

**Memorial University of Newfoundland
Business Research Experience Pool (BREP):
Researcher and Faculty Documentation**

Please note that all Researchers and Faculty are required to read this document prior to requesting an account to login to the Sona experiment management system. Additional detailed instructions on the Sona software can be found in the Sona Information document.

All relevant forms and templates mentioned in this document can be found here:
<http://www.business.mun.ca/research/brep/>

Introduction

The Associate Dean (Research) is ultimately responsible for the administration of the research participation pool and the access to the pool shall be granted through application to the BREP Committee. The primary focus is that the BREP exists first and foremost as an educational resource: The experience provides students with first-hand experience of how research is conducted, much like a lab component in a traditional chemistry or biology course. Convenience for researchers is of secondary importance.

It is anticipated that as the pool develops, there will be some changes to its administration. Therefore, the following is a work-in-progress.

How BREP works

BREP regularly includes students in Business 2010 (Business Research & Writing). Additional courses can be added into the pool on a per-semester basis. This can be done by notifying the BREP Committee, via the Associate Dean (Research), well in advance of the upcoming semester. In addition, the Faculty of Business Administration will need to submit an amendment request to ICEHR to add courses to BREP. Once ICEHR approval is given to add a course, there is no need to request ICEHR approval for specific semesters, instructors, and/or offerings of the course. If the FBA wants to limit use of a course to certain semesters and/or decide on a semester-to-semester basis to allow a course to be used in BREP, an amendment is not required; as approval for courses will be ongoing as long as the ICEHR annual update is submitted for BREP.

Students in BREP can earn bonus course credits by participating in experiments (a written alternative assignment is also available). Each semester, the BREP Committee will determine the number of hours allocated to faculty based on projected enrollment. The Committee will seek to distribute at least twice as many hours as there are possible students to ensure that there are more research opportunities available than students and therefore to help ensure there is a choice of which studies in which the students can participate. This also means that **researchers should not necessarily expect to have all of their timeslots filled.**

Students will access a list of Faculty of Business approved research experiences via the Web. The URL (<http://mun-fba.sona-systems.com>) will clearly indicate that the site is affiliated with the Faculty of Business at Memorial University of Newfoundland. For each experience, the

web site will list the time, date, and location of the experience, as well as the number of credits to- be- earned. The web application also can send students reminders, provide a summary of credits, and handle most administrative aspects of the pool.

Because the primary purpose is educational, no student can be excluded from any study on the basis of any minority status. For example, a researcher cannot limit participation to just native English speakers or to just right handed people. However, researchers may choose to select participants on the basis of any minority status (e.g., students born outside of Canada). The system does not enforce these pre-requisites, so any student who mistakenly signs up must still be allowed to complete the study and be granted credit (even if the researcher cannot use their data).

Ethics Approval

The BREP Committee will decide whether a protocol provides an appropriate educational experience about research in Business. The BREP Committee will be responsible to pre-screen projects to assess if they are eligible to use BREP prior to the submission to ICEHR for ethics review. Applicants should indicate that they have received FBA permission to use the BREP when they apply to ICEHR. Researchers will then obtain ICEHR ethics approval (including the modified Informed Consent Form specific to BREP participants, Sona study description, and a feedback form) Faculty should keep in mind that they may need to submit a revised protocol to ICEHR that addresses the following:

1. The student can withdraw at any time without penalty. Credit will be awarded for time spent (e.g., 0 to 30 minutes = 0.5 credit; 31 to 60 minutes = 1 credit; 61 minutes to 90 minutes = 1.5 credits; 91 to 119 minutes = 2 credits).
2. A written debriefing is mandatory (see sample and template).
3. A Sona study description should be submitted. This description will be posted on the website listing available studies, and should be essentially the same as, for example, an email recruitment script.

It is therefore possible that some proposals approved by ICEHR will not be approved by the BREP Committee.

As some students take the course(s) approved for the BREP by distance, some on-line studies will be needed. However as the primary goal is for students to have an educational experience by participating in business research, not all online studies may be appropriate for the BREP. A researcher should be available to answer questions prior to consent and during participation, and to debrief the participant at the end of the experiment including answering any follow-up questions. An alternative option for researchers who rely on online questionnaires would be to book a computer lab for a group testing session so that the researcher can be present during research experience.

