**Instructions for Naturalistic Observation Project**

You and your partner must work as a team to do a naturalistic observation study that includes the following characteristics:

* Select a naturally occurring, clearly defined, **public** behavior that you think will be influenced by the independent variable you have chosen. **The behavior must occur in a setting that is clearly in the public domain** (places such as a cafeteria, library, store, mall, city sidewalk, etc. are acceptable; restrooms and locker rooms are not acceptable because people assume some degree of privacy in these types of places). Observed behaviors could include – how people eat, how long the study, make eye contact, touch people they’re with, behave when they pass by good looking members of the opposite sex etc. You MUST tell me in advance what behavior you will be observing in order to be approved.
* Develop a prediction (hypothesis) regarding the outcome you expect in your study (e.g., female students will study longer than males).You may also propose a possible reason for your expected outcome (e.g., female students will study longer because they are more motivated). You are only required to make a prediction. If you do propose a possible reason for your expected outcome, you should include in your study a measure as directly related to the reason as possible (e.g., you should include a measure of how you determined how long they were studying).
* Do not intervene in the situation that you are observing (this is a covert, non-participant observation).
* You must use gender as the independent variable, but you may use some other naturally occurring independent variable as your secondary independent variable (time of day) if you wish (not required).

 When designing your project you should consider the following issues:

* Reactivity - how will you ensure that your observations are unobtrusive?
* Situation Sampling - where will you make your observations? Although situation sampling may be desirable, you may need to make your observations in only one location.
* Time Sampling - when will you make your observations? You and your partner should try to complete the assignment in no more than four hours of observation. So, it is important that you select observation times so that you can make as many observations as possible.
* Subject Sampling - how will you select the people you will observe? If you are observing in a setting in which there are more people eligible for your study than you can observe at once, how will you decide whom to include?
* Data Reduction - before beginning your observations, decide what kind of dependent variable you are using (e.g., frequency, duration, rating) and ask yourself how you will be able to summarize your results.
* Reliability - before beginning your observations, decide which factors in your study lead you to believe your observations are reliable.

Project Details Taken From: http://www.uic.edu/classes/psych/psych242kln/Observationproject.htm

After collecting your observations, consider alternative interpretations of your findings. That is, you are unlikely to pin down *the* interpretation of your results. It is more important that you can use evidence from your observations to articulate arguments for and against alternative interpretations. Consider issues of both internal and external validity when interpreting your findings.

You and your partner will give a short 2-3min presentation using the questions below as a guide. You and your partner are expected to work collaboratively to complete and give the presentation. There will be some time in class during which you can work together to prep your presentation.

Questions for Presentation

1. What research question were you trying to answer by doing your observation project?

1. What specific prediction were you testing in your study? Was there a reason underlying your prediction?

1. How did you avoid intervening in the situation you were observing? How did you avoid reactivity?
2. What specific procedures did you use for time sampling, situation sampling, and subject sampling? If you observed at only one time or location, indicate that you did so and explain why you made this choice.
3. Briefly summarize the results of your study using the descriptive statistic(s) that is most appropriate for your dependent variable. You don't have to include a figure or table, a sentence or two that includes the appropriate numerical values is sufficient.
4. Briefly describe the conclusions you were able to reach based on the evidence you collected (i.e., the results you reported in question 7).