**A Guideline on “Field Observation Diary”**

This assignment is designed as an opportunity for you to put into action your skills in observing, recording, and making sense of real-world phenomena. It should be a *mini “case study”* that takes the form a “field observation diary.” It should be a *coherent and stand-alone essay* that

* narrates a carefully designed event or process of observing some clearly delineated phenomenon related to media use or media effects,
* records your observations of the phenomenon in a concrete and descriptive language, and
* presents anauthentically real portrayal of the observed phenomenon.

Your observation may take place in one occasion (one setting in a single sitting, e.g., how students in a study area of the College Library incorporate their smartphone during a 2-hour study and discussion period) or multiple occasions (e.g., social interactions centered on televised sports in 3 different bars, or relationship-solidifying verbal exchanges during the multiple rounds of play of *World of Warcraft* in your apartment). Your essay should be based on no less than 2 hours of concentrated observations.

As stated in the syllabus, your assignment must involve (1) a clear identification of the observed phenomenon, (2) a description of how you’ve arrived and remained at the scene to observe (i.e., to see, hear, and talk with the relevant people), (3) a detailed record of what you’ve observed, and (4) a tentative interpretation of what you’ve observed, namely, a discussion on what theoretical concept might be relevant and how.

The document that you turn in must be a stand-alone essay of 6-8 pages (double-spaced, in 12-point font size, Times New Roman), excluding supplemental materials. It needs to have the following components:

1. A title that concisely denotes what your “mini case study” is about
2. A narrative that provides
   1. A description of the background;
   2. An identification of the phenomenon observed;
   3. The specific locale and time (including date(s)) of your observations, the means used to observe and to record observations, steps you’ve taken to be at the scene and to observe, your role during the observation (e.g., covert or overt observer, passive observer or active participant, observing only or observing plus interviewing, taking notes on the site or off the site, etc.);
   4. A detailed and logically organized (categorized by time segments, shifting settings, changing patterns, or switching foci) description of what you’ve observed;
   5. A tentative interpretation of the significance or meanings of what you’ve observed and recorded.
3. Any supplemental materials (Note: They must be numbered sequentially such as Appendix 1, Appendix 2, …)

You may include photos or screenshots, and other visual/audio materials as supplements, whenever necessary. But be sure to adhere to the research ethics of protecting individuals’ privacy, obtaining their consent if needed, and assuring confidentiality.

You may also include a reference list, if you refer to any source beyond your own observations or creation.

Your assignment must be typed, spell-checked, proofread, and page-numbered. As a general rule, you must properly attribute the work(s) that you refer to and provide a reference list in APA style.