Department of Communication
Participant Pool Manual for Researchers

January 17, 2018
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I. Key Contacts and Links

PPool Webpage:  https://tamucommunication.sona-systems.com/
PPool Email:  CommPool@tamu.edu

II. Registering a Sona Account

   a) You sign in and/or register on the pool webpage:  
      https://tamucommunication.sona-systems.com/
   b) If you are a returning graduate student or faculty member, you can continue using your login 
      information from previous semesters.
   c) If you are a new graduate student or faculty member, and want to run studies using the 
      participant pool, email the participant pool assistant requesting an account 
      (CommPool@tamu.edu).
   d) If you forget your login information, you can use the ‘Forgot Password?’ function on the Sona 
      sign-in page. Your User ID is usually your TAMU email address without the “@TAMU.edu”. If 
      this still doesn’t work, email the participant pool assistant, Gabriel Pantoja 
      (pantoja65@tamu.edu).

III. Steps to Getting Your Study Approved for the Participant Pool

   There are three separate steps for getting your study approved to be on the participant pool. You 
   must do Step #1 first, but you can do Steps #2 and #3 in any order.

   Step 1: Getting IRB Approval

   To run a study in the participant pool, you must have IRB approval. This approval must also 
   include the following:

   a) A clear statement indicating that you plan to use the Communication Recruitment Pool to 
      recruit participants.
   b) A concise description of your how your study is described to prospective participants (likely 
      placed directly in your consent form but potentially with additional language in the 
      application itself).
   c) A description of any prescreen items you plan to use, including exact wording of the 
      questions.
   d) An indication of how many credits you plan to award for participation (at a rate of 1 credit for 
      every 30 minutes of participation).
**Step 2: Documenting IRB Approval**

The Participant Pool Committee is tasked with making sure that your use of the participant pool is consistent with the approved protocol. For us to evaluate this, we must know not only that your study is approved but the conditions of that approval.

To do this, email pdf copies of the following documents to the participant pool (CommPool@tamu.edu):

a) Your IRB approval letter.
b) The full IRB application that is currently approved.
c) Your consent forms or information sheets
d) Any other documents required for us to evaluate the documents (as described below and potentially including a cover letter if you wish to highlight specific questions or concerns).

**IV. Loading your Study into SONA**

To begin recruiting, you must post your study on Sona. You can do this work before your study is officially approved but it will only become “active” (such that you can begin recruiting) when the approval is goes through.

a) Sign in to Sona (see above).
b) Click on the “Add a Study” link.
c) You need to select one of the following
   a. Standard Study (which has a time and place – e.g., classroom or lab room)
   b. Multi-Part Study (which requires consultation with the pool committee to set up)
   c. Online Internal Survey
   d. Online External Study

   *Instructions from here first assume Standard Study and then provide documentation for online studies.*

d) Now you will have to fill out the Basic Study Information. Below we detail how you should fill out this information. Please read this carefully—not following the instructions below will delay the approval process for your study.

   - **Study Name (required):** This is the study name (Study Title) that will be shown to participants. Your study name should match the study name as it appears in your IRB protocol. Studies will be presented to participants in a random order—not alphabetical order. You will not gain any advantage based on name ordering.
   - **Brief Abstract:** List the Study Name a second time. Do not include any information in this field other than the Study Name (Study Title).
   - **Detailed Description (required):** This is the description of your study that will show up after participants click on your study. This study description should match how you said your study would be advertised in your IRB documents. If explicit wording was not approved in your IRB application, then the wording MUST be taken directly from your approved consent form or information sheet. This description will give participants a brief description of a) what your study is about, b) what they will be doing, c) where
the study is taking place—building and room number, and d) any other pieces of
information that participants should know before making a decision about whether to
participate your study. The duration of your study, and the number credits that are to
be awarded, will be visible to participants elsewhere. Do not include any language on
study duration in this field. Note: You also may not engage in any study description
that in any form “markets” participation (e.g., “this is an easy study that takes only 10
minutes”). Even if such language is approved by IRB, it might be declined by the pool,
resulting in a need to revise your IRB submission.

- **Eligibility Requirements (optional):** This is where you should write about any eligibility
  requirements that you have for your study. Note: A more efficient way to enforce
  eligibility is using prescreen items. Note: If someone signs up who is not eligible, you
  may email them through the system to have them withdraw but, if they show up, you
  must give credit. This is why you are better served creating a prescreen item.

