The Oral History Connection: Engaging the Arts and Oral History for Community Dialogue
HUM4930, section 2338
T/TH 11:45am-1:45pm, Matherly 0102

Instructors
Jeffrey Pufahl: jeffpuf@ufl.edu
Ryan Morini: ryan.s.morini@gmail.com (also rmorini@ufl.edu)

Course Description
In this course, students will study the underpinnings of the practice of critical oral history and experience the process of devising performance material derived from oral histories. Through collecting new interviews and exploring the extensive collection of interviews in the SPOHP archive, students will address relevant social issues affecting our local, national, and global communities and ultimately create work that functions as activism in the community. Work can be exhibited on a variety of platforms including but not limited to: theater, film/video, literary arts (poetry, short story, spoken word), blog and podcast, visual arts, photography and innovative combinations (photo/voice, etc.) of the arts and technology. Devised works will be exhibited online, on the UF campus, in the community, and nationally and internationally.

Course Topics
1. Basic theory and history of oral history as a field
2. Oral history methods and best practices
3. Using oral history to promote and engage with social justice
4. Community engagement through oral history
5. Applying narrative forms and techniques to interviews
6. Devising performance
7. Performing oral history

Objectives
1. Students learn to use oral history to promote and engage with social justice.
2. Students learn basic OH skills: interviewing, transcription, audio and/or video editing.
4. Students propose and devise an oral history performance project.
5. Students assemble and arrange oral history interviews into a performance script.
6. Students produce and perform original work.

Course Format
1. Lectures, readings, and discussions (Tuesdays).
2. Fieldwork and research ( Thursdays, and other days) Fieldwork includes: conducting oral history interviews, transcribing oral history interviews, community outreach, admin tasks, and rehearsals.
3. A performance, podcast, or video presentation.
The Oral History Connection: Engaging the Arts & Oral History for Community Dialogue.

Schedule of Work

Week 1  **Oral History Workshop I**

Lecture: What is oral history? Why do we do it? What is the value?
Introduction to the SPOHP oral history collection, shared drive, and office.

Exercise: Practice interview: ‘the story of your name.’

Assign Readings: 1, 2, & 3

Week 2  **Oral History Workshop II**

What is the Role of Memory? Objectivity? Steering the narrative?
Transcribing & Audit Editing

Discussion 1: Readings 1, 2, & 3

Assignment: Transcribe a 60-minute interview

Assign Readings: 4 & 5

Week 3  **Oral History Workshop III**

Lecture: Interview guides, best practices, interview techniques and methodology.

Discussion 2: Readings 4 & 5

Assign Readings: 6 & 7

Week 4  **Oral History Workshop IV**

Lecture: Interviewing part II: active listening, follow-up questions, & depth.

Discussion 3: Readings 6 & 7

Assignment: Schedule & conduct a 60-minute interview.

Assign Readings: 8 & 9

Week 5  **Oral History Workshop V**

Lecture: Roadside Theatre & Story Circle Methodology

Watch: *Thinking Outside the Box - Diversity Project*
*South of the Mountain - Act 1, Roadside Theatre*

Exercise: Practice Story Circle

Assign Readings: 10 & 11

Week 6  **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS AND RESEARCH METHODS**

Presentation: Smathers Library Special Collections

Discussion 4: Readings 8, 9, 10, 11

Assign Reading: 12
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Week 7  Oral History & Performance I
Watch:  *Gator Tales* (Albert White & Gladys Thompson segments)
https://youtu.be/U6BU6VfxwIo
Discussion 5:  Gator Tales Panel Discussion with Kevin Marshall
Assign Reading:  13

Week 8  Oral History & Performance II
Lecture:  Navigating collecting and producing narratives; authorship, subject & audience.
What are cultural narratives? How can cultural narratives be performed?
Assign Readings:  14 &15

Week 9  Oral History & Performance III
Watch Film:  Anna Deavere Smith “Twilight”
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf/twilight-los-angeles-full-episode/3972/
Assign Readings:16

