

RESEARCH PARTICIPATION PROGRAM (RPP) GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

Quick Navigation:

[What is the research participation program?](#)

[Do I have to participate in RPP studies, or is there an alternative assignment?](#)

[How do I set up an RPP account?](#)

[How do I sign up for studies?](#)

[Why can't I sign up for some studies?](#)

[What is a restricted study and what if I do not have an "invitation code"?](#)

[Once I have signed up for a study, what do I do?](#)

[How do I cancel my participation in a study?](#)

[What if I do not show up to a laboratory study or I cancel without 24 hour notice?](#)

[What if a researcher cancels my timeslot?](#)

[What if the researcher doesn't show up?](#)

[When should I expect to get my credits granted?](#)

[What is the Prescreening Survey?](#)

[When is the last day to participate in the Prescreening Survey?](#)

[Can I take the Prescreening Survey once the deadline has passed?](#)

[There are two Prescreening Surveys showing up in my account, can I take them both and earn 2 credits?](#)

[Can I participate in studies if I did not take the Prescreening Survey?](#)

[Deadlines: When can I participate in other studies and when is the final day to participate?](#)

[How do RPP credits get applied to grades?](#)

[What if I still have questions?](#)

What is the research participation program?

UC Berkeley is known worldwide for its outstanding research – and the Department of Psychology adds to that reputation with a long history of important, breakthrough work. The Research Participation Program (RPP) gives undergraduate students a chance to participate in some of this research. As a participant in RPP surveys and studies, you help the department's graduate student and faculty researchers answer important questions about psychology. Your participation offers you a chance to learn more about research methods and the latest topics and to meet faculty and graduate student researchers.

To encourage participation in the RPP, your psychology course is allowing you to receive research participation credit as part of your grade. Participation in the RPP involves participating in a certain number of studies throughout the semester.

You must be at least 18 years old to participate in the RPP. If you are under 18, please notify your instructor or GSI and obtain an alternative assignment.

NOTE: In addition to RPP studies, other studies are posted around campus or online, for paid research studies. You cannot earn RPP credit for participating in paid studies, or any other than those listed in the Psychology Department online site: Sona (see below for more about this site).

Do I have to participate in RPP studies, or is there an alternative assignment?

You do NOT have to participate in RPP studies. It is your choice to volunteer, or not, for the program. Students who do not volunteer to participate in RPP studies should speak with their instructor or GSI about an alternative assignment. The alternative assignment will vary from course to course.

How do I set up an RPP account?

Participation in all RPP studies is coordinated through an online system called *Sona*. **Make sure that you are signing up for the Psychology Dept. RPP. Do not confuse it with Haas Business School's "Experimental Social Science Laboratory". You will not get any credit for studies completed with that RPP.** The websites look very similar. The Psychology Dept. Sona site has a picture of the Golden Gate Bridge and clearly says that it is for Psychology.

How to get a login and password, and set up your account:

- First, go to the Sona homepage for Psychology: <https://ucberkeley.sona-systems.com>
- Click on "Request Account"
- Enter your name, email address, and student ID number.
- For your User ID, enter your UC Berkeley ID. For example, if your UCB email address is student@berkeley.edu, enter "student" (without the quotes).
- Select ALL of the courses you are taking during this term only.
- **You must enter of this information in order to receive credit in your courses at the end of the semester.**
- You will receive an email with your logon and password almost immediately.
- Logon and change your password. From the Sona homepage, enter your user ID and password. Click on "login". You will see the overview (home) page for your account.
- Under "My Profile" click on "Change Password". Here you can change your password, as well as the email address for your account, and current courses. If you make changes, save them by clicking on the green button at the bottom, "Update". You can also delete your account here, which will erase all of your history, including records of your participation. You can see how many credits you have earned, and the total number required for your courses.

How do I sign up for studies?

- Once you have logged in, from your Sona account homepage, click on “Studies”.
- Here you can browse all of the posted studies, and click on the studies to find out more detailed information, including timeslots (appointments) that may be available for participating. Online studies will usually be available immediately, and have "timeslots" which only specify a participation deadline. These online studies can be done anytime before the deadline.
- On the "Studies" page, you can also chose a date for participation and then browse all of the posted studies available that day. Only in-person studies will appear this way, not online studies.
- Once you find a study you would like to participate in, click on "timeslots available", find a time that works for you, decide which class you would like the credit to be allocated to, and then click on "sign up". You will be taken to a confirmation page with the time and place for the study. If it is an online study, under "website", click on the blue button that says "Complete Survey Now", and you will be taken to the study.
- Under "My Schedule/Credits" you can see the credits you have earned, and see how many you need. You can also view upcoming appointments. If you have more than one course requiring RPP, you can reassign credits to a different class under "Course", and by clicking on the blue button that says "Reassign". Click on the course list, chose which one you want, and save changes by clicking on "Reassign credit".

