



## Procedures for Investigators Conducting Research In which Students in Psychology Classes Participate

These instructions assume that you have a faculty supervisor for your research project, and that you have discussed your project with and have obtained approval from your supervisor. You must have a faculty supervisor before conducting any research. Students who engage in research without a faculty supervisor are subject to being banned from sponsored research, which may make it impossible for you to complete a Psychology Major. Also, failure to follow these guidelines may result in access to the subject pool being denied.

### **Preliminary Requirement**

Student investigators, as well as all persons associated with research involving human participants, must complete the training requirement set forth by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Mercer University. The training tool selected is the *CITI – Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative*. Once the online course has been completed, you need to take the online test. The results will be forwarded to the IRB office of Mercer through CITI.

Course and Test URL: <http://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp?language=english>

Mercer University Office of Research Compliance URL: <http://www2.mercer.edu/ResearchCompliance/default.htm>

### **Step 1. Institutional Review Board**

ALL research at Mercer University must be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Most psychological research involves minimal risk to participants and will typically be approved by the IRB through an expedited review. Minimal risk includes taking any physical measures such as heart rate or blood pressure, exercise by healthy persons, ingestion of normal amounts of common substances such as food and caffeine, and so forth. Other types of research may potentially involve more risk to participants; such research will be approved only after a full review by the IRB. A complete list of procedures that may involve risk can be found in the Ethical Principles of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2002) and the Guidelines of Mercer University's Institutional Review Board (Mercer University IRB, 2007). It is important to understand that different kinds of research may require different kinds of IRB applications and approval procedures. Full reviews will take more time than expedited reviews.

Consult with your faculty supervisor to determine the kinds of risks and research procedures and potential risks of your research project. You will need to complete the Minimal Risk and Non-invasive Procedure Application Form (See URL Below). Officially, you will be the Principal Investigator and your supervisor will serve as the Faculty Sponsor on record for your research. This form will require you to include copies of all research materials to be used. Your application must be submitted to Ms. Ava Chambliss-Richardson in the Office of Research Compliance.

Additional information and downloadable copies of all IRB forms can be obtained from the IRB website maintained by the Office of Research Compliance.

IRB URL <http://www2.mercer.edu/ResearchCompliance/default.htm>

**NO RESEARCH MAY BE CONDUCTED UNTIL YOU RECEIVE AN APPROVAL LETTER FROM THE IRB.** Once you receive IRB approval for your study, you may proceed with Step 2. You **CANNOT** put out your sign-up folder(s) until your study has been approved.

## Step 2. Information Sheet

Create a folder (manila or binder) in which volunteers may obtain information about and sign up for your study. A sample *Information Sheet* is included in this document on page 5. Both your supervisor and the Chair of the department must sign your folder before you may set it out for participants. You will need to tell the Chair how many participants you intend to obtain and the amount of time required for each session. After obtaining the signature of the departmental Chair ask the department secretary to log your study into the department record and assign your study a number. Be sure to make a copy of the cover sheet for your faculty supervisor and for the department files.

Write the title of the study and your assigned study number on the outside of the folder. The inside left of the folder must contain an *Information Sheet* including the following information: (see example on page 5)

- a. the title and number for your study (note the title may have to be a "cover title");
- b. a brief description of the procedures of the study, including anything that would be reasonably expected to influence a participant's decision to participate;
- c. any special conditions that restrict volunteering, such as males only and so forth;
- d. the name, box number, and telephone number, and email address of the investigator;
- e. the name and signature of the faculty supervisor;
- f. the name and signature of the Chair of Psychology;

## Step 3. Reserving Rooms

If you plan to conduct the study in Wiggs Hall (Psychology Building), you must reserve a room. Determine which room(s) suit your needs and on which dates and times you will need the room(s). Then see the Psychology Department Secretary to make the reservation(s).

The inside right of the folder should contain sign-up sheets that provide exact information about the location, time, and date of the study. There should, of course, be enough openings to account for all the volunteers you will require, plus some extra openings to allow for the possibility that some may cancel. Also, MAKE SURE THAT YOU PROVIDE INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS ABOUT HOW THEY MAY CONTACT YOU, IF NECESSARY. Although there are many variations for sign-up sheets, the sample included in this packet (see page 6.) has the advantage of enabling the volunteers to take a reminder slip with them.

