STEP-BY-STEP FIELDWORK PLAN

STEP 1: SELECTION OF THE TOPIC

1. Identify your personal strengths and skills: sketching, mapping, interviewing strangers, doing background research, doing statistical analysis, etc

2. Select a type of fieldwork and a local area of study which you are interested in

3. Identify possible and accessible primary and secondary data

STEP 2: FORMULATION OF THE HYPOTHESES / QUESTIONS

Formulate one or more hypotheses or questions with the help of the teacher and using the checklist below:

- Is the question a geographical one? (ie: investigation of a spatial pattern, relationship, problem/issue)
- Is it sufficiently local and manageable in terms of scale, time, transport?
- Which of the allowed curriculum topics is it linked to?
- Check the list below to make sure your fieldwork will do as many of the following things as possible:
  
  ▪ Consider change over space/time
  ▪ Check out a hypothesis
  ▪ Analyze patterns/distributions
  ▪ Identify geographical processes
  ▪ Test theories/models
  ▪ Examine local issues
  ▪ Study people's behavior/perceptions
  ▪ Use and evaluate equipment
  ▪ Appreciate environmental impact
  ▪ Suggest management solutions
  ▪ Search for secondary information
  ▪ Apply appropriate statistics

STEP 3: PREPARATORY WORK
1. Research geographical theories/models behind the hypothesis (e.g. distance/decay principle, Burgess model, etc)

2. Select the fieldwork method(s) you will use

3. Map your study area and look for survey sites

4. Submit to the teacher an outline answering the following questions:
   - What is your hypothesis?
   - What primary and secondary data will you use?
   - What sampling methods do you intend to use for each type of data and why?
   - How will you analyze the data (including statistical tools used) and how do you intend to present it?

STEP 4: COLLECTION OF THE DATA

1. Identify all your data sources: the fieldwork must be based on PRIMARY data that YOU will collect (e.g.: US Census is NOT primary data), and which can be translated in NUMBERS for statistical analysis (e.g. "yes-no-maybe" can be entered as "1-2-3"). You should also use some secondary data as well (e.g. newspaper articles, online databases such as census, geography books or reviews, local authority town plans, etc)

2. Determine your sample size: how many questionnaires should you collect? How many points should you measure/survey?

3. Determine the ideal time of day/week for data collection, as this may affect the results (e.g. street traffic on Monday am vs Saturday pm)

4. Pilot and develop questionnaires

5. Prepare one-page data sheets (for further entry on Excel and statistical analysis). Ideally, combine the elements you are researching with other students to create a single survey sheet. That way, the data can be collected as a group and shared back. Check this example of a data sheet.

6. Collect the data in small groups and share the information collected

STEP 5: TREATMENT, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

Data presentation, interpretation and explanations are best combined than treated separately. Present, describe and explain each analytical test in turn, integrating those three tasks. For each set of data/analytical test, you should present the following elements on a single (or double) page spread to make it visually attractive to the reader. The data and analysis will be presented TOGETHER in the Section 3 of the Written Report (TIP: make sure you read the grading criteria)
beforehand, so that you know how you will be graded):

1. Use visual data presentation: graphs, charts, diagrams, photographs, flow-charts, etc. See the Glossary for examples.

2. Describe your results: use simple descriptive statistics to describe trends, identify anomalies or exceptions, such as mean, mode, median, frequencies, ranges, percentages, ratios, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, densities. Make sure you mention place names in your results.

3. Interpret and explain your results, relate them to geographical factors: use more complex statistical calculations (correlation, dispersion, etc) to explain the relationship or pattern you have found, make suppositions beyond the sample collected, compare the results to standard models or theories, link what you have found to the syllabus, discuss the results and whether they confirm or refute the hypotheses.

4. Optional: for some projects, annotated photographs or sketches are an excellent form of visual evidence to illustrate a point.

**STEP 6: CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION**

Recall and summarize your main findings and see how you are able to provide an answer to the question of the fieldwork (Section 4 of the Written Report).

Your project is likely to be less than perfect: this is normal! You are expected to show that you are aware of the limitations of your research. You need to do a self-evaluation (Section 5 of the Written Report) a list those limitations.

**STEP 7: REFERENCING OF SECONDARY SOURCES**

At the end of the project, you must a standardized list of references of any book, article, website or other source of secondary data you might have used for your project. Do not include notes taken in class or primary data collection however.