- **Duration (required):** Indicate how long your study will take to complete. Study duration
  must be in 30-minute increments. For example, if your study actually only takes 20
  minutes to complete, you must indicate 30 minutes in this section; if your study takes
  40 minutes to complete, you must indicate 60 minutes in this section.

- **Credits (required):** Indicate how many credits participants will receive for participating
  your study. Participants must be given as 1 credit for every 30 minutes of participation.
  Thus, the duration and credits sections must coincide. If you say the study will take 30
  minutes to complete, you must indicate that participants will receive 1 credit per
  participant; if you say a study will take 60 minutes to complete, you must indicate that
  participants will receive 2 credits for their participation—and so on.

**Timeslot Usage Limit.** This notice alerts you to the upper limit on the number of
credits/hours that you can collect in your study. If you require more than the default
number, email the pool administrators (CommPool@tamu.edu) to make such a
request.

- **Preparation (optional):** This is where you should let participants know how they should
  prepare for your study (e.g., not eating for 12 hours before participation). Any use of
  this field must be approved by the IRB. Note: You should use email to remind
  participants of this. If you wish not to give credit for those who shows up
  “unprepared,” then you must have IRB approval for this procedure.

- **Researcher (required):** Using the drop-down menu, select your name as the researcher
  (unless you are setting the study up for a co-investigator). We only allow one researcher
  per study. If you cannot find your researcher using the drop-down list, email the
  participant pool assistant coordinator about creating a P.I. account for your researcher
  (CommPool@tamu.edu). Note: Researchers must be affiliated with the department
  as a faculty member or graduate student.

- **Principal Investigator (required):** Using the drop-down menu, select the P.I. that was
  listed on your IRB documentation. The P.I. for your study must match the P.I. indicated
  on your IRB documentation. The P.I. must be affiliated in some way with TAMU’s
  Department of Communication. If you cannot find your P.I. using the drop-down list,
  email the participant pool assistant coordinator about creating a P.I. account for your
  P.I. (CommPool@tamu.edu). Note: P.I.’s must be affiliated with the department as a
  faculty member.
- **IRB Approval Code (required):** Enter the IRB approval code here (listed as “IRB ID” on your approval letter). This field is displayed to the administrator to help them keep track of studies. This code must match the IRB approval code found on your IRB documents—if it does not, we will not approve your study.

- **IRB Approval Expiration (required):** Enter the date when your IRB approval expires, which should match the date on your IRB approval letter. The system will prevent you from adding new timeslots to take place after this date, and your study will become inactive (not approved and thus not visible to participants) after this date. This expiration date must match the date found on your IRB documents—if it does not, the administrator will not approve your study. If your study is considered “exempt” by the IRB—and thus does not have an expiration date—please select the last day of the spring semester of the current academic year.

**Approved?** This notice alerts you at the time you register your study that your study has not yet been approved. This is the default when you are entering a study for the first time. This notice will change later when you go back to review your information. If you later change any aspect of your study registration (e.g., # of credits), the notice will default back to unapproved.

- **Active Study? (required):** Select Yes if this study is in progress. You must select Yes and the study must be approved (by the participant pool assistant) if you want the study to show up to participants on the list of available studies. If you have set this study up before you have IRB approval, select ‘No’ for now so that your study registration request is not reviewed. You also will change this to ‘No’ after the study is completed.

**Advanced Settings**

- **Prerequisites (optional):** If there are studies a participant must participate in before participating in your study, choose them here. Participants cannot see which studies you have specified as pre-requisites when they go to view your study.

- **Disqualifiers (optional):** If there are any studies a participant must not have participated in, please select them here. Participants will not see which studies you have specified as disqualifiers when they go to view your study.

- **Course Restrictions (optional):** If you would only like participants enrolled in certain courses to participate in your study, select the eligible courses here. NOTE: If you are a participating instructor (such that students in your courses are participating in the pool), you should choose course restrictions such that you EXCLUDE your own course. You will be blocked by the participant pool from recruiting from your own courses and so failing to check this option may result in delays.

- **Invitation Code (optional):** If you would like to have a special sign-up password for this study, enter it here. This is known as an invitation code, and applies just for this study. Participants must know the invitation code to sign up for this study. This is can be used in cases where a researcher wants to personally select participants (typically based on prescreening data), so the researcher only provides the invitation code to the desired participants. Invitation codes are not case sensitive. If you do not need an invitation code, leave this field blank. The participant pool coordinators can provide assistance.

