

The [Sona Experiment Management System](#) is used for the scheduling and management of the Psychology Department human subject pool at Christopher Newport University. The system provides an easy method for you to sign up for studies, and track your progress throughout the term. Everything is done through the software's web-based interface, so you can access the system at any time, from any computer, with a standard web browser.

## Getting Started

A listing of courses offering extra credit for research participation through the Sona system is available on the experiment management system at <http://cnu.sona-systems.com/>, but it is best to double-check with course instructors to confirm that their courses are accepting extra credit for participation. Instructors make the final decision to accept or decline all credits assigned to their course(s). **Any student who would plans on participating in any study MUST create a SONA user account.** If you are enrolled in PSYC 201 and/or 202, your participation is required either via research credit or completion of the alternative assignment for each course.

If you are enrolled in a class that is requiring or accepting extra credit, click on the *New User* link on the lower left corner of the experiment management system home page. Complete the account request form, making sure to provide your email information (e.g., joe.student.09) when you are prompted for a User ID. **Do not provide your student ID number!**\* As part of this process, you will need to **select all courses you are enrolled in that are accepting extra credit.** If you do not see your courses listed, please contact [hppc@cnu.edu](mailto:hppc@cnu.edu) *before* creating your account. Once submitted, your request will be processed and you will receive an email confirmation within two business days that your account has been activated. You will be assigned a default password, which you can change after your first login. If you did not receive your login information, please check your email program's junk mail folder before contacting the administrator. The most common reason for not receiving login information is that an email program misclassified the email as junk mail.

Before participating in any research, please review this guide to familiarize yourself with the operation of the system.

## Logging In

Once you have your login information, go to the front page of the site and enter your user ID and password to login. Once you login, you may be asked to review and acknowledge your organization's human subject policy for research. You will need to acknowledge this only once every 6 months. You may also be asked to participate in a prescreening. After you complete these tasks, you will see the Main Menu.

\*The SONA system is an independent website that is not integrated with CNU's Blackboard, email, or with the CNU Live interfaces so do not provide the CNU username or password that you use to access these sites to login to the SONA website. You will need to create a new account to enter the SONA website.

Your session will expire after a certain period of inactivity, usually 20 minutes. This is done for security purposes. If this happens, you can always log in again. When you are done using the system, it is better to explicitly log out, to prevent any problems that may arise if someone uses your computer before the session expires. This is especially important if you are using a public computer lab.

## Viewing and Signing Up For Studies

With the system, you may view studies and sign up for those that interest you and where you meet any special eligibility restrictions. You may cancel your sign-up through the system as well.

You may see some studies that are online studies. You should read the details of these studies closely, but generally you may participate in them online. It is usually assumed you will participate in the study shortly after you sign up for it, though you have until the Participation Deadline Date to participate.

To view a list of studies, click on Studies from top toolbar. You will see a list of studies. A brief description of each study will be listed, as well as any special requirements that may restrict your eligibility to participate in the study.

