CROPs guidelines for COMM 15000 instructors

Overview of CROPs

The Communication Research Online Participation System (CROPs) is a website developed to facilitate research involving COMM 15000 students. Days, times, and locations for all sessions for available research projects are posted on CROPs. COMM 15000 students go to the website to sign up for a study, cancel their participation in a study, or check the number of research participation points they have earned.

Researchers wishing to use COMM 15000 students as participants in a study submit a request form to the Communication Research Center (with evidence of IRB approval). The Assistant Basic Course Director posts the research project to the CROPs website (https://cci-apps.kent.edu/crops/). COMM 15000 students may then sign up online to attend specific sessions of the project or to receive a survey link via email. Most projects require either approximately 30 or 60 minutes of the student’s time. Thirty-minute projects allow students to earn 15 research participation points (of 60 possible points); 60-minute projects are worth 30 points.

For face-to-face sessions: Prior to conducting a specific session, researchers print out a list of students signed up for that session. Upon leaving a session, the student signs next to his or her name on the list. Following the session, the researcher returns to the website and records whether each student who signed up attended or was absent.

For online sessions: Upon completing the online study, students will be redirected to an online form, which allows students to leave their personal information that will enable the researcher(s) to award points for participation. Please note that responses and personal information cannot be linked, which ensures that participants’ responses cannot be traced back to a single individual. Once online data collection has been completed, the researcher returns to the website and records whether each student who signed up attended or was absent.

Uses of CROPs by COMM 15000 Instructors

Creating an account on CROPs

At the beginning of each new term, all COMM 15000 Instructors are listed as Users on the CROPs system. To use the system, each Instructor must also create an account. To do this, go to https://cci-apps.kent.edu/crops/. Enter your KSU Flashline UserID (e.g., jdoe) and password. (The first time you log on, you will be asked to create a password and answer a hint question).

To check to see whether all students in your section(s) are listed as Users on CROPs

Log on to the system.
Click Administration. Click Users.

You should see the names of all students in your sections.

To add a student to the list for your section, click Administration – Users – Add New. To add a student, you will need the student’s first and last name, KSU User ID, and the call number for the section.
To delete a student incorrectly listed in your section, click Delete to the right of the student’s name. (Warning: Do not do this after the first research project has been posted on CROPS. Doing so will cause any information about points the student has earned or sessions they have signed up for to be deleted. Let a CRC Assistant know if a student is listed incorrectly under the call number for your section.)

How do I know what research projects are available to COMM 15000 students?

Log on, then click Current Projects.

How does a student create an account on CROPS?

To participate in research, a student will need to create an account on CROPS. To do this, the student goes to [https://cci-apps.kent.edu/crops/](https://cci-apps.kent.edu/crops/) and enters his/her User ID (which must be the same as his/her KSU Flashline ID – e.g., jpsmith).

The first time students log on, they will be asked to create a password and answer a “hint” question. The answer to the “hint” question enables a “Password retrieval” function. When a password is forgotten, if the “hint question” is answered correctly, CROPS will email the student’s password to the student.

If you are a returning user and have not updated this information, please do so at this time. To update your personal information and fill out your “hint question,” click “My Account”, then “Edit User Info”.

How does a student sign up for a research project?

After logging in, the student clicks Current Projects to see what research projects are available. By clicking on a project, the student can see a description of the project, whether the study is face-to-face or online, the number of points it is worth, and any limitations for participation.

Once a student has signed up for a session at a particular time and location, he/she must either attend the session or cancel participation (online) at least 24 hours in advance.

What if a student forgets what session he/she signed up for?

To see what projects he/she has signed up for, the student clicks “My Projects”. The resulting page displays sessions the student has signed up for. If points have been assigned to the student for attending a session, they will be displayed in the “Pts Earned” column. Students can also view a “Total Points” column to see the total points they have earned.

How does a student cancel participation in a project?

The student should log on and click “My Projects.” A student can cancel enrollment in any session up until one hour before that session’s starting time.

What if a student missed a research session due to unavoidable circumstances?

If a student comes to you with an attendance concern, please direct them to the researcher for that project. If the researcher is unavailable or you need additional assistance, please contact the Assistant
Basic Course Director.