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1 If your approval letter does not have a current expiration (which might occur in some instances when studies are amended), provide a screenshot of the expiration from inside the Iris system, and the participant pool will follow-up seeking confirmation with IRB, prior to approving your study.
on using this option and guidance on language to include in an IRB application to ensure compliance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Is this a web-based study.</strong> This answer will be set from your prior answers. Ignore this.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Study URL:</em> You ONLY us this option if your study is being run online. If you are running a Standard Study (i.e., in-person lab study) leave this field blank. For information about how set up an online study, see below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Participant Sign-Up Deadline (required – but already filled out at 24 hours by default):</em> Enter the deadline before the study is to occur that the participant must sign up, in whole hours. If you want more time to plan, you might want to extend this number to 48, 72, etc., hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Participant Cancellation Deadline (required – but already filled out by default):</em> Enter the deadline before the study is to occur that the participant may cancel their existing sign up, in whole hours. If you alter the time, cancellation deadline should be equal to or shorter than the sign-up deadline, so participants can cancel an accidental sign-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Should the Researcher receive an email notification when a participant signs up or cancels? (required – but already filled out by default):</em> If set to Yes, the researcher for this study will receive an email notification whenever a participant signs up, or cancels their sign-up, for this study. The email notification will be sent to an email address based on the information the researcher has provided. Emails will contain the first 50 characters of the study name as part of the subject line, to make it easy to sort the emails with an email program that supports filtering based on subject line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Automatic Credit Granting (required – leave this option at ‘YES’).</em> You should be assigning “Credits” or “No Shows” within 24 hours. However, if you fail to do this, the system will assign credits in 48 hours. <strong>Note:</strong> Use of this default will result in a warning from the pool to assign credits within 24 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Shared Comments (optional):</em> This is an optional area where you may enter any comments or notes about the study. These are visible to any researchers and P.I.s in the system, but not to participants. This field is useful if you want to make the technique used in the study visible to other researchers, so they can set your study as a disqualifier if necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Private Comments (optional):</em> This is an optional area where you may enter any comments or notes about the study that will only be visible to the researchers (and PI) for this study, and not to participants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Alternative.** Set by default. Ignore this.

When you are finished filling out your study information, click the **Add This Study** button.

As was stated earlier, Steps 1 and 2 need to be completed before your study can be approved. Once completed, your study should be approved within 24 hours (M - H) or 45 hours (F - S).
V. After Your Study Has Been Approved

4. Posting Timeslots
At this point, your study is approved. For participants to see your study, you will need to post
timeslots. These instructions are primarily for Standard Studies (i.e., in-person lab studies). For
information about posting timeslots for online studies, see the ‘Online Studies’ section below.

a) After signing in to Sona, click on the “My Studies” button.
b) Click on the study for which you would like to add timeslots.
c) Click on the “Study Menu” drop-down list button, and then select “View/Administer Time
   Slots”.
   i. If you want to add a single timeslot (e.g., Thursday, January 18th, from 11:30 – 12:30
      in Bolton Hall, Room 213), click the Add a Timeslot button. After clicking, indicate
      the date of the timeslot, the start time, how many participants you will be running
      during the timeslot, and the location of your study. When you’ve entered all of this
      information, click the “Add This Timeslot” button.
   ii. If you’re adding multiple timeslots (e.g., 8 separate sessions, starting on the hour,
      from 9:00 – 5:00, with 10 minute breaks in between, in Bolton Hall, Room 213), then
      click the Add Multiple Timeslots button. Indicate the number of timeslots you’d
      like to post, the date of the timeslots, the start time of the first timeslot, how much
      time you’d like between timeslots, how many participants you’d like to run during
      each timeslot, and the location of your study. Again, for location, please indicate
      the building and room number (e.g., Bolton Hall, Room 225). When done, click
      Add Selected Timeslots.
d) After adding timeslots, you will be moved to a screen where you can view timeslots (all,
   recent, upcoming or older).
   NOTE: Sona also allows you to copy over timeslots from previous weeks, so you do not have to
   recreate the same timeslots week after week. This is convenient, especially if you have the same
   study schedule every week. To do this, click the “Add Multiple Timeslots” button, and then
   indicate the week you’d like to copy (i.e., “From the week of”) and the week you’d like to copy it to
   (i.e., “To”).

