

## **Individual in Community Assignment: The Number 1 Bus Project**

As the title of our course indicates, part of our task in Social Sciences 101 is to try to understand *how societies work*. To that end, we have been studying aspects of economic and social life in modern societies, including processes of socialization, types of economic activity, forms of social stratification, and systems of power and authority. Now our task is to explore the real world around us in our Individual in Community assignment. To understand the community outside our classroom walls in deeper and more meaningful ways, we'll employ some insights, tools, and concepts from the social sciences.

We'll start by riding the bus. Here's the inspiration for this assignment:

Ayanna Pressley is a former CGS student, a current Boston City Councilor, and a candidate for the United States Congress in the Massachusetts seventh district. In one of her recent campaign ads, Councilor Pressley said "You can learn everything you need to know about the seventh congressional district by riding the Number 1 bus from Cambridge to Roxbury." Given her role as a City Councilor and her surprise victory over a long-time incumbent in the seventh district congressional primary, we can likely assume that Councilor Pressley knows this district, where CGS is located, pretty well. So we're going to take up Councilor Pressley's challenge, and try to learn about our community on the bus. If we observe carefully and thoughtfully, taking perspectives from the social sciences, the MBTA Number 1 bus should serve as a good entry point for studying the community around us.

The ad can be viewed here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgF79Shc\\_YI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgF79Shc_YI)

The Number 1 Bus Project is a small-group project that will be made up of five main components: meetings, research, journaling, field work, and writing the paper.

**Meetings:** All groups will meet with Professor Mackey on Tuesday, October 16 and Thursday, October 18. Come prepared with questions, and be ready to take notes. The list of groups is posted on the Blackboard site, as are the specific meeting times. Meetings will take place in Professor Mackey's office (CGS 517).

**Research:** We will discuss this part of the process more in our meetings. But you should start by finding out more about the Number 1 bus, and about the neighborhoods the bus route passes through. I would also strongly recommend that your group make an appointment with a

research librarian at Mugar. A librarian can give you valuable insights into finding relevant information to help your project grow.

**Field Work:** Ride the bus! Your field work should be composed of careful observation of social, cultural, and economic life in the community served by the Number 1 bus route. While riding the bus should provide the basis for this project, you may of course also want to get off the bus at specific stops of your choosing, in order to examine particular areas more closely. It is crucial that you take good notes as you carry out your field research. And remember that while you are a researcher and observer, you are also a member of this community, and you will be interacting with people in various ways. Always be respectful and courteous to the bus drivers, fellow passengers, and other members of the community you meet along the way.

**Journaling:** for the weeks beginning October 15, 22, and 29, your weekly journal assignment will revolve around this project. Use your journal to compile notes and reflections on your group's research, and your role in it, as the project progresses. (While other aspects of the project are completed as a group, your journal entries will be individual). Your notes should include factual information based on your observations, while your reflections will be based on your analysis of your observations and the conclusions you are beginning to draw. Journal entries will serve to organize your thoughts through various stages of the project. As usual, be sure to complete your entries by the end of the week on your e-portfolio.

**Writing the Paper:** the final paper for this project is due on **Thursday, November 29**. It will be a group paper that will be based on your field work and research, and will analyze aspects of life in the Massachusetts seventh congressional district using social science perspectives.

**Format:** double-spaced, standard 1" margins, 12-point font. Hand in one stapled, hard copy of the paper, which includes the names of all group members in the top left, and a title centered above the text of the paper.

**Citations:** proper MLA or Chicago format.

**Length:** for groups with four members, papers should be approximately 2,000-2,200 words, or 8 to 9 double-spaced pages, and for groups with five members, approximately 2,500-2,700 words or 10-11 double-spaced pages.

Each group member needs to contribute to the research, field work, writing, and editing that goes into this project. Once all the work is complete and the paper is handed in, each student will complete an evaluation form, in which you will evaluate yourself and your group members.