their instructor's name, date-of-birth, gender, race/ethnicity, handedness, and language background (what languages students understand). These variables are used by the system as filters to ensure that students are able to sign-up only for those research study sessions for which they qualify (e.g., if a session is open to females only, then that session will be visible only to female students). Different studies may use different filters, and many studies use no filter at all. Students are known to researchers only by this number (i.e., researchers can look log into PECOLSUS to find PINs of students who have signed up for that session). Information linking the PIN to the student's identity is accessible only by the Subject Pool Coordinator. This link is used at the end of the semester for the purpose of giving students credit for the research studies (and professional training sessions) in which they have participated. Research studies are identified only by a pre-assigned study number. Other information displayed about each session includes the day, date, time, and location of the session, any special instructions that pertain to the session, the number of PECs the session is worth, and the name and email address of the emergency contact person for that session (usually the researcher in charge of the study). In a typical week, 300-500 hours worth of research participation opportunities are available, with sessions of varying lengths, and varying inclusion/exclusion criteria scheduled at many different times, thus making it relatively easy for students to choose participation sessions that are convenient for them.

Cancellation of Intention to Participate. If a student wishes to cancel his/her intention to participate in a research study prior to the day on which the session for that study is scheduled, he/she may do so without penalty simply by returning to the online sign-up system and removing him/herself from that session. Students must remove him/herself by midnight of the day before the session. Another student may then sign-up in his/her place. Students earn no PECs for cancelled sessions. Students who are still signed-up on the day of the session are expected to show up on time for that session.

Withdrawal from a Session in Progress. Students are free to leave a research session at any time without penalty. However, whether or not they are awarded PECs for that session depends on when they leave. Students are not considered to be enrolled in a study until after they are informed about the study procedures, have indicated their understanding of those procedures, and have signed an informed consent document. If a student shows up for a session but decides not to participate based on information provided during the informed consent process that takes place at the start of the session (i.e., the student does not sign the study's informed consent document, and so does not become enrolled in the study and does not begin the actual research procedure), he/she will be excused from the session immediately and will not to be penalized in any way. In such cases, the student will not be awarded any PECs. On the other hand, if a student shows up for a session, is appropriately informed about the study, and decides to participate (i.e., the student does sign the informed consent document, and so does become enrolled and does begin the actual research procedure), but then later decides to withdraw from the research for any reason, the student is free to do so, and is to be awarded the same PECs he/she would have earned had he/she completed the session. Further, such a student should be offered the same debriefing given to subjects who complete the entire session so that he/she may obtain the educational benefit afforded by the debriefing (see the section below entitled "Educational Benefit: Debriefing"). It is particularly important that the debriefing be offered when the student has been exposed to some form of IRB-approved deception (see the section below titled "Deception"). Students who withdraw from a session after signing the informed consent document are strongly encouraged to contact the PEC Faculty Coordinator as soon as possible, and in any case the researcher must report all such incidents to the PEC Faculty Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the PEC Faculty Coordinator to ensure that any such student who contacts him/her does not experience lasting untoward reactions as a consequence of having participated in that session. The PEC Faculty Coordinator will take all reasonable and prudent measures in dealing with such students, and in each case will follow-up with the researcher to ensure that only IRB-approved procedures are being followed.

No-Shows. Students are expected to be both responsible and courteous with respect to signing-up for and attending research participation sessions. If after signing up for a session a student decides not to participate, the student may use the online sign-up system to remove him/herself from the study session any time until the end of the day before that session is scheduled to occur, and may do so without any consequences whatsoever. However, if a student is still signed-up for a session on the day of that session, indicating his/her intention to participate, but does not show up for the session -- or is so late that the session cannot be completed in the time remaining -- he/she will be considered a no-show, and will forfeit one or more future opportunities to earn PECs by signing up for participation sessions via the online sign-up system. Specifically, the first no-show occurrence will result in the student forfeiting the opportunity to earn 1 PEC by participation. In this case, no more than 7 of the required 8 PECs may be earned by participation. The remaining 1 PEC will have to be earned by one of the written alternatives (see below under "Summarizing Published Empirical Research"). A second no-show occurrence will result in the student forfeiting the opportunity to earn a second PEC by participation. That is, no more than 6 of the required 8 PECs may be earned by participation, and the remaining 2 PECs will have to be earned by one of the written alternatives.