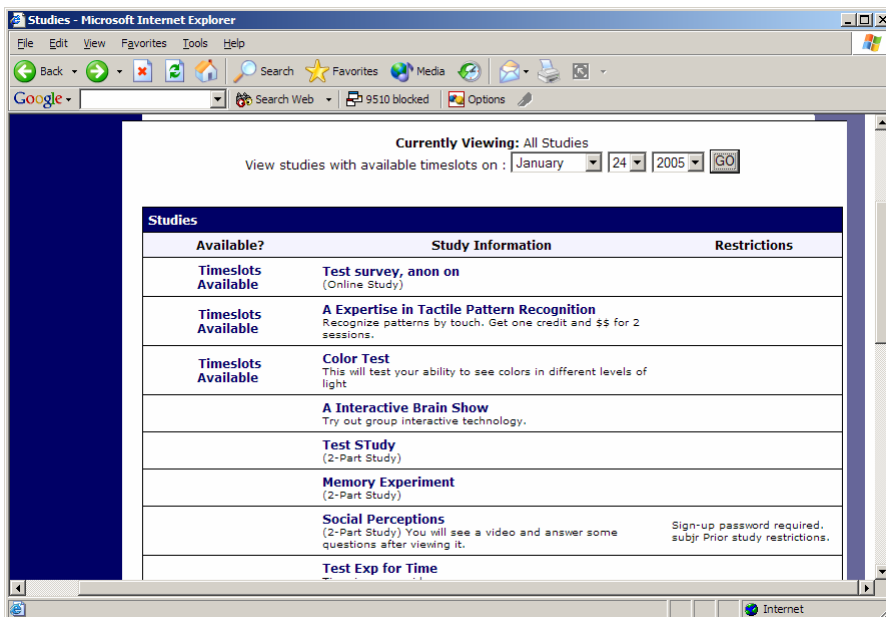


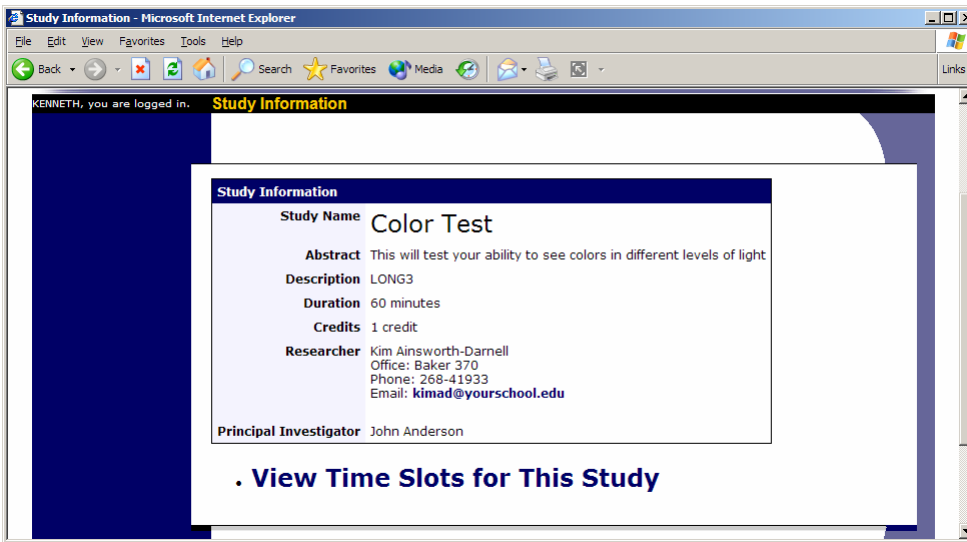
Figure 1 - Viewing Studies

Studies that currently have available participation times (timeslots) will have "TIMESLOTS AVAILABLE" listed next to the name of the study. If no studies have available timeslots, you may want to logon to the system a few days later to see if new timeslots have been added. You may also select a specific date to view studies with available timeslots on that date.

To view more information about a study, click on the name of the study. To sign up to participate in a study, find the study you would like to participate in. You will see a list of any special restrictions or eligibility requirements, as well as a contact person if you have questions about the study. In

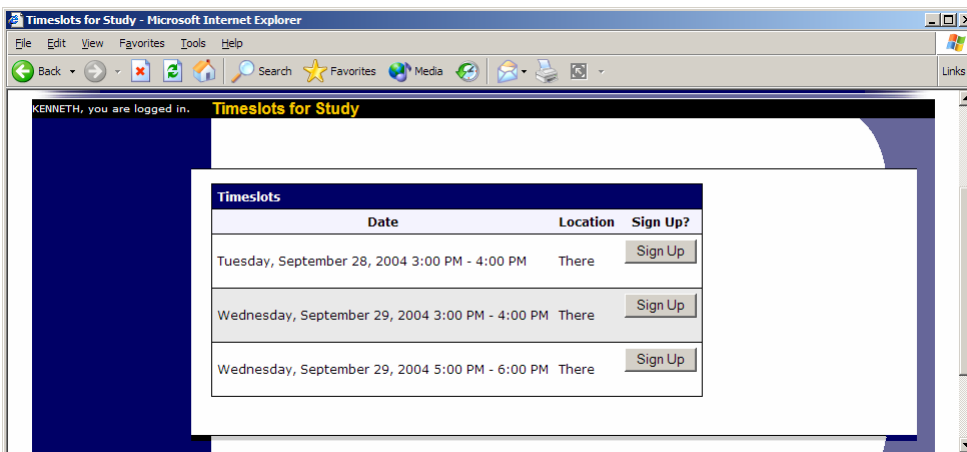
most cases, it is preferred to contact the person listed as the researcher if you have specific questions.

