

Section: Undergraduate Student Policies

Policy Number: 721.2

Subject: USU SONA Policy

Effective Date: September 30, 2016

USU SONA Policy

This document describes policies associated with using the SONA research system.

1. Students cannot be *required* to participate in SONA research studies as part of a course.
2. Research studies must be approved by the IRB prior to being posted in SONA.
3. Any research study that provides participation credit to students for use in a psychology course, such as for extra credit, must use the SONA system to assign credit. Researchers should not email instructors directly to inform them of a student's participation in a study.
4. For one time studies, SONA points should be assigned at the amount of 1 SONA point per hour of study participation (although see rules for laboratory-based and longitudinal studies). *Please note that "SONA points" refer to those that are provided by SONA to the student, they do not represent the weighted value of these points for grades in the course, which is up to each instructors' discretion.*
 - a. SONA points will be assigned with some flexibility (within reason) for longitudinal studies with additional SONA points provided for later study sessions.
5. For laboratory-based studies (i.e., studies in which a significant portion of the study involves an in-person appointment in a research office/lab): An additional .5 to 1 SONA points will be provided.
 - a. For 30 minute studies/appointments, a researcher can increase compensation from .5 to 1 SONA point (thus providing a .5 bonus point for coming to the lab).
 - b. For 60 minute or longer studies/appointments, a research can increase compensation by 1 SONA point.
6. Longitudinal studies that involve multiple appointments/study time points may also provide .5 to 1 bonus point to compensate for scheduling, travel and study retention. However, students should not receive more than 4 total SONA points for participating in a study.
 - a. Exceptions may be made, but only after the investigator consults with the Psychology Department Chair and the SONA director.
7. The SONA points to be assigned should be specified in the IRB-approved Informed Consent or Letter of Information document.

8. SONA points should be assigned to research participants in a reasonable time frame from when they complete their participation in a study (within 48 hours if possible).
9. SONA points must be assigned contingent on research participation and as specified in the Informed Consent document / IRB application. Researchers need to have a method in place for knowing whether a SONA sign up has completed research activities and only providing points if those activities are completed in accordance with the Informed Consent. It is NOT appropriate to assign SONA points ahead of participation or irrespective of participation (e.g., giving points to everyone who signs up due to not being able to identify who completed a survey study).
 - a. Exceptions to this are made for extenuating circumstances (e.g., if a participant withdraws during the study, if a student attends the study appointment but is unable to participate due to research errors such as the RA “no showing”).
10. The title for each study in SONA should exactly match the title used in the IRB protocol, unless otherwise specified in IRB approved recruitment materials. In circumstances in which there are multiple SONA studies under the same IRB protocol, researchers are expected to list a title that is as consistent with the study title and description as possible (e.g., using modifiers such as “phase I” to the IRB title if it isn’t too confusing in SONA).
11. The study description for each study in SONA should be consistent with recruitment scripts or other similar materials provided in the IRB protocol. Researchers are encouraged to include the text for SONA posting descriptions as part of the recruitment materials submitted for review in the IRB protocol. For further information on IRB guidelines for recruitment materials please see <http://rgs.usu.edu/irb/htm/resources/guidelines>.
12. If you have a course that is currently not listed on SONA, for your students to connect their participation to, please email Kimberly Panter at Kimberly.panter@usu.edu to get your course added for the semester.