Finally, if there is a third no-show occurrence, the student will forfeit all further opportunities to sign up for participation sessions. This means that all remaining PECs will have to be earned by one of the written alternatives (note, however, that these students may still participate in any additional sessions they were already signed-up for at the time the third "no-show" penalty was incurred).

This policy recognizes the inconvenience and opportunity costs that no-shows create for other students. Specifically, a no-show needlessly prevents other students from being able to sign up for that session, and so unnecessarily force those other students to delay completion of their PEC requirement. Because of the large enrollments in Psychology 100, these blocked opportunities can become a significant burden for students, and must be minimized. Further, no-shows also represent a cost to other students attending the same session if those other students cannot participate unless the expected number of students show up for that session (e.g., in studies of dyadic or group interaction requiring a fixed number of participants per session). In the latter case, those students attending the session are awarded the same PECs they would have earned had they been able to participate, but they obviously cannot gain the intended educational benefit of participation. It should be emphasized that this no-show policy is not designed to penalize students for withdrawing from a research study. Rather, it is designed to penalize them only for irresponsible and discourteous behavior that occurs before any information about the study has been provided, and so before the student has been formally enrolled as a subject. Even at the very last minute, students may cancel their participation in a session without any consequence whatsoever simply by showing up for the session and telling the researcher that they no longer wish to participate. Alternatively, in the case of an emergency, they may also contact the researcher running the experiment at any time prior to the start of the session and state their desire to cancel. Such behaviors are acceptable, and, like using the online sign-up system to remove oneself from a study session, they reflect the type of responsible, courteous behavior that students are expected to display. The no-show policy is therefore similar to other common educational practices designed to teach students personal responsibility (e.g., maximum grade restrictions on late homework assignments, papers, etc.).

Waiver of the No-Show Forfeiture. The no-show forfeiture described above may be waived at the discretion of the researcher or the Subject Pool Coordinator for students with legitimate reasons for having missed a research session. Students who miss a session and who wish to have the no-show forfeiture waived must contact the researcher or the Subject Pool Coordinator, preferably as soon as possible after the missed session, and in any case before the last day of instruction of the current semester. Legitimate reasons for waiving the no-show forfeiture include any sort of experienced or anticipated discomfort about participating in the session, any medical emergency that prevented the student from attending classes or participating in other academic activities on the day of the missed session, family emergencies, and the like. Forgetting about a session, over-sleeping, missing a ride to school, or similar mishaps are not normally considered legitimate reasons for waiving the penalty.

Minors. A small portion of the subject pool (typically less than 5 percent) may not yet have reached the age of 18, and so are legally considered minors. Because of its educational benefit, minors must be given the same opportunity as other students to participate in research as one means of earning PECs. At the same time, federal regulations require that minors have written permission from a parent or guardian to participate in research. To accommodate this special requirement, all minors are required to have a parent or guardian sign the Psychology Department's IRB-approved parental permission form. A copy of this form may be printed from the online sign-up system, or obtained from the Subject Pool Coordinator. By signing this form, the parent or guardian gives the student permission to participate in any minimal risk study of his/her choosing that otherwise draws participants from the Department of Psychology subject pool. The IRB-approved parental permission form is intended to contain sufficient information to enable the parent or guardian to make an

informed decision about whether or not to grant permission. Minor students are unable to use the online sign-up system further until the signed form has been given to the Subject Pool Coordinator. Signed parental permission forms are to be retained by the Subject Pool Coordinator for a period of 5 years. Beyond securing this parental permission, an informed consent procedure identical to that used for non-minor students must be used for minors. It is the responsibility of the Subject Pool Coordinator to ensure that minors in the subject pool are informed early in the semester about this parental permission requirement, and about how to obtain copies of the parental permission forms in advance of signing up for any research participation sessions. Under no circumstances will a minor student be permitted to participate in studies involving greater than minimal risk. The online sign-up system permits minors to sign up only for minimal risk research studies.