2. Running Your Study (Bring your List of Participant ID #s)

When you run your study, it is important to bring with you a checklist of the people who are to
show up. You will not have a list of names. Rather, you will have a list of Sona ID numbers (e.g.,
3103).

To obtain the list, return to the “View/Administer Time Slots” and select the day. Then choose
View Printer-Friendly List of Signups. Bring that with you to the study so that participants can
check off their Sona ID number. Note: If participants forget their ID, they can log into their own
Sona account and click on the “My Profile” button on the homescreen.
3. **Assigning Credit**

   *After participants participate in your study, you will need to give credit to those who showed and determine how you would like to handle those who do not show. Assign credit within 48 hours of the timeslot. Failure to provide timely assignment might result in a warning, with repeat warnings potentially resulting in loss of use of the participant pool.*

   **To assign credit:**
   
a) After signing in to Sona, click on the “My Studies” button.
   
b) Click on the study for which you would like to assign credit.
   
c) Click on the “Study Menu” drop-down list button, and then select View/Administer Time Slots.
   
d) Next, you’ll have to find the specific timeslot to which you’d like to assign credit. To do this, can click the “All Timeslots” or “Recent Timeslots”. At this point, you need to input the date of the timeslot for which you’d like to assign credit.
   
e) Once you find your timeslot, click the **Modify button**.
   
f) This is when you actually assign the credit. Below are some different credit-assignment scenarios.

   a. **Scenario 1:** If the participant showed up, participated, and their study session took as long as you were expecting (e.g., 30 minutes), click the “Participated” bubble—participants will then receive the amount of credit that was advertised (e.g., 1 credit).
   
b. **Scenario 2:** If the participant showed up, participated, but then his/her session took longer than expected, you must give them more credit than was advertised. For example, if your study was advertised as a 30-minute study worth 1 credit, but a participant’s session takes over 30 minutes (e.g., 40 minutes), you must assign them 2 credits.
   
c. **Scenario 3:** If the participant showed up, but then decided he/she did not want to participate your study, click the “Participated” bubble. You can make the decision about how much credit to assign. If participants were there for 30 minutes or less, you should give them 1 credit; if they were there between 30 and 60 minutes, and then decided to leave, you should give them 2 credits, and so on.
   
d. **Scenario 4:** If the participant did **not** show up, and he/she failed to provide a worthy excuse for their absence, you can give them an ‘unexcused no-show’. It is up to you what constitutes a valid excuse for a no-show. When you give a participant an ‘unexcused no-show’, he/she will **not** be able to sign-up to participate in your study again in the future (and repeated unexcused absences might result in additional restrictions, as determined by the participant pool administrators).
   
e. **Scenario 5:** If the participant did **not** show up, but has a worthy excuse for their absence, you can give them an ‘excused no-show’. Again, it is up to you what constitutes a valid excuse for a no-show. When you give a participant an ‘excused no-show’, he/she will be able to sign-up to participate in your study again in the future.
   
f. **Once you’ve made your selection concern credit, click the Update Timeslot button.**

   Please do **not** use the ‘No Action Taken’ function—we do not consider this to be a proper handling of credit. The only time you would ever use the ‘No Action Taken’ function is if you ever need to manually cancel a timeslot after it has occurred—which, in most cases, is not recommended. Choosing this option will likely result in a follow-up inquiring from the participant pool committee to determine the rationale.
VI. Special Topics

1. Online Studies

Sona provides two different types of online studies: internal online studies and external online studies.

Internal Online Studies
At this point, we will not go into detail about how to set up internal online studies, but we will provide you with some basic information about them to help you decide whether you’d like to run one.

- **Pros:** They are run within Sona (no need to link to outside software) and credit is automatically granted after participants finish the study.
- **Cons:** They lack a certain degree of complexity that you can get by using other survey software, such as Qualtrics (e.g., random assignment, piping text, branching, etc.) and the interface is not user-friendly.

If you have a very basic survey that does not require much complexity in its design, an internal online study might be the way to go. The only hurdle is the initial learning curve using the Sona survey engine. If your study requires any sort of complexity or if you already have mastery of a separate survey tool (e.g., Qualtrics, Survey Monkey), you will want to use an external online study. For more information about how to set up an internal online study, email the participant pool CommPool@TAMU.edu to request additional documentation and/or instruction.

