

School of Communication Studies Research Participation System (CSRPS) Guidelines for Students

CSRPS Website: <http://ohio-coms.sona-systems.com/>

Research Participation Information: <http://www.coms.ohiou.edu/research-participation>

Research Pool Administrator: coms-research@ohio.edu

As a student enrolled in COMS 101, 103, 110, and 342, you are required to gain experience with communication research to earn 2% of your course grade. You gain this experience by either participating in a research study or completing an alternative assignment (journal article summary). This requirement will be listed in the syllabus. Instructors of other COMS courses have the option of requiring you to participate in this research experience for either course or extra credit.

Note: You will need to complete a **separate** research study or alternative assignment for **each** Communication Studies class that requires a research experience. Make sure to distribute your credits across your courses using the CSRPS system. This is not done automatically.

This research experience is a learning experience for you and will familiarize you with current communication research topics and techniques. In your communication studies classes, you will be reading and hearing about research that informs us about communication. To better help you understand how such research is conducted, you will have the opportunity to participate in a research study or to summarize a research article. Your participation in these activities will give you a behind-the-scene glimpse of how researchers try to answer important questions about communication. At the conclusion of a research study, the researcher will provide you with a verbal or written summary of the purpose of that project. You are encouraged to ask questions about the study in which you participate so that you can learn more about the scientific enterprise. In addition to its educational value to you, your participation in research projects contributes to the scientific enterprise by helping Ohio University's investigators gain a better understanding of communication. In fact, one day a project you participated in may appear in a textbook. We hope you find participating in communication research studies to be interesting and informative.

To complete this requirement, you register on the Communication Studies Research Participation System (CSRPS) during the **first two weeks** of the term and complete a **prescreening questionnaire**. The prescreen helps researchers determine who is qualified for their studies. For example, some researchers may only want female participants and others may only want male participants. You earn 0.5% by completing this prescreening questionnaire and deciding whether you want to participate in a research study or complete the alternative assignment.

Relevant documents, including FAQs and instructions for using the system are available on the School of Communication Studies website (<http://www.coms.ohiou.edu/research-participation>).

In the third week of the term, the Research Pool Administrator will randomly assign you to a research study. If you did not complete the prescreen questionnaire and did not choose to complete the alternative assignment, the Research Pool Administrator will assign you to a study

that has no inclusion/exclusion criteria. To complete your assignment, you will either participate in the research study to which you were assigned **or** complete an alternative assignment (both are described below). Both options are worth 1.5% of the course grade and should take about one hour to complete. You may only complete one of the options per class. Completing both options will not result in any additional credit.

Students who are not yet 18 years old will need to complete the alternative assignment.

Option 1: Participation in a Communication Studies Research Study

The School of Communication Studies regards your participation in studies as an educational experience. Your participation is appreciated and essential to the research of the School of Communication Studies. The research contributions made by students are a lasting part of the body of knowledge about communication.

To participate in a research study, you must (a) sign up for a data collection timeslot or complete the study online, depending on the study format and (b) participate in the study. Some studies require that you provide data at two or more separate times. A research study may also be conducted entirely online, in which case you do not need to sign up for a data collection timeslot and only need to participate in the study prior to the study's closing date. The study closing date will be provided by the researcher.

For in-person studies, you will sign up for a data collection timeslot using the CSRPS. The researcher in charge of your study will send you an e-mail reminder 24 hours before your appointment. It is your responsibility to show up at the designated time and location. If it is necessary for you to miss an appointment, you may cancel your appointment via CSRPS no less than one hour before the study session is to be conducted. Researchers may specify a longer period of time by which you must cancel.

If you arrive late to a session (i.e., after human subject forms have been completed), you will not be given credit for participation and must sign up for a different timeslot or complete the research alternative. If you fail to show up for appointments three times, you will no longer be able to complete the research study and must complete the alternative assignment (option 2 below).