Educational Benefit: Debriefing. Because students are given PECs for participating in research, it is essential that each study provide an educational benefit. The descriptions of psychological research that appear in textbooks and that are presented in lectures necessarily offer only an incomplete picture of what psychological research is really like. Thus, there is educational value to be gained through first-hand exposure to a number of different types of studies and research procedures, and through learning by direct experience how research hypotheses are tested. These benefits can be fully realized, however, only if the researcher provides sufficient additional information about the participation session, and about the study as a whole, to enable students to meaningfully frame session activities in terms of the broader purposes of the research. Therefore, every researcher who uses the subject pool is required to provide this additional information as part of a debriefing to be given to each participating student. The debriefing should convey not only the overall goals of the study (e.g., the hypotheses being tested) but also how the particular activities the student engaged in help to achieve those goals. This information should be presented at a level that the student is able to understand, and where possible, should be related to material that has been covered in the student's Psychology 100 class. It is also recommended that students be given complete references to two articles they can look up in the library should they wish to do further reading on the topic. The debriefing to be used in a study must be described in the materials submitted for IRB approval.

Deception. Occasionally, it may be necessary to use a mild deception in a study in order to instantiate certain psychological conditions essential to the research. Researchers using the subject pool are permitted to employ deception only if (1) there is good scientific rationale for doing so, (2) non-deceptive alternatives do not exist or are not practical, (3) the potential risks to participants are minimal, (4) those risks are clearly outweighed by the potential benefits of the study, and (5) the IRB approves the deception. The nature of the deception, the rationale for its use, and its potential risks and benefits must be fully explained in the materials submitted to the IRB for approval. Further, it is required that study participants be fully debriefed about the deception and about the reasons for its use. This debriefing must take place at the end of the participation session. Researchers should be alert to the possibility that the deception debriefing itself may have unintended negative consequences for some participants (e.g., cause them to feel embarrassed for having been taken in by the deception), and so should deliver this debriefing in a sensitive and supportive manner.

Mass Testing. Researchers using the Department of Psychology subject pool are sometimes interested in enrolling participants who have certain specific attitudes, beliefs, values, personality traits, or other unique characteristics. These researchers often try to identify in advance those individuals who possess the characteristics of interest by administering one or more brief questionnaires. In order to facilitate this kind of research, early each semester students are invited to participate in "mass testing." For mass testing, student fill out IRB-approved questionnaires. Students complete the questionnaires (online or on paper) at their own pace. Students identify themselves on the mass testing questionnaires only by the unique PIN assigned to them. Students who choose to participate in mass testing earn 1 PEC for doing so. Students are informed in class about the purpose

and procedures used in mass testing, and are informed that they can choose not to participate. Furthermore, written informed consent to participate in mass testing is obtained from each student before he/she begins answering the questionnaires, and for minors, the IRB-approved parental permission form must have already been signed and turned in.

It should be noted that although the mass testing session is conducted under the supervision of the Subject Pool Coordinator, all questionnaires included in the mass testing must be independently submitted for IRB approval by those researchers who wish to participate in mass testing. Further, none of the data collected through mass testing are retained by the Subject Pool Coordinator. Rather, those data are accessible only to the researchers involved, who assume full responsibility for maintaining their security and confidentiality, in accordance with the provisions of the IRB-approved protocol for their individual studies. It is the responsibility of the Subject Pool Coordinator only to collect and retain the signed consent forms and parental permission forms for the mass testing session.

Researchers who wish to restrict eligibility for specific follow-up sessions to students who have responded in a particular way on one or more mass testing questionnaires may do so only if they have IRB approval for this restriction. Such restrictions are communicated by means of eligibility lists on which eligible students are identified only by their unique PINs. Eligibility lists are displayed online via the sign-up system, and must clearly indicate that students are eligible to sign up for that particular session only if their PIN appears on the list (or in some cases that students are eligible to sign-up only if their PIN does not appear on the list). The substantive nature of the criterion for eligibility is not to be specified on the eligibility list.

An exception to the eligibility list procedure is in the case of a researcher who asks students to volunteer their telephone number or email on the mass testing questionnaire itself, and requests their permission at that time to contact them by telephone or email later if they are eligible for the follow-up study. This exception may be implemented, however, only if the researcher has obtained specific IRB approval for doing so.

Note that being eligible for a follow-up study does not obligate a student actually to participate in that study. As always, students are free to decide whether or not to participate. Further, any such participation requires a separate informed consent procedure designed specifically for that follow-up participation session. The informed consent procedure for mass testing covers only the completion of the mass testing questionnaires themselves, and does not pertain to any subsequent participation in follow-up studies that may rely on the mass testing questionnaires as a screening tool.