External Online Studies
Many researchers opt to use external online studies rather than internal online studies. External online studies—studies that use outside survey software, such as Qualtrics, afford researchers considerable flexibility with survey/study design (e.g., random assignment, text piping, branching), and there is also the option of setting up automatic credit granting (similar to internal online studies). For this manual, we will discuss how to use Qualtrics as your outside survey software. Researchers familiar with other survey tools can adapt this tutorial for the associated software and are can receive guidance from the pool coordinators by emailing CommPool@tamu.edu.

Setting Up an External Online Study

- When setting up your Online External Study, follow all of the steps covered earlier in “Step 3: Setting up your Study.” We will assume that you are setting up your study in Qualtrics. See the PPool coordinators for other programs (e.g., Survey Monkey).
- In addition to those sections already reviewed, you will do the following:
  1. Complete the section for **Study URL** in the study Advanced Settings, when registering. Here you will simply add in the link to your Qualtrics survey.
  2. At the end of your survey URL, you must include “%SURVEY_CODE%” (without the quotations) and a variable name that differentiates between participants. For
example, if I choose that I want my variable name to be `id`, at the end of my study URL, without any spaces, I would include “?id=%SURVEY_CODE%.”

3. Next, within Qualtrics, in your Survey Flow, go to the bottom of the screen and click **Add a New Element Here**. Click on **Embedded Data**. Type the variable name `id` into the field provided. (Note: This field is case-sensitive.) Then, click **Save Flow**.

4. After hitting “save flow,” you will move back to a screen where you can now go to **Survey Options**. Click on this drop-down box and go to the **Survey Termination** option. Click the option to Redirect to a full URL. Go back to your study information page in Sona and cut and paste the URL from the section reading, *Qualtrics Redirect to a URL*. Cut this redirect link (from Sona) and paste it into the redirect box in (in Qualtrics). Press **Save** and that’s it. To see an example with screen shots, go to this [webpage](goo.gl/HWqDZH).

### Posting Timeslots/Assigning Credit for an External Online Study

- Go to “My Studies” and select the online study (once it is approved). Select that study. Go to “View/Administer Time Slots” on the drop-down screen. From there, click “Add a Timeslot” to add times of participation. This can either be oriented around a deadline (“Final Participation Time”) or a maximum number of participants to participate.

#### 2. Multi-Part Studies

With Sona there are numerous ways to set up a multi-part study. We will briefly highlight 3 different strategies for creating multi-part studies. However, we suggest the first time you seek to run such a study, that you contact the participant pool directly for a consultation ([CommPool@TAMU.edu](mailto:CommPool@TAMU.edu)). The information below will help you understand the options to pursue:

**Two-Part, In-Person Lab Study**

Sona has a built-in multi-part study feature, but it is quite limited. It only works for in-person lab studies—it does not work for online studies—and it can only accommodate 2 time points. If you are interested in running a two-part, in-person lab study, this feature will work well for you. However, if you want to run a multi-part study that is either online or has more than 2 time points, you must use a different strategy.

**Prerequisites Strategy**

This strategy relies on using Sona’s prerequisites feature (described above). In a nutshell, for this strategy, you would create multiple studies (i.e., however many time points you want), and set prerequisites from time point 2 on. For example, to participate in the second-time-point study, you can set it so that participants must have first participated in the first-time-point study; to participate in the third-time-point study, you would set it so that participants must have first

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2 Note that during the Spring semester of 2017, Qualtrics changed the structure of the anonymous links (URL’s) that it uses. The old format included “/SE/?SID=” as part of the URL, and for this format, one needed to add an ampersand (“&”) prior to the “id=%SURVEY_CODE%” text. However, in the new format URL, the ampersand needs to be changed to a question mark (“?”), as shown in the example above. This is related to the rules Qualtrics uses for assigning variable values. If you run into problems with this, please contact the participant pool assistant at CommPool@TAMU.edu.
participated in the second-time-point study (and so on). The primary flaw with this strategy is that you cannot guarantee that participants will sign up for subsequent time-point studies—just because they participated in your first-time-point study, it doesn’t mean they will necessarily sign up for your second- and third-time-point studies. To get around this flaw, you could try to explain the process clearly in your study descriptions, but there is still no way of guaranteeing that participants will sign up for all of your studies.

