

# Central Connecticut State University

## Urban Geography 438

### Urban Space Diaries Project

#### Instructions

This document has been designed to allow you to explore how you live in and experience urban space in your everyday life. To complete this project, you will maintain a diary-log and a written diary for one week (seven days) beginning on a Sunday and ending on a Saturday. To accomplish this, you will pick a week before October 13, 2011 (when the diary logs are due) and you will document your activity during that week. There are four parts to this project:

**Diary-log:** To complete the diary log, you will document your activities for each of the seven days. This will begin when you leave home in the morning and will end when you return home for the final time at night. Over the course of each day, you will log each place that you visit during the day, the purpose of your trip, who you met, and what you did. This will include, but will not be limited to school, work, dining, shopping, recreation, appointments, errands, social outings, and so on. The log is designed to provide the time, location, and place that you visited, the purpose of your visit, the activity you engaged in, and the person(s) that participated in this activity with you.

**Written Diary:** Over the course of the seven days you will also maintain a written diary of your time/logs. To accomplish this, you will write a diary entry at least once a day to explain the activities recorded in your log. In this diary you will discuss, in greater detail than in your diary-log, where you went, for what reason, who you saw and interacted with, what you did, and that you explain, to the best of your ability, the experiences you had. In the diary, also note your mode of transportation (did you drive, walk, bike, bus, or use other means of transportation to get from place to place). You do not have to provide detailed accounts of your time spent at home, school, or at work, only the time you spend in other places.

**Photographic Diary:** Using a camera or your phone, you take photos that document the places you go and the experiences you had during the seven days. This does not mean that you need to take photos of every place you go, but that you take some photos that you feel document the places you visit, the activities you engage in, and the experiences you have.

**Term Paper and Final (Exam) Presentation:** For your **term-paper**, you will write a seven to ten page paper on your urban diary experience. Using what you have learned in class and from your textbook, you will discuss your diary experience and explain how you use and experience urban space. To do this, you will analyze data

you collected in your diary-log, diary, and photos. You will then explain and discuss the key urban geography concepts of centrality, community, photography, materiality, automobility, consumption, and public space (all of which are discussed in the textbook) to explain your diary and experiences. Your diary-log, diary, and photos will be submitted as an appendix to your paper.

For your **Final (Exam) Presentation**, you will present your diary project to the class in a 10-15 minute presentation. Your presentation will need to have a visual component, in the form of a PowerPoint presentation or poster boards (or other means that you have approved by me) (read the section in your textbook on diagrams and how we represent urban space in graphic forms). In the presentation you will explain, in the context of this project and experience, what you learned about urban space, how live in urban space, and how you experience urban space.

**Grading:** This project will be graded based on the following:

- The completeness of your diary-logs (15%)
- The completeness, detail, and thoughtfulness of your diary entries (20%)
- The completeness and creativity of your photographs (15%)
- The quality of your term-paper and your utilization of the concepts of centrality, community, photography, materiality, automobility, consumption, and public space to discuss your experiences and what you learned (25%)
- The quality and creativity of your final (exam) presentation to explain your experience and what you learned (25%)

This project is intended to be fun, providing an interactive experience where you can explore your everyday life and experiences within the context of key concepts in urban geography. The intent of the project is to get your thinking critically about urban space and how you experience urban space in the context of mundane everyday life. However, I warn you that this project is not easy and will take a considerable amount of time. Do not think you pull together the diary-log, diary, and photographs and write your paper and develop your presentation in the last week of the semester. You will need to complete your diary-log, diary, and photographs by **October 13** (you must submit your logs to me for approval). You will then analyze these documents in the context of the key concepts (noted above) discussed in the textbook and in lectures to write your term-paper. Next, you will develop and work through your presentation. This will take time and you need to start working on this project as soon as possible. However, this project will be rewarding and if you put the time and effort required into it, the project will enable you to apply the urban geography key concepts to your everyday life, to see the complexity of urban space, and to better understand urban space and how we experience it.