Some restrictions are automatically enforced by the system. If the study has certain pre-requisites or disqualifiers (studies you must *not* have participated in to participate in this study), those will be listed, as well as a note about whether you meet those Eligibility Requirements. An example of an eligibility requirement is "Left-handed people only." If listed, you should only sign up for the study if you meet this restriction. If you sign up for the study and you do not meet the restrictions, you will likely not receive credit for the study, and could face a penalty.



**Figure 2 - Study Information**

Once you have determined you meet all the requirements, click on View Timeslots for This Study and you will see a list of available timeslots. Choose a timeslot that is convenient for you, and click Sign Up.



**Figure 3 - Study Timeslots**

After you click Sign Up, you will see information displayed confirming the time and location of the study you plan to participate in. You may receive an email confirmation as well, depending on how

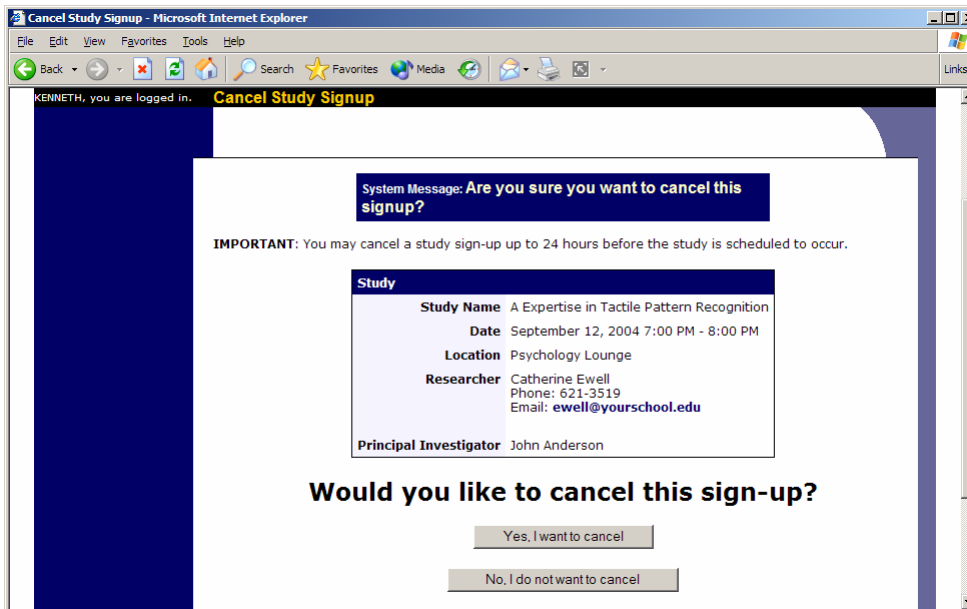
your system is configured. You are now signed up for the study. To cancel your sign-up, see Canceling a Sign-Up in this documentation.

## Canceling a Sign-Up

If you need to cancel a timeslot you have signed up for, you can do this from the My Schedule and Credits page. Choose the My Schedule/Credits option from top toolbar.

You will see listed all the studies you have signed up for, as well as those you have completed (see the Tracking Your Progress section of this documentation for more information).

Studies you have signed up for that you are allowed to cancel will have a Cancel button next to them. There is a time limit before the study is to occur, when it is too late to cancel. This restriction may be listed at the bottom of the page, or can be found by clicking on the study name and viewing the study details.



**Figure 4 - Sign-Up Cancellation**

Once you click Cancel to cancel your sign-up, you will see a confirmation page. You will also be warned if your cancellation might affect your ability to participate in other studies you have signed up for, due to pre-requisite restrictions. If the cancellation will affect your ability to participate in another study you are signed up for, it is *your* responsibility to deal with this issue (usually by canceling the depending study as well). The system will warn you, but will not block the cancellation.