Obtaining Access to BREP as a Researcher

Only faculty (including honorary research professors and professors emeriti) with a primary appointment in Business are eligible to be allocated hours. Graduate and undergraduate student

researchers must get hours from a faculty supervisor. Faculty are ultimately responsible for how their graduate and undergraduate research students behave. Problems caused by undergraduate or graduate students working for a faculty member, or problems caused by the faculty member him/herself, can result in sanctions ranging from decreased priority for hours to suspension from using the pool for one or more semesters.

Faculty will request hours prior to the beginning of each semester. Once the deadline for submitting requests has past, the BREP Committee will determine how to allocate the hours. Hours will be allocated on the basis of the number of participants in BREP, the number of credit points they may earn, and the numbers of hours requested by all other researchers. Hours are allocated to faculty and it is up to the faculty member to determine how to divide hours among any research team members.

At any time during the semester, faculty members or researchers can request to post a new study in Sona. To do so, researchers submit a brief form that includes: the title and reference number of their ICEHR-approved protocol; a written description of what the experiment entails; a separate title and description that will be displayed on the Sona web site; a consent form that includes the BREP-specific wording; and a debriefing/feedback form.

It is important to have experimental sessions available to students every week of the semester. If the BREP Committee deems there are too few studies posted and available, it may offer additional hours to researchers who have experiments ready to be tested.

BREP Researcher Responsibilities

- Be available for all of the timeslots you post, and show up early
- Ideally, the researcher should be **present at the study location 10 minutes prior** to the start time.
- If you have a participant scheduled and you cannot make it to the study session, see if another researcher can cover for you. If this is not possible, email the participant to let them know you cannot make it and ask to reschedule if it's more than 24 hours before the timeslot.
- If it is **less than 24 hours** before a timeslot, and you cannot make the session, you can still ask the participant to reschedule (so you can get the data), but **you should still grant credit** for the original timeslot. You can do a manual signup for the re-scheduled time to participate to override any repeat-signup restrictions. (*See Sona Documentation for more details.*) You should also ask someone else to leave a note for the participant in the study location, in the event that they do not receive your email prior to the session.
- It is possible that sometimes a student cannot participate in a scheduled experiment due to reasons beyond everyone's control (i.e., a loss of power in the building, internet failure, university closure). Under these conditions, the student will not be penalized. If the student arrived in good faith, the student will be awarded the credit he/she would have obtained if the experience had not been cancelled. (You can still try to reschedule the study session, but the student would earn additional credit for participating.)

- Update student participation status as soon as possible
- Ideally, update the status to “participated” immediately after the end of the study session. If this is not possible, then you should minimally update each day’s timeslots at the end of the day.
- It is important for students who have participated to be able to view their updated credit point status as soon as possible.
- It is important that students who do not show up for a timeslot do not get awarded credit in error (by the system’s automatic crediting function). Students who do not show up for their session (and do not contact the researcher) should be updated as “No Show-Unexcused”. Students who contact you in advance of the timeslot to notify you they will not be attending (e.g., due to illness) should be updated as “No Show- Excused”. See the *Sona Documentation* for more details on updating timeslots.

What do I need to do next?

1. **Request BREP Hours** for the upcoming semester by the current deadline. Only faculty in the Business Department may request BREP hours, and hours will only be allocated to faculty members. It is the responsibility of each faculty member to request enough hours for everyone (students, RAs, etc.) in his/her team. Please note that you may not receive the number of hours requested, depending on the number of students and researchers involved in BREP in a given semester.

In order to apply for BREP hours, please submit a Request for Hours form and a Sona Study Description.

2. **Obtain approval from ICEHR to test BREP participants** in your experiment(s). This application or amendment should include:
 - a. BREP Informed Consent Form
 - b. Sona Study Description
 - c. Feedback Sheet
3. **Request a researcher account** for the Sona website. This should be done by faculty members and any researchers on their team who will be testing BREP participants, including graduate and undergraduate students and research assistants. Note that faculty are responsible for all researchers in their teams. To do this:
 - a. Read the BREP Researcher and PI Documentation
 - b. Fill out and submit the Researcher Account Request Form and submit to the FBA research officer
4. **Request a BREP New Study** (fill out and submit the form) for any ICEHR approved studies you wish to post in the BREP. Match the description to your submitted document, including the ICEHR approval statement, and make sure you round the duration to match the credit points (e.g., if your 1 credit experiment takes 45 minutes, the duration should be listed as 60 minutes).

5. **Create your study in Sona**, following the instructions in the Sona Information document (available at: <http://mun-fba.sona-systems.com>) **Use the link in the system to request visibility.**