

May 2004

Psychology Participation Pool Instructions for Experimenters

The participant pool will be using **Experimetrix**, an online sign up system, at:

<http://experimetrix.com/mac>

There is a direct link to this site listed on the "Undergraduate Studies" page from the Psychology Department home page
<http://www.mcmaster.ca/psychology/understu.html>

Experimetrix allows you to post experiments, schedule appointments, and award research credits. Here is a **Quick Start** summary of the procedures:

1. Get an **experiment number** (logon) and **password** from the administrator.
2. Select **Experimenter Area** from the main page. Enter logon and password.
3. Select **Edit Header** to provide details for your experiment posting.
4. Select **Add new times** to add sessions that students can sign up for.
5. Select **View Schedule** to look at the current schedule and be sure to check the box labeled **Display experiment to students**.
6. After the experimental session, select **View schedule** to award credit (or penalty) to the participant.

A more detailed explanation of how to use the system and its various options - Documentation for Experimenters - can be found at:

<http://experimetrix.com/MomentumEdoc.htm>

Experiment number and password

In order to obtain an experiment number (logon) and password from the administrator (Ann or Kathy), you need to have received **ethics approval** to do the research.

Once ethics approval has been received, submit a copy of the **debriefing** (for each new experiment), and **consent form** to the administrators (Ann & Kathy).

The **debriefing** and **consent form** should be the ones that were approved in the ethics application. Also please note – according to the new APA guidelines, student volunteers

should be referred to as 'participants' – not 'subjects.' The debriefing sheet should have if possible the following information – hypothesis, independent variable(s), dependent variable(s), type of analysis likely to be used on the data, and references (in APA format).

Setting Up an Experiment

The Administrator (Ann or Kathy) will then give you an **experiment number** (logon) and **password**. When you log in the first thing you need to do is edit the header (**Edit header**). Under 'supervisor' list the faculty responsible for the research as we need to know which lab it is from. If you are an R.A. or grad student supervising an undergraduate who is collecting the data, either enter your name along with the supervisor's or make it the first name under 'experimenter.' Under 'experimenter' list the person or persons who will be collecting the data. If there are several people collecting data for the same experiment, they will need to know the logon and password. But be careful sharing this. [*We will see how this works best as we become more familiar with the system – we may want to have a different experiment number and password for each experimenter.*] As long as there are no major changes (i.e., minor adjustments to some of the parameters), the same experiment number and password can be used. If the experimenter changes, then a new experiment number and password should be obtained.

The header contains the description of your experiment that is displayed to potential participants when they are searching for an experiment. A subset of the information is shown on the 'sign up' page. The remaining information in the header is visible when the participant selects 'view schedule.' If you have any **selection criteria** such as female only, or native English speakers, this **will be placed in bold at the beginning of the description** for students to see immediately when scanning for experiments.

It is suggested by the Experimentrix people that if you have a multi-session experiment that it be set up with two experiment numbers – one for each session. The 'eligibility' for the second 'experiment' (i.e., session), can be set up to require participants to have completed the earlier experiment.

The **last day** Experimentrix will allow experiments to be posted is **JUNE 18, 2004**.

Awarding Credits (Penalties)

All must be entered by June 18, 2004.

After the experimental session, be sure to enter the experimental credit (or penalty) to the participant. This is **extremely important** and this is critical if this system is to work. You do this by selecting '**view schedule**'.

There are several courses this term offering the research option. Under '**Read me (Rules, etc.)**' there will be a list of the courses and their requirements. You do not really need to worry about this as the students themselves assign the credits to the courses. (This is another reason why you have to have the credit entered by June 18 – if the

students haven't assigned the credits to a course, they will lose them.) However, it will give you an idea of the total number of hours that may be available.

We have set the **cancellation window** to a minimum time of 120 minutes (**2 hours**) prior to appointment to permit a student to cancel an appointment. However you can personally set what's called 'Lead Time'. With this option you can prevent participants from signing up at the last minute. Any open appointments not taken within the lead time will be automatically removed from the schedule.

Participation for Money

We are still figuring out how to do this. If anyone is interested in this option, let us know and we will figure it out together.

Who are the Participants?

The participants can be any McMaster student with a valid student number and McMaster e-mail address. Students must logon themselves to be a participant. No class lists are entered. So there will be no mechanism for checking to see if a student is in one of the courses with a research option or whether they are even in a psychology course at all. If experiments are set up for course credit, I can't see this as much of a problem. However, if you are paying students, keep in mind that any McMaster student may sign up.

Experimetrix System on Trial

This is a trial run with this system. For this first go around with it, we want you to still keep a paper record of who has participated – that is, still have the students sign in on the sign-up sheet as before. These should be given in to Ann or Kathy every so often. Students will still receive receipt slips for participating to ensure that they receive their experimental credit(s). We will also at the end of term be distributing a short evaluation form of the system and would appreciate your feedback on the pros and cons of the system.

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Please bring any questions, comments, and observations to the attention of the Administrator(s) as we go along, so we can be well prepared to handle the BIG Class in the Fall.