

PBJ 301: Section 810
Spring 2008 Prof. Nickels
Theory & Practice Paper Project

The purpose of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to practice writing a shorter version of the theory and practice paper that you will be required to write in PBJ 397.

Before submitting the final draft of your paper, you will have an opportunity to workshop at least one of your site observation drafts in class. You will also be asked to present your findings to the class sometime in the final week of the course. Your presentation will be 10% of your paper grade. You should attach the corrected site observation draft as well as evaluations you receive from your presentation to the paper you submit.

Instructions:

Choose an agency that would be an acceptable site for Public Justice fieldwork and arrange to observe the operations of that agency for a brief period. You must make a minimum of two (2) site visits to observe and you must spend a minimum of two (2) hours at the site for each observation.

Then, you must write a paper in which you relate at least two (2) organizational theories you have learned about through course materials or through your own independent research to what you have observed in the agency. The paper should be, at a bare minimum, five (5) double-spaced, typed pages in a normal font (i.e., Times New Roman, 11 or 12). There is no upper limit for page length but composition counts in this assignment, so keep your delivery focused and concise—as is expected with any academic writing.

1. You may choose any of the agencies on the listing provided by the Public Justice Department or any other suitable agency (check with Prof. Nickels if in doubt). If you prefer, the agency can be in your hometown rather than in the Oswego area. You do not have to choose the agency (or even the same type of agency) in which you plan to do your actual fieldwork. However, you must ask the director of the agency in advance for permission to observe in the agency of your choice.
2. You must complete one (1) site observation report for each separate visit and both observations must be at the same agency or type of agency (e.g. police department, court, lawyers' office, probation department, etc.). A draft of your first site observation report is due in class on March 12, so your first visit should be completed before that date. It is suggested that you delay the second observation until you have had an opportunity to received feedback on the results of the first. The corrected draft must be included with your paper submission along with the finalized drafts of both site observation reports.
3. Your paper must relate at least two (2) theories to your observations. For each theory, you must: 1) identify and explain the theory, 2) give several scholarly sources for the theory and 3) explain how the theory relates to what you have observed.

4. You should choose theories that relate to the mission, objectives, organization, operations, organizational behavior and/or methods that you see in use in the agency. After obtaining permission, you may observe business being conducted, talk to employees, and/or talk to clients to gather impressions about the operation of the agency.
5. You must have at least four (4) scholarly sources for your paper (books, journal articles). You should consult the libraries databases for appropriate sources. Also, you may find bibliographies in your textbooks that would provide a source for the theory you wish to use. Use must follow the guidelines for research papers published by the Public Justice Department. Available on the department website. All pages must be consecutively numbered. The cover page, bibliography, and any appendix materials do not count toward the five-page requirement.
6. Your paper will be evaluated on content (which includes responsiveness to the task posed by the assignment, extent of research, and quality of reasoning and argument), organization, and mechanics (which include such things as the appropriate use of grammar, spelling, and notation).
7. In order to be complete, your submission must include:
 - a. Your research report, with attached bibliography
 - b. Two finalized site observation reports
 - c. The corrected draft of your first site observation report
 - d. Your presentation evaluation

Theory and Practice Project
SITE OBSERVATION FORM

Name of Student _____

Name of Agency _____

Date of Observation _____

Attach your type-written or word-processed site observation report to this form. Your two (2) site observation reports must be submitted with your theory and practice paper. Your site observation report should respond to each of the following questions and/or issues:

1. What kinds of activities did you observe during your site visit? Describe what you saw **in detail**, including:
 - a. What time of day you observed
 - b. What kind of business activities you saw
 - c. What people you talked to
2. What did you conclude from your observations?
3. How did your observations correspond to your expectations of the agency?
4. How did you feel about what you observed?
5. What types of theories might be relevant to what you observed?