

UCSUR's Brown Bag Speakers' Series Presents...

The Potential of Tracking Technologies for Research in the Social Sciences



Dr. Noam Shoval

Noam Shoval, Ph.D.

*Visiting AICE Professor, University of Pittsburgh,
Professor, Department of Geography, The Hebrew
University of Jerusalem, Israel*

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UCSUR's 1st Floor Conference Room

3343 Forbes Ave.

(Across Forbes from Magee-Women's Hospital)

The question of mobility is of immense importance in social science research. Yet the current methods used to collect data on spatial and temporal activities have limitations in terms of accuracy and validity, since they tend to rely solely on the evidence provided by the research subjects themselves. Until recently, the most common method for gathering information on time-space patterns of individuals was the time-space diary. In recent years, the rapid development and availability of small, cheap, and reliable tracking devices has led to a growing volume of research in the social sciences using tracking technologies. The best known technology is the Global Positioning System [GPS] that offer researchers the opportunity for continuous and intensive high-resolution data collection in time (seconds) and space (meters) for long periods of time. Recently the massive introduction of smartphones opens up even far greater opportunities.

This presentation will show examples from my own research and publications in the last decade regarding the implementation of tracking technologies in various fields, such as: urban studies, tourism, ageing and medicine.

Noam Shoval, Ph.D. Professor Shoval completed his Ph.D. at The Hebrew University (2000) and conducted post-doctoral research at the Department of Geography, King's College, University of London (2000–2001). He was (2007–2008) an Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellow at the Department of Geography of the University of Heidelberg (Germany). Professor Shoval's main research interests are urban geography and planning, urban tourism and the implementation of advanced tracking technologies in various areas of spatial research such as tourism and urban studies and medicine. Over the years he published two books and almost one hundred other scientific publications.

**RSVP: 412-624-9177, or
pncis@pitt.edu**



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