Finally, the educational benefit of the mass testing procedure adheres in the rich set of concrete examples of various questionnaire types that students are exposed to, and that the course instructor can refer to in subsequent lectures on such commonly covered topics as personality assessment and theory, attitude measurement and dynamics, and research methodology.

Summarizing Published Empirical Research

Another way that students may earn some or all of their PECs is by summarizing published empirical research articles using the resources of UIC's Daley Library. There are two forms of this activity, and these carry different amounts of credit, according to the amount of time and effort required for each. These two forms are (1) writing article summaries, and (2) preparing bibliographic synopses.

Article Summary. The first form this activity can take consists of reading empirical research articles published in any of the psychological journals found in UIC's Daley Library, and then writing

brief 400-500 word summaries of those articles. Each summary is worth 2 PECs. Thus, students who wish to do so may earn all 8 PECs by writing a total of four summaries. It is anticipated that the average student will require about two hours to complete one summary (this includes the time needed both to read the article and to write the summary). Thus, one summary is equivalent to 2 hours worth of research participation. This is consistent with the equivalencies established at other universities (e.g., UCLA). Summaries may be turned in to the student's Psychology 100 teaching assistant at any time before the 15th (last) week of class, and are to be evaluated on an acceptable/not-acceptable basis. Acceptable summaries will include a complete reference to the summarized article, along with a brief description, in the student's own words, of (a) the purpose of the research, that is, what theory or hypothesis was tested, (b) the basic procedure used to test this theory or hypothesis, (c) what was actually found, and (d) what the findings mean for the theory or hypothesis tested. Students might also consider whether there are any personal applications that the results suggest, how society might constructively utilize those findings, and/or what additional research seems appropriate. Along with each summary, students must submit a photocopy of the abstract from the published article. Students are encouraged to seek guidance from their Psychology 100 teaching assistant both in selecting appropriate articles to read and in writing the summaries.

Bibliographic Synopsis. The second form of this activity involves creating a bibliographic synopsis of a small cluster of research articles written by the same researcher and published in any peer-reviewed psychological journal. Each synopsis is worth 1/2 PEC. Thus, students who wish to do so may earn all 8 PECs by writing a total of sixteen synopses. It is anticipated that the average student will require about one-half hour to complete one synopsis. The creation of a bibliographic synopsis begins with the student identifying a key reference that is cited in the chapter currently being covered in his/her Psychology 100 class. A key reference is defined as a citation for any empirical research study that is discussed at some length (a paragraph or more) in the textbook. Then, using online bibliographic resources (e.g., Google Scholar, PsychINFO, etc.), the student identifies five additional empirical articles written by the same author but not cited in his/her Psychology 100 textbook. The student is to print and read the online abstract of each article, and write a 3-5 sentence synopsis that identifies the underlying theme common to all five articles and that links them to the key reference found in the textbook. Synopses are to be turned in to the student's Psychology 100 teaching assistant no later than one week after the chapter that contains the key reference has been covered in class (e.g., if the chapter containing the key reference is covered in Week 5, the synopsis must be turned in before the end of Week 6). No synopses will be accepted during the last week of class. Synopses are to be evaluated on an acceptable/not-acceptable basis. Acceptable synopses will include (a) a complete printed reference and abstract for each of the five articles identified, and (b) a concise 3-5 sentence written statement, in the student's own words, describing the main theme(s) that tie the five articles to one another and to the key reference found in the textbook. The specific location (page number and paragraph) of the key reference in the student's Psychology 100 textbook must also be provided. Students are encouraged to seek guidance from their Psychology 100 teaching assistant both in selecting key references from the textbook and in writing the synopsis.

Educational Benefit. Scientific journals provided much greater detail about the methods and procedures used in psychological research than is typically found in psychology textbooks. Reading whole research articles and thinking about the methods and procedures used in published studies can therefore enrich students' understanding of psychology as a science. This benefit is crystallized by requiring students to prepare organized summaries of what they have read (i.e., the article summaries). Further, the typical psychology textbook does not offer students any sense of scope or continuity in the scholarly work of most researchers. Locating multiple research articles written by the same author, and identifying the unifying themes in those articles, can thus enrich students' understanding of science as a professional activity. Finally, both activities teach students to use library resources (journals, online bibliographic tools) that will be of benefit to them throughout their

academic careers, and expose them to reports of psychological research beyond what they get from their textbook and from lectures.