Manual Sign-Up Strategy
Given the possibility of attrition—as described in the Prerequisites Strategy section above—some researchers would rather sign participant up to all time points at the same time. This is difficult, if not impossible, to do in Sona. One strategy that gets close to doing this utilizes Sona’s manual sign-up feature. In this scenario, you might post your first-time-point strategy on Sona with a very clear study description. And then once participants show up to participate in the your first-time-point study, you can manually sign them up for the subsequent time-point studies (if they consent to this).

- As discussed above, some multi-part study strategies require creating multiple studies within Sona. If this is what you plan to do, when emailing your documents to register your study (“Step 2: Documenting IRB Approval”), please indicate that you will be submitting multiple studies as part of your multi-part study (potentially providing details in an attached cover letter). Doing this will facilitate the study-approval process and can help us assist you with implementation.

- For more information about Sona’s built in two-part in-person lab studies and/or manually signing participants up to a study, you can schedule a meeting with the participant pool assistant (CommPool@TAMU.edu), or see the Researcher/PI Sona User Manual—if you don’t already have this manual, email the participant pool assistant (CommPool@TAMU.edu).

- Regardless of the strategy you choose, if you are running a multi-part study, please be very specific about your procedures when you describe your study in the “Detailed Description” section when setting up your studies—participants should know exactly what they will be asked to do and how much credit they should expect to earn by participating in all of your time points.

3. Getting Re-Approval for a Study Mid-Semester

- If you make certain changes to your study after it has been approved (e.g., changing the researcher or P.I., or changing the credits to be given for your study), your study will become unapproved. Sona will warn you before you make any change that would cause your study to become unapproved. If you make one of these changes, you will need to get your study re-approved.

- In this case, use the “Send Request” button on your study information page. Within the textbox give us a brief description of the change, and why you don’t need IRB-approval for your change. This should be the only instance in which you use the “Send Request” button.

- If the change does not match what your IRB protocol already specifies (e.g., changing your study from 30 minutes to 60 minutes), you will need to provide documentation of an IRB amendment
that allows this change. If you have already this document, you can send it directly to CommPool@tamu.edu with an explanation of the issue. If you have not, your study activities will be suspended until you gain this approval and provide this documentation.

4. **Cancelling Timeslots**

- If no one has signed up for your study, you may cancel the timeslot at any time.
- If participants have already signed up, but you would like to cancel the session, you should email participants THROUGH THE SONA SYSTEM (see below) and please arrange for a note to be placed on the session room door for in-person studies, if possible. (A note should not take the place of an email but is a basic courtesy that should be observed whenever possible.)
- Sona allows you to contact participants that are signed up for your study without you having to learn participants’ names or email addresses—use this feature. If you cancel the session more than 24 hrs in advance, you do not have to award credit(s). If you cancel a session less than 24 hrs in advance, you have to award credit(s). Please remind participants to check their e-mails prior to attending the experiment.

5. **Communicating with Research Participants**

- There are many reasons why you might need to contact participants directly (e.g., to cancel a session, to coordinate follow-up sessions, etc.) and there are many instances in which students might contact you (e.g., to check on credits, to ask questions about your procedures and protocols).
- **When you are in information screen for your study, you can go to** View/Administer Time Slots and then click Modify next to the timeslot. Below each participant, you can click on Contact to contact the individual participant. Also, at the bottom of each timeslot, you are given the option to Contact All Participants, which will give you the option of contacting all in that timeslot.
- Unless a mode of contact has been approved by the IRB as part of the study protocol, ALL EMAIL CONTACT WITH PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED THROUGH THE SONA SYSTEM. This even applies when a participant has provided you with a personal email account to use.
- You also are advised that ALL email contact occurring in the SONA system is archived and may be read by the participant pool coordinators, with them in some instances being obligated to report contact to the IRB (e.g., in instances in which participants report a breach of confidentiality or mistreatment) and, in consultation with the Department Head, may result in loss of access to the participant pool.

6. **Contacting the Pool**

For any adverse events or concerns regarding interactions or experiences of research participants, contact Texas A&M University Human Research Protection Program at 1-979-458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu. For questions or concerns related to the use of the participant pool, contact any of the participant pool at: CommPool@tamu.edu