Research Experience Component and Psychology Subject Pool Frequently Asked Questions

Have a question about the Psychology Research Experience Component or the Psychology Subject Pool? Take a look at our Frequently Asked Questions for Participants and Researchers. If you still have questions, please contact the Psychology Undergraduate Advisors and Subject Pool Coordinators at psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu.

Participant/Student FAQs

How many SONA credits do I need?

For the Psychology major requirement, students must earn 12 credits attributed to the Research Experience Component. Credits cannot be double-counted, so SONA credits attributed to other courses do not count toward the 12 required Research Experience Component credits for the Psychology major.

Intro Psychology students must earn 4 SONA credits for the course. Individual instructors may provide the option for students to earn additional SONA credit for extra credit toward their course grade.

What class should I select for allocating subject pool credit?

If you are seeking to earn credit for your Psychology major requirement, please select the “Research Experience Component” class.

If you are seeking to earn credit for a course, select the course with the semester, year, section number, and instructor corresponding to the course you are earning credit for. If your instructor is allowing you to earn SONA credit for your course and you do not see your course listed, please email psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu.

How can I add a new course to assign SONA credit?

When you sign up for a study there is a drop-down menu where you can select which course you would like the credit assigned. If you do not see the course you want in that menu, you will have to go to your SONA profile and click the "change courses" button in the upper right corner.
Why does my SONA profile say I need more credits than the Psychology major or my Intro Course requirements state?

The number listed as required varies from student to student. If you are a psychology major, it will be at least 12 required credits, because 12 credits are needed to satisfy the “Research Experience Component” requirement for psychology majors. If any of your courses offer extra credit for SP usage, the number of credits they offer will be added to the tally for required credits. So, if several of your classes do that during your time here, it is possible that your required credits will rise to well over 20.

But please note that any extra credit points for courses are not technically “required” for you to earn – they are just extra credit, after all! Therefore, even if you don’t earn all of the required credits, you can still graduate so long as you have completed 12 credits toward the “Research Experience Component” of the major.

Can I apply credits from an activity to my class AND my REC?

No. A study’s credit can be allocated to only one thing (the REC or a specific course). It cannot be assigned to multiple things. This is why you are asked to choose were to assign a credit when you sign up for the study.

For example, if you were enrolled in a class (e.g., Intro Psych) in a prior semester and earned SONA credits for that class, you cannot now re-assign those credits to a current class or the REC.

My credits or a study were assigned to the wrong course. How do I reassign them?

It is possible to reassign SONA credits if they have not already been counted for extra credit in your prior course. For example, if you earned the SONA credits this semester, you can still re-assign them before the last day of instruction this semester (e.g., from REC to a specific class). Or if you earned more credits than could apply to a class, you could reassign the leftover credits to the REC; the opposite is true too (i.e., reassigning excess REC credits to a current course). In these cases, email the Psychology Subject Pool Coordinators (psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu) to request these credits be reassigned.

Why are my credits marked as “pending”?

Credits are marked as pending when you have signed up to complete a research study or attend a talk, but you have not yet been granted credit for completing it. For studies, this typically means that you did not finish the study. For talks, it means either that you did not attend the talk or else attendance log from the talk has not yet been uploaded into SONA.
I’m certain I completed the activity/talk, but my credits are still “pending”. What should I do?

If you have completed a study and your credits are still marked as “pending,” or if you attended a talk over a week ago and your credits are still marked as “pending,” please contact the lead researcher running the study or hosting the talk. It is their responsibility to assign credit. If they are unresponsive, then email the Psychology Subject Pool Coordinators at psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu with proof of study completion or talk attendance. This can include a screenshot of the completed study page, a code given at the end of the study, confirmation of completion from the researcher, or an explanation of what the study participation included.

How many activities are usually available on SONA?

In a typical semester, there are usually 10-15 research participation opportunities or talks listed. But they are not listed on SONA all semester long: some are listed in the early part of the semester, others in the middle or end of the semester.

If you know you need a good number of credits in a single semester, be sure to check SONA regularly (e.g., every two weeks) for listings.

Another option for earning credits is to write summaries of research articles. If you would like to earn credits in this manner, please contact the Subject Pool Coordinators at psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu to choose an article from our approved selection.

When do you recommend that I complete the 12 REC credits?

We advise that you complete them early in your final semester, ideally within the first month. Otherwise, you are likely to receive a truly terrifying email from the Registrar that you might not graduate. Don’t procrastinate.

I have not yet completed my 12 REC credits, and the semester is almost over. What should I do?

To get to 12 credits, you can choose any combination of the following options: participating in research studies, attending talks, or writing summaries of research articles. If you are interested in the summary writing option, please direct inquiries for research articles to the Subject Pool Coordinators at psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu.
I’m a senior, and I’ve completed my 12 REC credits and am now ready to graduate. What should I do?

Congratulations! The final step is to let the Psychology Subject Pool Coordinators know. Please email them (psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu) to request that they inform the registrar you have completed this requirement. Please include your N#.

Researcher FAQs

How do I get my study added to the SONA site?

To recruit participants for your study from the university through SONA, you will first need to fill out the Subject Pool Permission form found here:

Psychology Subject Pool Permission for Research Studies

Once that is completed and signed by both you and your faculty sponsor, please send the form to the Subject Pool Coordinators (psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu). They will sign the bottom of the form and send it back. This fully completed form will need to be included in the paperwork you submit to HREB.

Once you receive approval from the HREB, please forward the approval letter to the coordinators. At that point, you are ready to add your study to the SONA website. If you are not yet familiar with that process, the coordinator can help walk you through it.

How do I add my research talk to the SONA site?

If you are interested in promoting a talk as an opportunity for students to earn credit through SONA, you must complete a Permission Form. This form can be obtained from the Subject Pool Coordinators. Faculty can also access it from the department’s g-drive or sharepoint folder.

The completed form can be forwarded to the Subject Pool Coordinators (psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu) or Dr. Senko (senkoc@newpaltz.edu). Once your talk receives approval, it can be added to the SONA website.

How do I advertise my research study/talk to students?
Your faculty sponsor should be able to help with advertising the study/talk. Messages can be sent to certain groups of students via Blackboard. If you need any help with this process, feel free to contact the Subject Pool Coordinators (psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu).

**What is automatic credit granting?**

Automatic credit granting is a way for students to be immediately granted participation credit for your study upon completion. It applies only to online studies.

If you are conducting an online study, you should use this feature. It is simpler, faster, and less mistake-prone than manually approving participation credits. Automatic credit granting must be set up at the time the study is added to the SONA system.

**How do I set up automatic credit granting?**

We have written a simple step-by-step guide for granting automatic credit in studies done on Qualtrics. Contact the Subject Pool Coordinators (psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu) for this guide. Faculty can also access it from the department’s g-drive or sharepoint folder.

Please see the following link for instructions on linking a Qualtrics study to SONA to ensure automatic credit granting upon completion of the study. If you have any questions regarding this process, you can reach out to the Subject Pool Coordinators for help (psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu).

**When should my study’s participation deadline be?**

Please make the participation deadline on or before the last day of instruction for the current semester. You can find this date on the university’s academic calendar, or you can contact the Subject Pool Coordinator(s) at psychadvisor@newpaltz.edu.

The reason for this is to make sure that students complete their studies in the current semester so that their credits can be applied to their current courses.

Once the semester ends, you can always add a new timeslot with a later deadline so that you can continue the study.