Participating as a Simulated Client in Professional Training Sessions

A third way students may earn PECs is by volunteering to serve as simulated clients in one or more professional training sessions conducted by and for students enrolled in advanced undergraduate or graduate-level courses in psychology. These professional training sessions are used to teach advanced undergraduate and graduate students the skills needed to conduct interviews and administer various psychological tests, and take place under the close supervision of the Psychology Department faculty teaching those courses. It should be emphasized that these are training exercises that have no research component whatsoever. Thus, they do not fall under the purview of the IRB. They are described here simply because they represent another means by which students may earn PECs. It should also be emphasized that it is the advanced undergraduate and graduate students who are receiving the professional training, not the Psychology 100 student. The Psychology 100 student is simply participating as a simulated client.

Credit. Each hour of participation as a simulated client in professional training sessions is worth 1 PEC. Credit is given in 1/2 hour increments, according to the length of the session. Thus, students earn the same credit for participating in professional training sessions as they would earn by participating for a comparable amount of time in research studies. Because professional training exercises sometimes call for two or three sessions over a two-to-three-week period, some student who choose to participate as simulated clients in these training sessions may be asked to return one or more times. Such students are given credit for each separate session they attend.

Sign-Up Procedure. The procedure for signing up to participate as a simulated client in a professional training session is identical to the procedure for signing up to participate as a subject in a research study session. Professional training sessions are listed by the online sign-up system intermixed with the research study sessions. However, the professional training sessions are clearly marked as non-research participation opportunities. Except for being identified as non-research participation opportunities, the process of signing up for professional training sessions is identical to signing up for research study sessions.

Cancellation of Intention to Participate. If a student wishes to cancel his/her intention to participate in a professional training study prior to the day on which the session is scheduled, he/she may do so without penalty simply by returning to the online sign-up system and removing him/herself from that session. Another student may then sign-up in his/her place. Students earn no PECs for cancelled sessions. Students who are still signed-up on the day of the session are expected to show up on time for that session.

Withdrawal from a Session in Progress. Students are free to leave a professional training session at any time without penalty. However, whether or not they are awarded PECs for that session depends on when they leave. Paralleling the informed consent procedure used in a research study, professional training sessions always begin with an informed consent process in which the topics to be covered (for interviews) or procedures to be employed (for psychological tests) are explained. During this informed consent process the voluntary nature of the student's participation is emphasized, as is the student's right to terminate the session at any time without penalty. Further, participants are asked to acknowledge their understanding of and willingness to participate in the session by signing an informed consent form that is generally similar to the type of informed consent form used for research studies. If a student shows up for a training session but decides not to participate based on information provided during the informed consent process (i.e., the student does

not sign the informed consent form, and so does not begin the actual interview or testing procedure), he/she will be excused from the session immediately and will not be penalized in any way. In such cases, the student will not be awarded any PECs. On the other hand, if a student shows up for a session, is appropriately informed about what will take place during the session, and decides to participate (i.e., the student does sign the informed consent form, and does begin the interview or testing procedure), but then later decides to withdraw from the session for any reason, the student is free to do so. Furthermore, any such student will be awarded the same PECs he/she would have earned had the session been completed. Students who withdraw from a training session after the informed consent form has been signed are strongly encouraged to contact the Subject Pool Coordinator as soon as possible, and in any case the supervising faculty member must report all such incidents to the Subject Pool Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the Subject Pool Coordinator to ensure that any such student who contacts him/her does not experience lasting untoward reactions as a consequence of having participated in that training session. The Subject Pool Coordinator will take all reasonable and prudent measures in dealing with such students, and in each case will follow-up with the supervising faculty member to discuss the situation.

