Experiments at CELSS

Experimenters' Guide*

Aug 2017

Show-up Fee

Anyone who has showed up before the official start time of an experiment is entitled to a show-up fee of at least $5. Experimenters are encouraged to provide more if their budget allows. Experimenters are also encouraged to provide a higher minimum compensation for those participating in the experiment.

If for some reason the experiment fails (generally due to technical error), please pay all participants for their time. The amount paid should be at least $15/hour and should never be less than the base show-up fee of $5.

Programming and Testing

The lab is equipped with zTree, MatLab (with PsychToolbox) and internet access for web experiments. There is one server computer and 24 client computers. The experiment can be run either from the server computer (particularly those involved strategic interactions) or directly from the client computers. Please note that everything in the server computer and the client computers that are not in the Experimenters folder or the shared folder will reset whenever the computer reboots. As such, if you store data in the client computers, you will need to get them out by the end of the day.

Programs must be tested before any sessions are scheduled. Experienced researchers may test their programs outside of lab opening hours. First-time experimenters must test their experiment during normal lab hours with the lab manager present. Please email the lab manager to find a time.

*If you find any error in this guide, please contact `celss-manager@columbia.edu`

zTree

- Experimenters are encouraged to attend the z-Tree tutorial which is held each semester. Experimenters who are having trouble with their programs can consult the zTree mailing list.
- In the Experimenters folder in the server computer, under your UNI, we set up a zTree folder as follows
  - There is a shortcut to zTree that will start the program in your folder. Please open zTree using **this shortcut only**
  - There is an empty "makepayfile" questionnaire to help you create a pay file. You can also create your pay file using your own questionnaire. Please open "makepayfile" only from z-Trees interface and not by double-clicking on the icon. Also, make sure that the file type is set to .ztq when you try to open it. The payment file will be in the directory marked paydir.
  - Please open zLeaf directly from the client computers. There are 3 versions available: a legacy version for experiments programmed in zTree up to version 3.5, a current base version and a current base version with font size 16. If you program in the current version and on a small screen, we recommend using the version with font size 16 for more readability.
  - The sub-folders help you collect the desired output
    paydir: gathers the payment files with computer names and final payments.
    programs: your programs should be saved here
    expdata: gathers the experimental data produced by zTree
    temp: gather the temporary files created by zTree
- If you want to use media in your experiment, it may be good to run from the shared folder for smooth running
- Resources on zTree are widely available on the internet. Of particular interest are
  - Main website: `http://www.ztree.uzh.ch/en.html`
  - Manual: `http://www.ztree.uzh.ch/static/doc/manual.pdf`
  - Program importing zTree to Stata: `http://www.econ.hit-u.ac.jp/~kan/research/ztree2stata/`

MATLAB

- In all computers, MATLAB with PsychToolBox is installed to facilitate experiments using perception tasks.
- If you require very accurate timing/reaction time, we recommend running your scripts in the client computers and save the data on the client computers.
- Otherwise, you can run your scripts from the shared folder in the server computer and write your data to the shared folder by using "\\titan\CELSS-shared"

Conducting an Experimental Session

- Before the session
    1. Submit the your proof of IRB (with a stamped consent stating the IRB expiry date) to the lab manager at `celss-manager@columbia.edu`
    2. If this is your first time running experiments at CELSS, you will need to submit the lab usage agreement and the ORSEE usage agreement
    3. Schedule a session via ORSEE. Please refer to the ORSEE guide for more information.
    4. Make sure you have enough consent forms (2 copies per participant) and payment receipts. The consent form should come from your IRB protocol. The payment receipt is found in the experimenter's package unless you have other specific payment receipts.
- On the day of the session
    1. Please notify the lab manager at `celss-manager@columbia.edu` if you need help in marking/distributing payment attendance
    2. Print a copy of the attendance sheet to mark participants' attendance. Bring cash for payment.
    3. Please arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of your session to prepare.
    4. Prepare cards or tokens for random seating if required. If cards or tokens are used, please collect them back immediately after the subjects are seated to prevent loss.
    5. Distribute consent forms, payment receipts and instructions (if any) before the session starts

6. If you want the lab manager to distribute payment the participants, the manager will do so from the office. Before sending the participants to the office, please either have participants fill out their own payment receipts and check them from your pay file, or call participants up one at a time and fill out the receipts for them.
7. Keep your files in the shared folder organized. Take your data from the session by the end of the day, especially if the session is run on the client computers.

- After the session

1. Please remember to mark attendance on ORSEE and mark the session as finished
2. The following text can be used to describe the recruitment of participants in your experiment. This text has not been checked by the IRB and is provided only for inspiration purposes.

   The Department of Economics is hosting the recruitment software ORSEE on its server to recruit participants for the use of the Columbia Experimental Lab in Social Sciences (C.E.L.S.S.), under protocol IRB-AAAI1315.
   The subject pool consists of students and alumni from the Columbia community who have accepted the rules and privacy policy described in the recruitment software's IRB protocol, and who have actively chosen to register on ORSEE.
   Information on participants is provided by them at the time of registration. It is used for two purposes: the experimenter might want to select on specific criteria determined by the specific test she wants to run. Second, the experimenter needs to check the ID of participants before they can participate in an experimental session so that the participants who show up at the laboratory are those who actually registered on the website.
   The personal information provided by ORSEE cannot be matched to the experimental data collected in the laboratory.