

## Social Roles Lab Manual

We're so happy to have you as a research assistant in the Social Roles Lab! Your efforts are invaluable to conducting our research. Importantly, without you, Dr. Diekman and the graduate students would be unable to conduct research of the quality and speed necessary to effectively learn, expand knowledge of interest and motivation in STEM, and keep up with the publication standards of the field. Thank you! As you contribute to cutting edge research, please keep in mind the following lab policies.

### Lab Time Commitment

**Standard Commitment.** The standard time commitment for research assistants is 8 hours a week in the lab, plus a 1 hour lab meeting, to total the 9 hours of work expected of a 3.0 credit commitment. If you are not signed up to receive credit due to your course commitments, an 8 hour assignment is still standard.

**Other Commitments.** If you would like to be involved in the lab less than the standard time commitment, we're happy to accommodate you. If your availability on campus is limited, but you can work from a distance, we in many circumstances can also make this work. As a general rule, we would rather have you in the lab for fewer hours than not at all.

It is preferable that you speak to us about taking on fewer hours or a distance assignment at the beginning of the semester before you sign up for the full 3.0 credit course so we can ensure you're only receiving credit representative of your time commitment to the lab. However, we are also happy to work with you throughout the semester. If you are ever interested in reducing your hours from the standard time commitment or reducing your in-lab hours in exchange for working at a distance, email Dr. Diekman and the graduate students.

### Lab Duties

You are responsible for two main tasks as a research assistant: running participants and coding data when assigned. It is your right to be properly trained on all coding tasks and aspects of running participants. If you ever have a question, want more training, or need a refresher, feel free to ask. We want to make sure you're comfortable with your tasks!

**Organizational duties: Sona.** When you run participants, you will be responsible for putting up your Sona slots each week for the study that we are currently running in the lab. In general, we run participants during normal business hours (9am to 5pm) on Monday through Friday, and only when classes are in session. We do not run participants on the weekends, school breaks, or during final's week. If your regularly scheduled lab hours fall during a participant break day, you are not expected to come into the lab for your hours.

As part of your lab duties, you will be responsible for granting credit to participants who have participated, and no-shows for participants who did not show up. Mark participants no-show unexcused if you have not been contacted by them and they do not show up. If a participant contacts you to cancel, mark them no-show excused.

**Organizational duties: Lab time conflicts.** If you have a new consistent, reoccurring conflict with your scheduled lab time (e.g., a weekly discussion section was just added to your class, your on campus

job has put you on the schedule weekly for a lab time), don't panic. Please email the graduate students ASAP. We'll work with you to rearrange this.

If you have a once off time conflict (e.g., a doctor's appointment, illness, emergency), don't panic. We hope you're okay. If you are able, do not put up Sona slots for a time that you know you won't be able to be in lab. If you already have Sona slots up and find out you will have to miss your regularly scheduled lab time, immediately cancel any **empty** slots you have. If all of your slots are empty, there is no need to try and find a substitute.

If you have Sona slots up that have participants scheduled in them, you need to try and find a substitute. Email all other RAs, let them know of your situation, and see if any of them can take the slots – copy the graduate students on this email so they are aware, but know that as a general rule, graduate students should not be running slots even in the event of an emergency. If no one can take care of your slots, or if you cannot get anyone to respond in time, cancel the slots and apologize to the participants. Ask the participants to participate in the study at another time.

**Organizational duties: Paperwork.** You are responsible for ensuring that participants fill out and sign informed consent forms and filing these forms in the proper location. In addition, you are responsible for giving participants their debriefing forms.

When you notice that **there are less than 30 informed consent or debrief forms left in the filing cubby**, please make more copies at the copy machine in the first floor office area or **contact the graduate student in charge of that particular study**. Place the copies in the respected spots in the filing cubby.

**Running participants.** During your lab times, you should try to arrive 7-10 minutes early to set up the study. Greet participants and be sure to have them sign the informed consent form.

Be sure to ask that participants turn off their cell phones before they begin the research. Close the cubicle door behind them to minimize distractions.

Participants occasionally ask questions about the research. If they have not yet been debriefed, participants may have questions about the wording of an item or task. The best answer to this question is for participants to go with their gut feeling of what the question is asking. We do not want to sway participants to think about our items in one way or the other. If the participant has been debriefed, feel free to answer any of their questions to the best of your ability.

If an adverse event does occur, please do your best to calm the participant and find out what happened. Please assure them that they do not need to continue. Debrief them, and ask them if there's anything you can do to help them feel better. It is essential that if an adverse event does occur, email the graduate student running the study. If you do not know which graduate student is running the study, immediately email all of the graduate students.

After a participant finishes the study, be sure to hand them a debriefing form and answer their questions. Grant them credit on Sona.

**Coding.** You will be informed via email when you are expected to be coding data, and you should receive training from the graduate student asking for the request. If you don't have enough

information to perform the coding task, please feel free to ask for clarification or ask to schedule a meeting with the graduate student.

Unless you have arrangements with the lab or if it has otherwise been specified, you should only be working on coding during your regularly scheduled lab times. This helps us ensure that we aren't putting unreasonable demands on your time. Use the lull while participants are working on the experiment to code, and take advantage of times when no participants are scheduled. If you are scheduled in the lab at the same time as another research assistant, you're likely going to find yourself coding more often – let one research assistant handle the running of participants, and the other focus on coding.

### **Lab Meetings**

Unless you have a scheduling conflict known to the grad students, you should make every effort to attend the weekly lab meeting. Some weeks, you'll need to read a research article before lab so we can have a lab discussion. Other weeks, someone will present data analyses or propose a new project and seek your feedback. Lab meetings are a great way for you to see how research is conducted and disseminated.

### **Cool Research Opportunities**

Although being a research assistant in the Social Roles Lab already lets you dig into the research process and learn new things, there are several opportunities available to you that allow you to go beyond the normal research assistant role. These extra research experiences can help you grow your research knowledge and abilities, let you try and see if a research career may be for you, or look great on a resume regardless of what you pursue after Indiana University. If any of these interest you, be sure to talk to the graduate students.

**Undergraduate Research Conference.** If you'd like to go more in-depth into an ongoing project, consider signing up to present at the IU Undergraduate Research Conference. You'll work with a graduate student on an ongoing project, and you'll get to take a deeper dive into the project, shape the direction of the project, and potentially learn research skills such as data analysis and interpretation. Toward the end of the Fall semester, you'll present your findings as a poster. This is a great way to get more involved with research.

**Senior Thesis.** The senior thesis is a process guided by Indiana University and involves developing your project and conducting the research project your senior year. The senior thesis is presented at the IU Undergraduate Research Conference or the Midwestern Psychological Association. The senior thesis is closely advised by a graduate student and Dr. Diekman.

### **Questions?**

If you have any questions, contact the graduate students.