Why can't I sign up for some studies?

- You have already completed this study
- This study requires an authorization code (see below)
- The deadline to signup has past (some studies may have a deadline 24 hours beforehand)
- No studies are posted yet for that week. Check back in a day or two; researchers can post new studies and appointments at any time.
- It is the end of the semester and no more sessions are offered

What is a restricted study and what if I do not have an “invitation code”?

- Occasionally, a researcher will recruit specific people for a study. If you are contacted by such a researcher, they will give you an “invitation code” which you will be asked for when you sign up for the study. Do not participate in any study unless you have signed up for it through Sona; you may not get credit toward your courses. (Occasionally, new researchers mistakenly recruit directly for their studies, but they really need to have you sign up through Sona. If you are contacted for participation and not directed to a study listed in Sona, please email rpp@berkeley.edu so that we can help the researcher with the right protocol.)
- If you are asked for an “invitation code” when trying to sign up for a study and you do not have one, then you have not been recruited for this study and should choose another.

Once I have signed up for a study, what do I do?

- Be sure to write down or otherwise save the study time, date, and location, to bring with you for your appointment.
- You will receive a reminder email the day before the study.
- Go to your study session on time as scheduled. Note whether the study starts on the hour or at ten minutes after the hour.

How do I cancel my participation in a study?

What if I do not show up to a laboratory study or I cancel without 24 hour notice?

As part of your protection, you may decide not to participate in any study at any time without penalty. However, please only sign up for studies that you intend to complete, and always cancel in Sona and email the researcher if you will not be able to make it, at least 24 hours in advance.

Missing appointments is detrimental to researchers, who are left waiting, as well as to your fellow students, who cannot sign up for booked appointments. Please show mutual consideration.

If you have two no-shows (including canceling less than 24 hours in advance), you will no longer have access to in-lab studies . You will only be able to sign up for online studies.

To cancel in Sona: click on “My Schedule/Credits” to view your scheduled appointments under "Study Signups". On the right side of each upcoming study you will see a button that says “x Cancel?”. To cancel a session, click on this “cancel” button You will be asked if you are sure you want to cancel. If you want to cancel, click on the red “yes” button. Thank you!

What if a researcher cancels my timeslot?

You will receive an email notifying you of the cancellation. Researchers must cancel 24 hours in advance, so be sure to check your email before the study. If a researcher cancels a session with less than 24 hours notice, they still need to give you credit for the session. If they don't credit you within a week, email them to remind them that they need to do so.

What if the researcher doesn't show up?

If a researcher has not shown up 10 minutes after the scheduled start of a session (i.e. 20 minutes after the hour *if* it is on “Berkeley Time”), you must report the event immediately to rpp@berkeley.edu, and email the researcher who was late or absent. Remind them to credit you for participating.

When should I expect to get my credits granted?

The researcher will assign your credit within one week of your participation. If you don't see the credit after one week, you might kindly send a reminder email to the researcher.

What is the Prescreening Survey?

The online Prescreening Survey is an easy way to earn one research credit. It consists of questionnaires that some researchers use to determine which students are eligible for participating in their restricted studies. For example, some researchers may only need students who are youngest children. So, in addition to earning you an easy credit, the Prescreening Survey also may make you eligible for more studies than you otherwise would be. The Prescreening Survey is the only study available during the first week and a half of classes, and is unavailable after that, for the rest of the semester.

When is the last day to participate in the Prescreening Survey?

The deadline for completing the Prescreening Survey online is **September 4 @ 12:00pm (noon, midday)**.

Can I take the Prescreening Survey once the deadline has passed?

After the date above, you will NOT be able to take the Prescreening Survey for any reason.

There are two Prescreening Surveys showing up in my account, can I take them both and earn 2 credits?

If you are taking more than one psychology course with RPP requirements, you may see two or three different prescreening surveys available in Sona. If you can see them, you can take each one if you like, and will get one credit for each.

Can I participate in studies if I did not take the Prescreening Survey?

Yes! You do not need to have completed the Prescreening Survey to be eligible for most studies. Other studies will become available throughout the semester, but the first day to participate in studies other than Prescreening is **September 5**.

Deadlines: When can I participate in other studies and when is the final day to participate?

The first day to participate in studies other than the Prescreening Survey is **September 5**. The last day to participate in studies is **December 6**, and the last date to change how your credits apply to your courses is **December 7**.

How do RPP credits get applied to grades?

At the end of the semester, your instructor will receive a report showing your participation (credits earned for their class). *They will translate the RPP credits into a score toward your*

grade, as spelled out in the course syllabus. Instructors make all decisions regarding grading. Check your course syllabus or bCourses for information from your instructor on how many credits you need to earn, and how they translate to your grade.

What if I still have questions?

If after consulting the website you still have questions or concerns, please email rpp@berkeley.edu.