PYCTS Primer for Professors

**What is PYCTS?**

The Psychology Credit Tracking System (PYCTS) is web software that allows *students* to quickly and easily check the number of research credits they have earned from participating in psychology research studies. As a *Professor*, you will be responsible for administrating the PYCTS software. This includes keeping the *student* roster up to date, adding new users, and making studies available to *students*. PYCTS is designed to give the user feedback for any action which manipulates data. As such, any time an action is performed which adds user or credits, removes users or credits, or modifies the system options, the user will see a status bar appear just below the navigation bar. This bar will be either green or red to indicate success or failure respectively and attempts to provide a reason for failure in the latter case.

**Where is PYCTS?**

PYCTS can be found at the following URL:

http://pycts.clarkson.edu

You can log in using your Clarkson username and password. This is the same username and password you use to access other Clarkson web resources (e.g. Moodle and Peoplesoft).

**How do I add students to the roster?**

Before your *Research Assistants* can assign credits to *students* who have participated in research studies, you will first need to create a roster of all *students* enrolled in PY151. There are two ways to do this:

1) Create a CSV file containing data for many *students* that can be uploaded to PYCTS

2) Add each *student* one at a time.

For the former, you will need to go to the **Database** tab, for the latter navigate to the **Users** tab and fill in the **Add User** or **Student** form. If you are going to use a CSV, please read Section 4.4 (Roster Management) of the User Manual carefully, as there are a few rules that must be followed when creating the CSV.

**What if a student switches PY151 introductory psychology sections?**

To switch the *Professor* to which a *student* is assigned, navigate to the **Users** tab. Next, fill in the field under **Delete Student** with the *student’s* AD Username. After deleting the *student*, fill in the **Add User or Student** form to re-add the student with the correct *Professor*.

**How do I add my Colleagues and/or Research Assistants?**

You can add *Professors* and *Research Assistants* from the **Users** tab once logged in. Be careful when choosing the user level (*RA* or *Professor*), as *Professor* users are capable of making irreversible changes to the roster and users.

**How do I upload/manage flyers for research studies?**

An important feature of PYCTS involves tracking research studies. When *students* log in to check their credits, they can navigate to the **Studies** tab to see a list of all visible studies. Note that when making a study visible all *students* will receive a notification email.

For more information on adding, maintaining, and removing studies please see section 4.3 of the User Manual.

**How do I add credits?**

There are two ways to add credits. The first and most convenient is through **quick-add**. This is generally used to assign the same study credits to multiple *students*. The second method is to add a single credit to a single *student*.

To add credits through **quick-add**, make a selection of *students* in the **Roster** table using the checkboxes at the far right. Once your selection is complete, use the dropdown menu at the top of the roster to select a study. Finally, click the **Add Credits to Selection** button to give the selected *students* credit for having performed the study. If you want, you can give a description of why the credits are being added, but this is not required.

To add credits directly, click on a *student’s* last name in the roster to go to that *student’s* page. From here, study-associated credits can be assigned in the same way that they were through **quick-add**. If needed, miscellaneous credits which are not associated with a study can also be assigned. This generally happens in the case of research papers or independent study projects. A reason must be given when assigning miscellaneous credits.

**How do I check on added credits?**

There are multiple ways to do this. If you wish to check which credits a specific *student* has been assigned, you can navigate to the **Roster** tab and select the *student’s* last name to bring up and individualized page containing the relevant information. To check which users have been given credit for a study, navigate to the **Statistics** tab, scroll down to the last table, and select the study which you wish to view.

**What statistics are kept?**

As a *Research Assistant* or *Professor*, it is possible to view aggregated statistics about the credits that have been assigned on the **Statistics** tab. Selecting a study from the Study Statistics table under the **Statistics** tab will bring up a new page detailing all credits assigned for that study.

**How can I backup the data in PYCTS?**

A backup of the roster can be created from the **Database** tab. Please see section 4.5 of the User Manual for more information.

**How do I prepare for a new semester?**

Once a roster is no longer useful (e.g. after the semester has ended), you can delete it from the **Database** tab. This can be done by entering “confirm” in the text field and clicking the delete button. All *students* and all credits that they have been assigned, will be deleted. This is also the best time to remove studies which have concluded and will not be used during the next semester. Make sure to check with your colleagues to ensure that they do not still need any data before deleting it.

Credit blocks are used to divide the semester into three sections so that participation is evenly distributed across the semester. The dates defining these periods of time can be set in the **Blocks** tab. By defining these dates properly, any newly added credits will default to the block in which the current date falls.

**How do I change the blocks?**

The amount of blocks into which the semester is divided can be altered when uploading a roster to PYCTS. This feature is available as long as there are no credits assigned. Any positive integer will be accepted as a block amount, but performance and aesthetics are not guaranteed above five blocks. To remove the block division of the semester, set the amount of blocks to one when uploading a roster.

**How do I modify the automated emails?**

PYCTS sends automated emails to *students* when certain events occur. It is possible to modify the text of some of these emails from the **Options** tab. To do so, navigate to the **Options** tab and modify the text of the desired email, then hit the corresponding **Update Text** button. If you would like to see a sample email, select the type you would like to receive from the **Test Email** dropdown and click the **Send Test Email** button. A sample email will be delivered to your inbox.

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