**How do I determine how many research participation points a student has earned?**

Instructors may find out how many points a specific student (in their section) has earned at any point during the semester. To do this:

Log onto CROPs.
  Click “Administration” Click “Reports”
  Click “Points by Student”
  Click “Report” to the right of the student’s name.

Clicking *Points by Student* allows you to see a list of all students in your section (based on call numbers). Clicking on the “Report” link next to a student displays a list of all sessions the student has signed up for. If a session has not yet been completed, “Scheduled” is shown in the Points Earned column. A drop down menu is displayed allowing you to update the attendance status for each session.

We have set up the CROPs site so that you as an Instructor can change the attendance record of the students with your call number. Please do this only in extraordinary circumstances with legitimate documentation. Alternatively, please direct student concerns about research attendance directly to the researcher listed on CROPs. If the researcher is unavailable or you need additional assistance, please contact the Assistant Basic Course Director or Director.

In addition to Points by Students, you will see three other types of reports: Points by Project, Points by Session, and Total Points Earned. These are described below.

*Points by project*

Clicking on the “Points by project” link takes you to a list of all projects. Clicking on the “Report” link next to a project displays a list of all sessions for that project and the users that signed up for each session. *(You only see users in the list if they have a call number that is assigned to you.)* The list is grouped by sessions, and then sorted by call number. The point value earned by each student for that session is listed next to his or her name.

*Points by session*

Clicking on the “Points by session” link takes you to a list of all sessions. Clicking on the “Report” link next to a session displays a list of all students who signed up for that session. *(You only see students with a call number that is assigned to you.)* If a session has not yet been completed, “Scheduled” is shown in the Points Earned column. A drop down menu is displayed allowing you to update the attendance status of each student.

*Total Points Earned*

The three reports noted above provide information about points earned by individual students. But perhaps you just want a quick summary of the number of research points earned by students across all of your sections. If so, click “All Courses,” then “Total Points Earned.” The information will be displayed in a table form (for example, 18 students have 60 points; 22 students have 45 points, etc.). If you want a summary of total points earned within a single section (rather than across all of your
sections), click the call number of that section.

**How do I obtain the total research points earned by each student at the end of a term?**

At the end of any given semester or summer session, you will need to know exactly how many research points each student in your class earned. You may also want to view this report throughout the term in order to have an understanding of your students’ research attendance. This is a simple process, achieved in a few steps.

To get the Total Research Points earned by each of your students:

1. Log on to CROPS
2. Click "Administration"
3. Click "Reports" click "All Projects"

You will see a list of points earned by each of your students, broken down by research project. You will also see the total points earned by each student.

At the end of a term (once all research projects are completed), this list should be printed out and/or downloaded to an Excel file. To download the list to an Excel file, scroll down to the bottom of the list and click **Export to Excel**. In the popup window, choose “Save” to save the file wherever you want.

After you have retrieved and saved the number of research points earned by each of your students, enter that number into whatever course management system you use to organize grades.

Keep in mind that students can earn research points, not only by participating in actual research projects, but also by completing alternative assignments. Each alternative assignment is worth 15 points. Please note that alternative assignment directions will not be distributed until the last few weeks prior to the conclusion of each semester.

To obtain a student’s final research participation point total, you add:

1. The number of points earned from actual research studies as recorded by CROPS and
2. The number of points earned from completing alternative assignments.

**Log In/Out**

The “Log In” and “Log Out” links allow you to log in to access the Administration link or view your personal information, and to log out when you are finished using CROPS. Once your name is on the Users list in CROPS, you may log on and then click the “New User” link. You are then prompted to enter a new password and your personal information. From then on, you can log in using that user ID and password.

**Help and FAQs**

The “Help and FAQs” link allows you to view some frequently asked questions about the online research participation system. This link also provides you with contact information to get technical assistance if you need help.

Last updated: 4/27/2012
Concerns and questions should be addressed to the following individuals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact person</th>
<th>Nature of question or concern</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Attendance/completion of study, details regarding research project, participation points updates, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Basic Course Director</td>
<td>Request to use COMM 15000 students as research participants, online maintenance of webpage, adding/canceling sessions, CROPS troubleshooting, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Course Director, Dr. Jennifer McCullough (<a href="mailto:jmcull11@kent.edu">jmcull11@kent.edu</a>)</td>
<td>Contact Dr. McCullough to determine who currently serves as the Assistant Basic Course Director and obtain contact information.</td>
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