



Example of an IP Assignment

Dear student,

In this two-part assignment you will learn and experience how and why doing observational research can be an important tool for social workers. To be able to work on this assignment in the best way possible you have to have read the following articles before class starts on Tuesday:

Chapter 7 of Lofland, L. H. (1971). *A World of Strangers; Order and Action in Urban Public Space*. University of California, San Francisco.

Step 2 of Spradley, J. P. (2016). *Participant observation*. Waveland Press.

Page 2 – 10 of Low, S., Simpson, T., & Scheld, S. (2019). Toolkit for the Ethnographic Study of Space (TESS). *Public Space Research Group, Center for Human Environments, The Graduate Center, City University of New York*.

You can find each of these mandatory readings in your email.

During the class on Tuesday you will work on an observation plan (see table below) and conduct a short observational assignment in the university café. After class on Tuesday you and your group will do a preliminary walk through the project neighborhood to scout out a location where you plan to do your observation assignment on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, after our field visit, you and your group will go to the place you picked and conduct your observation assignment. You will stick to your observation plan and follow the steps below.

Step One: What Actors do you see, what places do you see, what activities do you see? In other words, map the social situation of a part of the neighbourhood. (buildings, streets, people, facilities, etc).

Step Two: Make a map of your surroundings (see P.6 of the TESS document)

Step Three: Zoom in on the activities; how do actors and place interact? What do people do, how do they make use of the build environment (place). Think of Lofland's article and some of her concepts such as *The Entrance Sequence*, *Waiting Styles*. What do you see? How do people behave in public space?

Step Four: As future Social Workers it is important to be able to understand people's behaviour in a place to be able to identify social issues. Spend at least one hour observing the social situation that is at the centre of your observation plan. Use the fieldnote template from the TESS document to describe: Where are you? What do you see? How do you reflect on that?

Step Five: Based on the social situation you have observed, what social issues might be present in this place? What social strengths do you see? How can this help you answer the research question you have written down on Tuesday?

	Student names:
1	Topic: What topic that you can observe do you want to focus on? (Think buildings, streets, people, facilities, etc)
2	Theory: Why is this relevant for Social Work?
3	Research Question: What do you want to know? (a question that interacts between neighbourhood characteristics (chosen topics), public space, and social work)
4	Research location: Where will you do your research? (what public space?)
5	Observational situation: What kind of situation are planning to observe? Actors: Situations: Place:
6	Observation plan: How do you want to observe this? Division of tasks
7	Literature

Presentation

On Friday you will present your findings in a 15 minute presentation. We strongly encourage students to present it in a creative way and think outside the box of PowerPoint.

You will present the following:

- Why did you choose this topic and what is its relevance to social work? (theoretical and experiential foundation)
- What did you do? (methodology)
- What did you see? (Brief visual example, perhaps using the maps they made)
- What can Social Work do here?
- What advice would you come up with to improve the social issues you have observed. Present this in a visual way.