## Step 4. Participant Sign-Up

At least three class days prior to the first research appointment, place your sign-up folder on the table in the lobby of the Psychology Building. Although not required, it may help to give the instructors who are offering credit a reminder slip so they can announce the presence of your sign-up folder to their classes. You must leave your sign-up folder on the table throughout the duration of your study. Some who have signed up for the study will have lost their reminder slips, so the sign-up folder is the only way for them to determine when and where to show up. Leaving your sign-up folder on the table will reduce the number of people who sign up but do not show up.

Any participant who does not show up for an appointment is considered a "no show" and will be penalized the number of credits your study was worth. Any participant who cancels less than 24 hours in advance of an appointment should also be considered a no show. However, you as the investigator may use your own discretion to decide whether you want to allow a participant to reschedule once before being penalized. You may negotiate this with your own participants.

## Step 5. Informed Consent

If your study procedures include written consent, you must first sign and distribute *Informed Consent Forms* to every participant. Each participant should receive two copies before beginning your study. One copy, signed by you and then the participant, must be returned to you. You must turn these in to your faculty supervisor, who must maintain a file of these completed forms for at least three years after the completion of your study. This file must be available for inspection by a member of the IRB at all times. The second copy of the *Informed Consent Form* is the participant's copy. The participant will keep this copy for his or her own personal records. Note: You may want to sign an original *Informed Consent Form* and then make the appropriate number of copies before you begin meeting with your participants. A template for the *Informed Consent Form* is found on page 7 of this document.

The *Informed Consent Form* template in this document contains the minimum elements, which the Department of Psychology at Mercer University requires for use of human participants in research. This format is recommended. Provide the information tailored to your specific study. If you are mailing a questionnaire/survey to participants, a *Cover Letter* may be required rather than an *Informed Consent Form*. Both *Informed Consent Forms* and *Cover Letters* should include at least the information indicated. It may be necessary in some cases to use separate *Informed Consent Forms* for various aspects of a study, such as different participant groups or individual phases of a multi-phase study. Oversight sections, numbered 7, 8 and 9 on the *Informed Consent Form* sample must be retained in your Consent Form exactly as they are worded.

Please note that obtaining informed consent is typically required for most psychological research. Failure to obtain and maintain a record of informed consent may subject you to being banned from conducting additional research at Mercer (even research that is part of a course requirement) and may subject you to other legal penalties, such as charges brought before the Honors and/or Judicial Counsels. Again, you may obtain information related to informed consent at <http://www2.mercer.edu/researchcompliance/default.htm>.

### **Step 6. Debriefing Research Participants**

Debriefing research participants is required for most behavioral studies and, in most cases, should be done immediately after the experimental session following a script prepared in advance by the researcher in consultation with the Faculty Sponsor. In studies where debriefing subjects immediately after their participation might make the study invalid or make it likely that subsequently collected data would be contaminated, then the researcher is obligated to debrief participants after all the data have been collected. Although other methods may be used in addition, in every case the researcher must place a written debriefing statement in the Debriefing Notebook on the table in the foyer of the Psychology Building as soon as all the data have been collected but no later than one week before the last day of classes for the term. This Debriefing Statement must be approved by the Faculty Sponsor of the project. See the sample Debriefing Template on page 10 of this document.

### **Step 7. Research Evaluation Form**

Participants must be treated with respect and their participation should be a learning experience. The mechanism for insuring these qualities is the *Research Evaluation Form*. Distribute these evaluation forms at the end of the study. A sample *Research Evaluation Form* is included in this packet on page 9. These forms are available in the psychology department office. Student participants will place these forms in the envelope hanging on the bulletin board above the sign-up table in the lobby of Wiggs Hall (Psychology building).

### **Step 8. Green Slips & White Cards**

Immediately upon completion of a study session, you must identify those students who participated as well as those who signed up but did not show up for their appointments. You will need some *Green Slips* to do this. A sample *Green Slip* is included in this packet at the bottom of page 9. These forms are available in the psychology department office. Each slip provides spaces for student information and study information. Have participants fill out the spaces designated for their information, including to which class the participation credits should be applied. As the investigator, you should properly fill out the spaces for your study number, whether the students participated or were "no shows," and how many credits they each should receive. Make sure each slip is complete, legible, and that both you and your participants have signed them. Turn in all of your *Green Slips* each day to the departmental secretary. The secretary will log in each participant's credits, and then inform the appropriate instructors about who participated and who did not show up for your study. Students should have a *White Card* with them at the time of the study. The *White Card* should be filled out in addition to the *Green Slip* so that the participant may also keep a record of their participation credits for comparison should the number of credits awarded be found discrepant in the final research participation credit report given to the instructor. When you have completed your project, give the original copy of the sign-up folder with the signed *Informed Consent Forms* to your faculty supervisor.

