

## EXPERIMENTAL PERMISSION FORM FOR STUDENTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

Guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services prohibit the use of children who are under the age of 18 as participants in psychological research unless permission is granted by their parents or guardians.

\_\_\_\_\_ is presently enrolled in a psychology course,  
(Student: Please print your name.) **UTEID**  
and as part of that course, must fulfill a research requirement either by participating in psychological research studies or by writing a paper on psychological research.

The Department of Psychology at the University of Texas at Austin believes that participation in psychological research provides the student with a positive educational benefit because the students see first hand how data about human behavior are gathered. This experience with research should enable the student to evaluate the results of research presented in the text, in books, and in the news media.

Before you sign the statement below, you might be interested in reading the following page that briefly describes the Department of Psychology, the various types of research that are conducted by members of the Department, and the approval process for research studies.

My son or daughter, \_\_\_\_\_, has my permission to  
(Please write in name of your son or daughter.)  
serve in research projects approved and monitored by the Departmental Review Committee of the Department of Psychology and the Institutional Review Board of The University of Texas at Austin.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian

**Please return this completed form to Abby Black in SEA (Seay Psychology Building),  
Room 2.216 via mail, hand delivery, or fax: (512) 471-3413**

## PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The Department of Psychology at the University of Texas at Austin is composed of approximately 50 full time faculty, 150 graduate students, and 1,500 undergraduate psychology majors. Approximately 250 research projects using human participants are conducted in the Department every year. All this research activity allows your son or daughter the opportunity to contribute to the advancement of science as well as to obtain knowledge in the various areas in which research is carried on at the Department. Participation in research projects also provides first-hand information on how psychological research is conducted at a major university. We feel that this is a rewarding personal experience and is also useful in evaluating the research that we read about in textbooks and the popular press. Finally, as research workers, we are interested in allowing the student to experience some of the intellectual excitement that is always a part of the research enterprise. Many psychologists first became interested in research as a result of the interest aroused when they served as participants in a project.

The topics investigated in the various research studies are as diverse as is the field of psychology. However, the majority of studies investigate such topics as learning, memory, perception, language, interaction of small groups, effect of personality upon performance, choice behavior, and attitudes. Some of the experiments are interesting; others may be dull or boring.

The Institutional Review Board, a university committee established to protect human research, reviews each of the studies conducted in the Department of Psychology. For a research study to be approved, a researcher must convince the members of the committee that the subjects will be treated fairly by the researcher and that any physical or psychological discomfort will be minimal. Prior to participation in a study, each potential participant is informed about aspects of the study that could reasonably be expected to affect his or her decision to participate in the study and signs a statement indicating that he or she has received this information and that he or she agrees to participate in the study. A student may drop out of a study at any time if he or she wishes to do so. The researcher may not use persuasion, coercion, or threats to induce the student to remain in the study. If the study asks the participant personal questions, the participant may simply refuse to answer those questions which he or she deems objectionable or threatening without fear of embarrassment or coercion. In all cases, the names of the persons serving in a study and the answers they give are treated as confidential information to the fullest extent possible. The names of the research participants are never associated with their responses in any published documents.

All researchers are required to explain the nature of the study to each participant before dismissing the participant. The purpose of the study and the reasons for the way the study was conducted are explained fully so that they are clear to the participants. This ensures that participation in the study will be a learning experience for the participants.

If further information is desired about research conducted by the members of the Department of Psychology at the University of Texas at Austin, please contact:

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