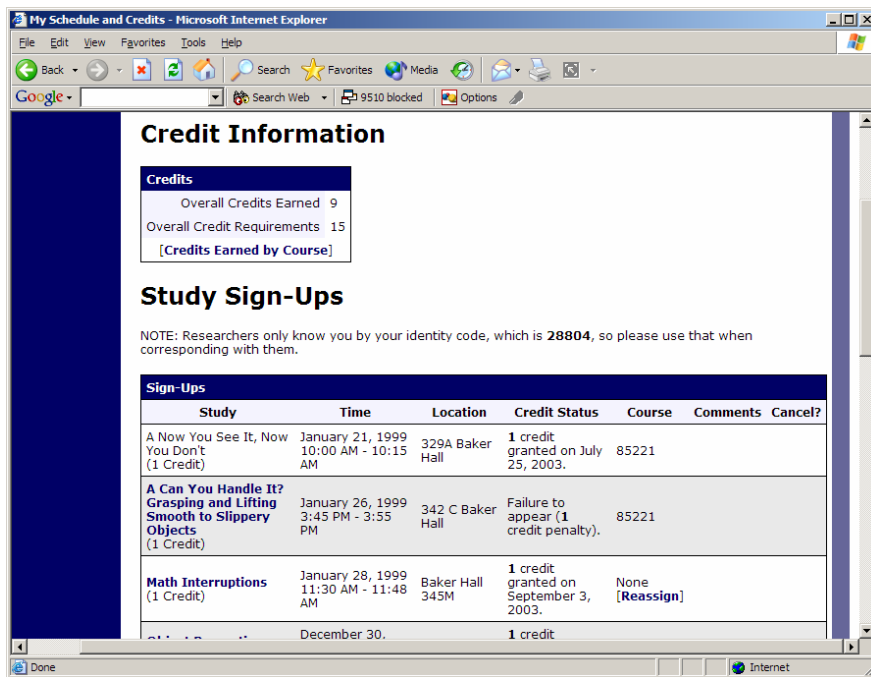
Click Yes to cancel your sign-up, and the sign-up will be cancelled immediately.

If you cancel the first part of a two-part study, the second part will also be cancelled. If you cancel the second part of a two-part study, the first part will *not* be cancelled, but you will need to ask the researcher to sign you up for the second part again, if you would like to participate in it at a later date.

## Tracking Your Progress

You may track your progress at any time by choosing the My Schedule/Credits option from the top toolbar.

When you view this page, you will see at the top a list of the number of credits you are required to earn, and how many you have earned so far. You may also have an option to view how many credits you have earned for each course. Below that, if you have signed up for any studies, those are listed as well. In the list of studies, you will see information about your credit status.



**Credit Information**

Credits

Overall Credits Earned: 9  
Overall Credit Requirements: 15  
[\[Credits Earned by Course\]](#)

**Study Sign-Ups**

NOTE: Researchers only know you by your identity code, which is **28804**, so please use that when corresponding with them.

Study	Time	Location	Credit Status	Course	Comments	Cancel?
A Now You See It, Now You Don't (1 Credit)	January 21, 1999 10:00 AM - 10:15 AM	329A Baker Hall	1 credit granted on July 25, 2003.	85221		
A Can You Handle It? Grasping and Lifting Smooth to Slippery Objects (1 Credit)	January 26, 1999 3:45 PM - 3:55 PM	342 C Baker Hall	Failure to appear (1 credit penalty).	85221		
Math Interruptions (1 Credit)	January 28, 1999 11:30 AM - 11:48 AM	Baker Hall 345M	1 credit granted on September 3, 2003.	None	[Reassign]	
	December 30.		1 credit			

**Figure 5 - Viewing Your Progress**

If you failed to appear for a study, it is possible you were assessed a penalty. That will be displayed in your progress, and the penalty (if assessed) will either increase the number of credits you must earn, or be deducted from your current credit earnings, depending on how the system is configured. It is possible you might end up with a negative value for the number of credits you have earned. Next to each credit or penalty, you can also see any comments the researcher left regarding the study and your credit for it. In cases where the study was set up for monetary compensation and not credits, your participation will be noted as "participated." This is done to ensure your eligibility for any studies where the study you just completed is a pre-requisite study.

Non-study credit is also listed, when applicable. Non-study credit is usually granted for completing the alternative article summary or some other special situation.

### **Reassigning Credits**

If you belong to multiple courses, you may reassign a credit from one course to another. To do this, simply use the Reassign link that appears when you view your progress. The link appears under the course entry for each item in your progress listing. You may not split a credit between two courses, for example by assigning 2 credits of a 3-credit study to one course, and 1 credit from that study to another course.