Any participant who, upon reading your informed consent, decided not to participate in your study must be awarded one (1) research credit (one half hour). The same applies to any participant who decided not to complete your study after the procedures began. Identify these students by writing "DROP OUT" next to their names on the green slips. The secretary will know to award drop out participants one credit. **YOU CANNOT PENALIZE A STUDENT FOR EXERCISING HIS OR HER RIGHT TO WITHDRAW CONSENT.** Doing so is a

violation of your implicit agreement with your research participants and a violation of research ethics.

#### References

American Psychological Association. (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists. *American Psychologist*. 57, 1060-1073.

Mercer University IRB. (2007). *Standard Operating Procedures*. Mercer University, Office of Research Compliance web site: <http://www2.mercer.edu/ResearchCompliance/IRB/Standard+Operating+Procedures.htm>

**STUDY INFORMATION SHEET (SAMPLE)**

***(Title of Your Study – NOTE: This title may have to be a “cover title” and should be the same title as on the consent form.)***

**Study Number \_\_\_\_\_**

(Name of Investigator)

Phone: (investigator’s phone number)

Mercer Box #: (investigator’s box number)

Email: (investigator’s email address)

**PLEASE DO NOT SIGN UP FOR THIS STUDY IF...**

*(Describe any special conditions that restrict volunteering. For example: males only, females only, or only if you were informed of eligibility by the investigator. Participants must be over 18 years of age.)*

This is a study about ... *(Describe in simple terms what the experiment is about and what the participant will be doing during the course of the experiment. Keep in mind that this form will represent all the information a potential participant will have in deciding whether or not to sign up for your study. It is generally best not to disclose your experimental hypothesis or predictions here.)*

The entire study will require from 30 minutes or less of your time, or 31-60 minutes of your time, etc. *(Change amount of time needed accordingly)*

The sign-up forms on the opposite page contain a number of different appointment times. Please sign-up for one of these times, and tear off the right half as your reminder. Then, please arrive for the study on time, or call the number written on the reminder to cancel your appointment. If you must cancel an appointment, please do so well in advance, not at the time of the appointment. Otherwise, the missed appointment will be counted as a “no show” and will negatively affect your participation credits. Due to the amount of preparation involved a study, cancellation of appointment with less than 24 hours notice is in most cases considered a “no show.” Contact your investigator for more details. *(Word this section as appropriate for your needs.)*

Thank you,

\_\_\_\_\_  
John Doe  
Student Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jane Doe  
Faculty Supervisor

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Psychology

**STUDY SIGN-UP SHEET (SAMPLE)**

<p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Monday, May 23</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b>  <b>PRINT</b> your name: _____                      Phone: _____                      Instructor's name: _____</p>	<p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p> <p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Monday, May 23</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b></p> <p>If you are unable to attend the experiment session for which you have signed up, you <u>must</u> contact the experimenter directly, or the Psychology Department Office at 478.301.2971, at least 24 hours in advance to avoid being penalized for a No Show.</p> <p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p>
<p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Tuesday, May 24</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b>  <b>PRINT</b> your name: _____                      Phone: _____                      Instructor's name: _____</p>	<p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p> <p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Tuesday, May 24</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b></p> <p>If you are unable to attend the experiment session for which you have signed up, you <u>must</u> contact the experimenter directly, or the Psychology Department Office at 478.301.2971, at least 24 hours in advance to avoid being penalized for a No Show.</p> <p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p>
<p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Wednesday, May 25</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b>  <b>PRINT</b> your name: _____                      Phone: _____                      Instructor's name: _____</p>	<p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p> <p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Wednesday, May 25</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b></p> <p>If you are unable to attend the experiment session for which you have signed up, you <u>must</u> contact the experimenter directly, or the Psychology Department Office at 478.301.2971, at least 24 hours in advance to avoid being penalized for a No Show.</p> <p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p>
<p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Thursday, May 26</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b>  <b>PRINT</b> your name: _____                      Phone: _____                      Instructor's name: _____</p>	<p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p> <p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Thursday, May 26</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b></p> <p>If you are unable to attend the experiment session for which you have signed up, you <u>must</u> contact the experimenter directly, or the Psychology Department Office at 478.301.2971, at least 24 hours in advance to avoid being penalized for a No Show.</p> <p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p>
<p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Friday, May 27</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b>  <b>PRINT</b> your name: _____                      Phone: _____                      Instructor's name: _____</p>	<p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p> <p><b>Study # _____ Study Title</b>                      John Doe - Student Investigator                      Day &amp; Date: <b>Friday, May 27</b>                      Time: <b>7:15 PM</b>                      Room: <b>Psychology 204</b></p> <p>If you are unable to attend the experiment session for which you have signed up, you <u>must</u> contact the experimenter directly, or the Psychology Department Office at 478.301.2971, at least 24 hours in advance to avoid being penalized for a No Show.</p> <p><b>Participant Reminder (Please Retain)</b></p>

