

Observation

J335 Spring 2018

Wagner

Length: 500-600 words

Deadline: 11:59 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 29

Your assignment for the weekend is pretty simple: find a place in a Madison neighborhood where you can sit and observe, taking notes so you can write 500 to 600 words about what you see there. A map of Madison neighborhoods you can explore can be found here: http://www.madisoncommons.org/?q=nbhd_map

This is an opportunity to think less about story structure and your lead so that you can just write — make use of as many of the observations you jot down as you can, and be sure to engage all of your senses. What do you see? What do you hear? Does it have a smell or a taste? How do you feel — literally and figuratively? What isn't there? What did it make you think about? What stories could you tell about this place?

Here are a few things to consider as you decide where to go and observe:

1. Choose a place that's interesting to you, and which is interesting in general.
2. Along those lines, get away from campus. It would be too easy for everyone to just stand out at the corner of University and Park or hang out at College Library and just write up what you see there. I want to challenge you to step away a bit out of your comfort zone and find something different and new to you.
3. As always when you are reporting, be careful. Make sure it is a safe place for you and that you do not put yourself in harm's way.