No-Shows. Students are expected to be both responsible and courteous with respect to signing-up for and attending professional training sessions. If after signing up for a session a student decides not to participate, the student may use the online sign-up system to remove him/herself from the session any time until the end of the day before that session is scheduled to occur, and may do so with no consequence whatsoever. However, if a student is still signed-up on the day of that session, indicating his/her intention to participate, but does not show up for the session -- or is so late that the session cannot be completed in the time remaining -- he/she will be considered a no-show, and will forfeit one or more future opportunities to earn PECs by signing up for participation sessions via the online sign-up system. Specifically, the first no-show occurrence will result in the student forfeiting the opportunity to earn 1 PEC by participation. In this case, no more than 7 of the required 8 PECs may be earned by participation. The remaining 1 PEC will have to be earned by one of the written alternatives for earning PECs (see above under "Summarizing Published Empirical Research"). A second no-show occurrence will result in the student forfeiting the opportunity to earn a second PEC by participation. That is, no more than 6 of the required 8 PECs may be earned by participation, and the remaining 2 PECs will have to be earned by one of the written alternatives. Finally, if there is a third no-show occurrence, the student will forfeit all further opportunities to sign up for participation sessions. This means that all remaining PECs will have to be earned by one of the written alternatives (note, however, that these students may still participate in any additional sessions they were already signed-up for at the time the third "no-show" penalty was incurred).

This policy is identical to that for missing a research participation session. It recognizes the limited availability of professional training sessions as a means of earning PECs, along with the opportunity costs that no-shows represent for other students who would have signed up in the missing student's place. It should be emphasized that the no-show policy is not designed to penalize students for withdrawing from a professional training session. Rather, it is designed to teach both personal responsibility and courtesy toward others. Even at the very last minute, students may cancel their participation in a session without any consequence whatsoever simply by showing up for the session and informing either the person conducting the session or the supervising faculty member that they no longer wish to participate. Alternatively, in the case of an emergency, they may also contact the Subject Pool Coordinator at any time prior to the start of the session and state their desire to withdraw. Such behaviors are perfectly acceptable, and, like using the online sign-up system to remove oneself from a session, they reflect the type of responsible, courteous behavior that students are expected to display. The no-show policy is therefore similar to other common educational practices designed to teach students personal responsibility (e.g., maximum grade restrictions on late homework assignments, papers, etc.).

Waiver of the No-Show Forfeiture. The no-show forfeiture described above may be waived at the discretion of the Subject Pool Coordinator for students with legitimate reasons for having missed a professional training session. Students who miss a session and who wish to have the no-show forfeiture waived must contact the Subject Pool Coordinator, preferably as soon as possible after the missed session, and in any case before the last day of instruction of the current semester. Legitimate reasons for waiving the no-show forfeiture include any sort of experienced or anticipated discomfort about participating in the session, any medical emergency that prevented the student from attending classes or participating in other academic activities on the day of the missed session, family emergencies, and the like. Forgetting about a session, over-sleeping, missing a ride to school, or similar mishaps are not normally considered legitimate reasons for waiving the penalty.

Educational Benefit. Two types of educational benefits accrue from participating as a simulated client in professional training sessions. One is gaining a better understanding of what a professional psychology setting is like, and what kinds of things professional psychologists do in those settings. Clinical and Industrial/Organizational Psychology, the two main professional branches of psychology, are the largest subdivisions within psychology as a whole. Participating in professional training sessions, which are relevant to both of these areas, thus affords students an opportunity to get first-hand experience related to the most common career paths in psychology. Second, the participation experience itself may offer students insight into their own behavior. The sole purpose of these sessions is to train the person conducting them, not to provide professional services. Nevertheless, the content of the sessions sometimes encourages participants to reflect on their behavior and to see themselves, if only for a short time, from a different point of view. On occasion these experiences can spark genuine personal growth. It is expected that those who will profit most from these two types of educational benefits are students who are curious about psychology as a major, and as a possible career.

Considerations of Potential Ethical Issues Arising from the Participation Procedures

Conflicts of Interest. The online sign-up system is designed to help students avoid situations in which there might otherwise be a faculty-student conflict of interest. Specifically, students who are uncomfortable about participating in research or professional training sessions supervised by their course instructor or teaching assistant can avoid such situations by not signing up for those studies or training sessions. For both types of activity, the names of the person supervising the session (who is also the emergency contact for that session) is always listed. Students therefore know in advance whether or not their instructor or teaching assistant is supervising the activity. In a typical semester 40-60 different research studies use the subject pool, along with one or more professional training courses that in combination enroll 25-75 student trainees. Therefore, Psychology 100 students who are uncomfortable about participating in a research study or professional training session that may be supervised by their course instructor or teaching assistant always have many other studies and many other participation opportunities to choose from, and of course may also earn PECs by summarizing empirical research articles.