**INFORMED CONSENT TEMPLATE NOTE: This must be on letterhead paper**



**Informed Consent**  
**(Your Research Study Title)**

[If including the exact title might bias the results, use a general title instead if applicable.]

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you give your consent to volunteer, it is important that you read the following information and ask as many questions as necessary to be sure you understand what you will be asked to do.

**Investigators**

Provide the names and degrees of all investigators involved in the research study. Indicate the department and institution with which the investigator(s) is affiliated. If you are a student, include the name of your faculty advisor. Also provide the investigators campus addresses and campus phone numbers.

**Purpose of the Research**

**This research study is designed to . . .** (state what the study is designed to assess or study).

The data from this research will be used to . . . (explain how data will be used).

If you are a student, indicate how the results will contribute to your course of study.

**Procedures**

**If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to . . .** [describe what subject will do using lay language].

[If controls are used, also explain what will be expected of the controls such as Group A and Group B.]

(If the description is complicated, bulleting or listing works well.)

**Your participation will take approximately . . .** [estimate amount of times, frequency etc.].

If standard treatment will be withheld, state this here.

If any procedures are experimental, identify them here.

**Potential Risks or Discomforts**

**DO NOT** state that there are no risks or discomforts. You may say there are no foreseeable risks associated with the study.

Describe any reasonable foreseeable risks, discomforts, inconveniences, or costs associated with this research that the participants may encounter. These could be physical, psychological, emotional, social or economic. Inform the participant of any provisions for managing these and of the subject's right to discontinue participation, either temporarily or permanently.

**Potential Benefits of the Research**

Describe any benefits the participants can expect as a result of participating in the study. If there are no benefits to the participants, state this. Describe any potential benefits to science and society that may result from this research.

**Confidentiality and Data Storage**

Describe the precautions that will be taken to preserve the confidentiality/privacy of participants. If confidentiality will not be maintained, state this and explain if names, images or tapes will be used and how and when they will be used.

Include the procedures for using and storing data (e.g., in Dr. X=s office) and include who will have access to the data (e.g., the investigator and advisor). (It must be stored at Mercer University for at least 3 years after completion of the study.)

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If video or audio tapes will be used to record information, describe exactly how the recordings will be used, who will have access, how long the recordings will be stored and when they will be destroyed.

**Participation and Withdrawal**

**Your participation in this research study is voluntary. As a participant you may refuse to participate at anytime. To withdraw from the study please contact ....** (Explain how to withdraw, whom to contact, please place your). Note: if the data are anonymous, subjects cannot withdraw after data collection has taken place.

**Questions about the Research**

**If you have any questions about the research, please speak with** (place your Mercer University contact information and your advisor’s contact information here)

**In Case of Injury (Include Only If Applicable to Your Project)**

**It is unlikely that participation in this project will result in harm to subjects. If an injury to a subject does occur, he or she may be seen at a local or regional medical facility. All expenses associated with care will be the responsibility of the participant and his/her insurance.** (If the research is not conducted at Mercer University., leave out the option of using local or regional medical facility.)

**ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS ONLY WHEN APPROPRIATE  
PLEASE DELETE SECTION IF NOT NECESSARY**

**Incentives to Participate**

If an incentive is offered, describe what is being offered and what is required to obtain the incentive.