For online studies, the researcher in charge of your study will notify you when the study opens and when it closes. The researcher will send you an e-mail reminder at least 48 hours prior to the close of the study.

You must complete your research requirement during the times designated for your study. Some studies will end early in the term whereas others will end later. The researcher will inform you of the study close date. It is your responsibility to complete your research participation before the study close date. All research studies must be completed no later than the next to last week of the term (i.e., the 9th week for quarters, the 14th week for semesters, and the 6th week for summer sessions). Most studies have earlier completion deadlines.

Important conclusions are reached about communication from research studies. Please respond in a serious manner to the questions and tasks involved in the study.

For your participation in a research study, you are entitled to 1.5% course credit in one COMS course for which you are currently enrolled. The researcher will assign you credit using the CSRPS. Your instructor can see that you received credit, but will not know what study you participated in or have access to the data you provided. You may not receive credit in multiple classes for participation in one study. If you are registered in multiple courses that require a research experience, you must complete one research study or alternative assignment for each course you are enrolled in.

You have the option of not participating in a study or withdrawing your participation at any time without penalty. The purpose of this guideline is to insure that you may cease participating in a study if you feel uncomfortable about what you are being asked to do. You do **not** need to specify a reason for withdrawing. If you choose not to participate, the researcher will have you complete the alternative assignment to earn credit.

At the end of your research participation, the researcher will provide you with a debriefing. This debriefing is a learning experience. It usually consists of a full explanation of everything that happened during the session, what was being studied, and a summary of the researcher's hypotheses. The debriefing may be provided in-person or via written electronic form. You are encouraged to ask the researcher (in-person or via e-mail) any questions you have about the study.

If for some reason you do not receive credit for participating in a study, notify the researcher (not your instructor). He/she has the responsibility to double check and find out whether you participated.

Option 2: Research Article Summary (the Alternative Assignment)

If you are not able or do not wish to participate in the research study to which you are assigned, you may complete the alternative assignment, which is a series of questions about a research article. You can sign up for the alternative assignment via the CSRPS. To complete the alternative assignment, you will review a communication research study from a peer-reviewed journal and then complete the alternative assignment document. You may choose among the research articles provided on the alternative assignment website.

The purpose of the summary is to demonstrate that you have read and understand the research article. At the top of the paper, include your name and e-mail address and the full citation information of the article you read. The summary must be typed. You must turn your paper in to the researcher (i.e., not your instructor) by the study close date to receive the 1.5% credit. The study close date will be provided to you by the researcher for your study. If you were not assigned to a study, you must give your summary to the administrator (coms-research@ohio.edu) by the end of the next-to-last week of class (i.e., week 9 of quarters, week 14 of semester). Papers received after this date will not receive credit.

When you have completed the research article summary, e-mail it in to the researcher to whom you were assigned. The researcher will provide you with 1.5% course credit for the alternative assignment. **Any summary that is entirely or *partly* copied word-for-word from a research article (or from another student) will not receive credit.** This is plagiarism, which is a very serious academic offense. The researcher will check to make sure that your work is original.

Whom to Contact

Your first point of contact should be the researcher to whom you were assigned. You will be assigned to a researcher during the 3rd week of classes. If you are 17 years old or younger, you will not be assigned to a researcher and will need to contact the research pool administrator with any questions. You should not contact your instructor with questions about the research experience.

Guidelines for Reporting Concerns or Complaints

Occasionally, students are unsatisfied with some dimension of their research participation. In such cases, you should first meet with the researcher to resolve these concerns or complaints. If you and the researcher cannot reach a satisfactory resolution, you may meet with the Research Pool Administrator to discuss your concern or complaint. The Research Pool Administrator may ask you to fill out a “Research Participant Complaint Form.”

Filling out a Complaint Form with the administrator does not waive your right to also address complaints to the Research Compliance Office of Ohio University.

Any adverse events should be reported to the Research Pool Administrator and the Institutional Review Board immediately.