Incidental Identification/Stigmatization of Students. Students sign up to participate in research studies and in professional training sessions using only the Psychology Department's online sign-up system. Because this system is used privately, because students can see only the sessions they themselves have signed up for (i.e., they cannot see what other students have signed-up for), and because students are identified to researchers only by their unique PINs, there is minimal opportunity for incidental identification of students. Further, when IRB-approved special selection criteria are used (e.g., to select overweight, high test anxious, or introverted students), measures of these characteristics are often obtained privately during the mass testing session. Researchers who make use of such information for identifying students who are eligible to participate in follow-up studies

(less than 15-20 percent of the studies run in a typical semester) do so by posting an eligibility list via the online sign-up system. These eligibility lists contain only the students' PINs -- the substantive nature of the criterion for eligibility is not specified on those lists. Thus, the eligibility lists provide no basis for stigmatizing students who sign up. In other cases, researchers and instructors teaching the professional training courses may use as selection criteria one or more of the three filters available in the online sign-up system (i.e., the student's age, gender, and/or race/ethnicity). Because these filters operate in the background (i.e., only sessions for which the student qualifies are displayed), they provide no basis for stigmatization. Finally, in cases when specific selection criteria are posted directly in the special instructions section of a participation session listing, (e.g., "Sign up only if you are left-handed", "Must be equally fluent in Spanish and English," "Must be a cigarette smoker to participate"), the selection criteria do not have obvious, broadly-recognized stigmatizing properties, and students who prefer to avoid being identified in this way may easily do so by not signing up for such studies. Less than 20 percent of the studies run in a typical semester involve a special selection criterion of this sort. Because 40-60 different studies are run in a typical semester, students who wish to avoid this sort of incidental identification always have many alternative ways of earning PECs via research participation, and may also earn PECs either by summarizing empirical research articles or by participating as simulated clients in professional training sessions. Nevertheless, researchers who use IRB-approved special selection criteria should in all cases be sensitive to the possibility that some students might feel stigmatized once a participation session has begun, especially if it involves a group testing procedure. Researchers are expected to take precautions that are appropriate to the situation in order to minimize this possibility.

Participation by Ethnic Minorities, Minors, and Other Protected Groups. The sign-up procedures for research participation and for participation as a simulated client in professional training sessions minimize the likelihood that there will be any overall participation bias according to age, gender, race/ethnicity, religious background, or the like. The 8-point PEC requirement is the same for all students enrolled in Psychology 100, including minors, and students choose for themselves the research studies and professional training sessions in which they participate. Procedures are in place to facilitate the participation of minors (e.g., easy access to the parental permission form). Further, less than half of the research studies and professional training sessions using the subject pool involve selection criteria related in any way to the online sign-up system's internal filters (i.e., involving age, gender, and race/ethnicity), and among these, a variety of different types of students are recruited (e.g., whereas some sessions may seek to recruit only male participants, others will seek to recruit only female participants -- often the same study will recruit males for one session and females for another). Finally, because of the high degree of diversity found in UIC's undergraduate student population in general, and in the subject pool in particular, research studies using the subject pool, as a group, enroll unusually diverse participant samples with large numbers of minority students and students who are members of other protected classes relative to national norms.

Identification of Participants in Order to Protect their Welfare. As noted previously, students are known to researchers only by a unique Participant Identification Number (PIN) that is randomly assigned to them by the online sign-up system. Information linking the PIN to the student's identity is accessible only by the Subject Pool Coordinator, and is used at the end of the semester for the purpose of giving students credit for the research studies (and professional training sessions) in which they have participated. In addition, in certain unusual circumstances, the Subject Pool Coordinator may use this information as needed in order to protect the welfare of the student. For example, if a student completes a mass testing questionnaire in a way that suggests he or she may be suicidal, and this is detected by the researcher working with that questionnaire, the Subject Pool Coordinator may release the student's name to the researcher and/or to other appropriate individuals (e.g., a member of the Psychology Department who is a clinical psychologist) for the purpose of proactively contacting the student in order to encourage him or her to seek counseling or other help. It

is anticipated that such occurrences will be very infrequent. All such releases of participant information are to be reported in a timely manner to the IRB.