

Kim Haimes-Korn -- Assignment Guidelines

Team Project #1 – Cultural Observation and Analysis Project

Overall Objectives: This project asks you to choose a particular group to observe. You must choose a collaborative public space to which you have access and obtain permission to observe. The goal of this observation is to immerse yourselves into the culture of your space and extend your understanding of the theories and terms discussed in the class. As a group you will look at structure, organization, roles, verbal and non-verbal behavior, relationships, communication styles, etc.

Guidelines

- **All** team members are required to observe your chosen group (in person) enough times to conduct a meaningful analysis.
- Team members should apply theories and terms from the textbook to design a working rubric to use in your written analysis and presentation (see “Designing a Working Rubric”).
- Team members should provide written, individual field notes/impressions/assimilation of their observations of the group.
- Teams should “triangulate” and observe/analyze your group from different vantage points and perspectives (field observation, informant interviews, document analysis, multiple sites and times, etc).
- All teams will be self-governing in terms of organization, structure, timeline, etc.
- Teams should keep professional, written minutes for each team meeting (included in report). All minutes must be posted to your **Google Drive Team Space** in a timely manner following each team meeting.
- Teams should post presentation/report drafts (including final) to **Google Drive Team Space** for online peer response workshops, editing and final display.
- All team members must complete **weekly** evaluations along with a final group-process memo and evaluation.. You will be **grading and evaluating** your group members and the project as a whole at the end of the project.

Your team project should include:

- A 30-minute oral/visual presentation of findings.
- A professional team report in which you analyze and describe the group you observed. The report should include introduction, background information, visual supplements, application of pertinent theories, and group members’ observations/analyses. This should be a professional team report with appropriate sections, documentation, team voice, and visual appeal.
- Appendix materials that speak to your processes and group organization.
- Typed minutes and correspondence/discussions from all meetings that describe the activities, discussions, and decisions made by your team.

Designing a Working Rubric

In order to study or understand collaborative spaces it is important to look at the group and space through a variety of interpretive lenses or a rubric. Your current project involves descriptive research which is “hypothesis generating” rather than “hypothesis proving” and asks you to *describe* a particular group’s communication from multiple perspectives. Once you have gathered your data through observation you will need to come up with systematic ways of looking at your information. Consider the following theories/criteria as your group constructs a working rubric and a common language for talking about your observations.

Communication

- Intentional—Unintentional
- Verbal—Non-Verbal
- Defensive—Supportive

Language Behavior

- Bypassing
- Inference Making
- Polarizing
- Signal Reactions

Self Disclosure

- The Johari Window

Interaction Roles

- Group Task Roles
- Group Building and Maintenance Roles
- Individual Roles
- Team Interaction
- Social Distance
- Conflict Management

Relevant Background Factors

- Personality
- Sex/Gender
- Age
- Health
- Attitudes
- Values

Physical Environment

- Territoriality
- Personal Space
- Seating Patterns

Group Size and Structure

- Communication Networks
- Group Size
- Sub-Groups

Type of Group

- Primary Groups
- Casual/Social Groups
- Cliques
- Educational Groups
- Work Groups
- Problem Solving Groups
- Task Oriented
- Decision Making Groups

Question Types

- Discussion
- Fact
- Definition
- Policy

Discussion Group Formats

- Dialogue
- Panel
- Symposium
- Forum
- Colloquy