**Audio or Video Taping**

If audio/video taping and/or names will be used, add an additional statement about permitting taping and/or use of name.

**Reasons for Exclusion from this Study**

State in basic lay language reasons why a subject should be excluded from participating (e.g., being a smoker, pregnant, under the age of 18, a medical condition). Include only those reasons which could not be pre-determined by the investigator.

This project has been reviewed and approved by Mercer University’s IRB. If you believe there is any infringement upon your rights as a research subject, you may contact the IRB Chair, at (478) 301-4101.

**You have been given the opportunity to ask questions and these have been answered to your satisfaction. Your signature below indicates your voluntary agreement to participate in this research study.**

_____ <b>Signature</b> of Participant	_____ <b>Date</b>	_____ <b>Printed Name</b> of Participant
_____ <b>Signature</b> of Investigator	_____ <b>Date</b>	_____ <b>Printed Name</b> of Investigator
_____ <b>Signature</b> of Faculty Supervisor	_____ <b>Date</b>	_____ <b>Printed Name</b> of Faculty Supervisor
_____ <b>Signature</b> of IRB Representative	_____ <b>Date</b>	_____ <b>Printed Name</b> of IRB Representative

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**RESEARCH EVALUATION FORM (SAMPLE)**

**RESEARCH EVALUATION FORM**

Please rate the study on the following dimensions by circling the rating that best describes your experience. Deposit this form in the envelope in Psychology Building lobby.

1. The researcher treated me with courtesy and respect.

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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2. The researcher clearly explained the study.

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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3. I learned a great deal from this study.

1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
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Print the researcher's name: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any additional comments, please write them on the back of this form.

*(Note: These forms may be obtained in the psychology department office and are to be placed by the participant in the folder above the sign-up table.)*

**GREEN SLIP (SAMPLE)**

**RESEARCH PARTICIPATION FORM**

Name (Please print)	PSY Course and Period	Date	Study #
Social Security #	Course Instructor	NO SHOW	# of Credits
Your Signature	Researcher's Signature		

*(Note: These forms are obtained in the psychology department office and are to be returned to the psychology department secretary each day by the investigator.)*

The following template is provided for your guidance. Remember the two main purposes of debriefing are to make research participation educational, especially when subjects were deceived or not fully informed immediately after the study, and to remove any discomfort that may have resulted from the study. You want your participants to feel good about their experience, to feel appreciated, and to know that their participation was important. You may modify the language below to fit your particular study, but be sure to include all the required elements of debriefing.

### **DEBRIEFING NOTEBOOK**

Place a copy of your debriefing statement in the Debriefing Notebook in the foyer of the Psychology Building as soon as all the data for your study have been collected. This is the case for ALL studies: those in which participants were orally debriefed and especially those studies in which subjects were not fully debriefed at the time of their participations.

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### **DEBRIEFING STATEMENT (SAMPLE)**

***YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT TITLE (FROM CONSENT FORM)***

Study # \_\_\_\_\_

**Conducted by (*your name*) for (*indicate reason for the research – e.g., PSY 303 research requirement*)**

#### **Debriefing Statement**

Thank you for your participation in this research on (*state what is being studied*).

The goal of this research is (*in general terms, explain what the study is designed to discover or establish*).

The research question is (*describe your hypotheses – what you expect to find and why*).

During this research, you were asked to (*describe the activities that subjects in each experimental condition or group were asked to complete, e.g. "some subject had 10 minutes to complete the task, while others had 20 minutes to complete it."* You should clearly describe each independent variable without simply stating the independent variable was \_\_\_\_\_. Remember your job is to explain your study so that it can be clearly understood by the participants).

Explain the use (if any) of deception in the research by contrasting what subjects were led to believe with reality and give reasons for the deception.

For example:

- You were led to believe that the purpose of this study was.....; however, in reality, the purpose was..... This deception was necessary because.....
- During the research, information about ..... was withheld so that .....
- The emergency (or argument, assault, etc.) you just witnessed wasn't real. It was staged in order to.....

#### **Contact Information**

If you have questions right now, please ask. If you have additional questions later, you may contact me at (*phone number or e-mail address*). You may also contact the faculty member who supervises this research, (*name of Faculty Advisor, at phone number or e-mail address*).