Week 10  Oral History & Social Justice I
Lecture:  Social Justice and Oral History/Storytelling: What can you achieve?
Discussion 6:  Readings 13, 14, 15, 16 & Anna Deavere Smith

Week 11  Oral History & Social Justice II
Watch:  Tectonic Theater: *The Laramie Project*
Assign Reading:  17

Week 12  Oral History & Social Justice III
Lecture:  Storytelling & Narrative Structures
Watch:  Lyfe n Rhyme:  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfFg8zNkXZM
The Power of Digital Storytelling:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jA2cTZK9hzw
Assign Reading:18

Week 13  Oral History & Social Justice IV
Discussion 7: Readings 17 & 18

Week 14  Reflection & Discussion 8

Week 15  Presentations & Performances
Week 16  Presentations & Performances
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Assigned Readings

12) Albert White & Gladys Thompson Interviews (SPOHP Archive)
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Evaluation of Grades:
Grading will be dependent on a 300 point scale.

Attendance and Participation (60 pts, 1 point per class for attendance, 1 point per class for participation)
If you will be late or absent, please email the instructors before class. Attendance at all rehearsals is mandatory and students are expected to arrive on time and ready to work and participate in all exercises, discussions, and rehearsals. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case bases providing the director is contacted BEFORE the rehearsal begins.

Course Discussion (16 pts)
You will be assigned readings that will provide more detailed information about the process of oral history and some that supplement the projects and tasks you are working on. The required texts have been made available through Canvas (http://elearning.ufl.edu/). The dates for discussions are provided in the syllabus. You will be expected to have read the assignment before arriving to class, and be prepared to participate in a discussion about the text.

Students will create and submit one question per weekly reading assignment for a total of 2 points per week. Questions are due at 5pm the day before the class discussion is scheduled. Question must demonstrate reading comprehension and be useful for spurring discussion during the 8 class discussions to receive full credit. Not all student questions will be used in class, but everyone must submit a question for each reading to receive credit.

Time spent reading for class and in class sessions does not count toward weekly hours.

Weekly Activity Log (90 pts total; 6 pts per week, 1 point per hour, 1 point per reflection)
Students will log how much time they spend on course required activities including but not limited to: research, transcribing, community outreach, writing, and rehearsing. A total of 5 hours logged for these activities are required each week to receive full credit—1 point per hour completed.

Each week’s activity log must also include a 300-word summary/reflection of work completed, the writing portion of the activity log is worth 1 point each week. Course required reading does not count toward this time commitment and must be excluded from the activity log.

Research (34 pts total)
Conduct an Oral History Interview – 10 pts
Transcribe an Oral History Interview – 10 pts
Other relevant fieldwork - 14 pts

Final Project (80)
Students will present a final project at the end of the semester. This project, created in collaboration with other students and the course instructors, will be performative in nature: a play or dramatic reading, podcast, short film or video, interactive website, photovoice, etc., and must involve oral histories.

Reflection Paper (20 pts)
Students will complete a 3-4 page paper at the end of the semester reflecting on their experience in the internship and production.
Academic Honesty: Academic integrity is a fundamental value at the University of Florida. It must be at the heart of all our endeavors and must guide our actions every day as students and as members of the faculty, administration, and staff. Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students.

Plagiarism: It is plagiarism if you present the ideas or words of someone else as you own. You are responsible for understanding the University’s definitions of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Please read the Student Honor Code and ask us if you have any questions. Keep in mind that plagiarism is a serious violation of the student academic honor code and university policy recommends that, at a minimum, instructors should impose a course grade penalty and report any suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students.

Accommodation for Disabilities: We are more than happy to work with anyone who needs extra help on a project or assignment. In line with university policy, students requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the professor. Please be sure to provide this documentation to the instructors or program director Dr. Paul Ortiz as soon as possible.

Grading Policy:
Each intern will earn a letter grade for their internship at SPOHP. Grades will be assigned according to the following scale.

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Grade Points:

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