

GER/SW 6130

Interviewing Older Adults & Life Review (Spring 2013)

January 22 - May 18, 2013

Tuesdays, 6:55 - 9:35 PM

Chapel Classroom, Bellerive Hall, UMSL South Campus

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Office Hours: By appointment.

Required Readings: **All required readings for this course will be posted to MyGateway in PDF format.** While students are not required to purchase a textbook, the following titles are especially good if you anticipate doing life review work professionally.

Optional Texts: Haight, B.K., & Haight, B.S. (2007). *The Handbook of Structured Life Review*. Baltimore, MD: Health Professions Press.

Gibson, F. (2004). *The past in the present: Using reminiscence in health & social care*. Health Professions Press, Baltimore, MD.

Birren, J.E., & Deutchman, D.E. (1996). *Guiding Autobiography Groups for Older Adults: Exploring the Fabric of Life*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Course Description (from the Bulletin)

This innovative course combines training in interviewing techniques with video production. Students will learn how to conduct life review interviews with older adults, and then take these skills into the community by interviewing older adults living in various settings. Students will learn how to use a digital video camera and edit video clips on the computer. Student-conducted interviews will be viewed by the instructor and classmates, issues associated with aging will be discussed, and constructive feedback provided. Some of the video clips developed in the course will become part of an educational video clip library in support of gerontology education through UMSL.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- a) Understand the various forms of life review that aging adults may experience, whether through formal intervention, group interaction, or personal introspection;
- b) Appreciate the benefits of utilizing a semi-structured life review approach;
- c) Develop a basic competence in conducting a life review interview through in-class training, role playing, and direct practice with volunteer elders;
- d) Feel competent to video record an interview and edit the footage (creating titling, transitions, etc.) using PC-based editing software.

Format & Expectations

This course will involve a mix of lecture, discussion, review of videotaped case material, and hands-on practice (e.g., role playing, mock interviewing, real interviewing). Each class session will start at 6:55 pm sharp, so please arrive on time (5-10 minutes early is best).

Communication about the course will be conducted through MyGateway and student e-mail accounts. Be sure that your student e-mail is working properly (e.g., that your inbox is not full) so as not to miss important communications.

Students are expected to attend all class sessions, having completed all assignments for the day. Students should be prepared (when applicable) to present assigned material to the class. Assignments must be turned in on time (i.e., by the end of the scheduled class session when the assignment is due). Students in need of more time to complete an assignment must communicate with the instructor ahead of the class session when the assignment is due. The instructor will consider individual circumstances and the student's demonstrated commitment to the course when making an extension decision. Specific evaluation criteria and other policies/expectations are listed below.

One Saturday session is required on March 9th, ~8:30 AM - 3:30 PM. We will travel to the LSS Retirement Community at Meremac Bluffs (Valley Park, MO) to participate in a "Blitz" Interviewing Event. You will shoot your first of two Life Review Interviews on this date. Lunch will be provided. Second interviews will be scheduled individually; plans for this will be discussed in class.

Semester Schedule of Topics & Assignments (*subject to modification*)

The following table summarizes scheduled class sessions, topics to be covered, assigned readings, and assignment due dates. This syllabus is a work in progress and may be modified to improve the flow of presented material and/or to respond to specific student needs.

1/22/13	1)	Introduction / Guided Autobiography (GAB) Experience 1 Required Readings: Butler (1963); Birren (2006) Required Activity: Sheehy Life History Survey (complete and bring to first class)
1/29/13	2)	The Narrative Self / GAB Experience 2 Kunz (2007); Hooker & McAdams (2003); Gibson (Chap 2, 2004) <i>GAB Paper 1 due. Bring two copies to class (one for instructor, one for reference).</i>
2/5/13	3)	LR Intervention Options & Evidence of Efficacy / GAB Experience 3 Kivnick (2003); Wills & Day (2008); Watt & Cappeliez (2000); Davis et al (2012) <i>GAB Paper 2 due. Bring two copies to class.</i>
2/12/13	4)	LR Interviewing 1 / GAB Experience 4 Luepker (2010); Randall et al (2006) <i>GAB Paper 3 due. Bring two copies to class.</i>
2/19/13	5)	LR Interviewing 2 / Guest(s) for In-Class Interviewing Practice McAdams (1995) LR Format; Haight (2007)
2/26/13	6)	UMSL Life Review Project Approach from Start to Finish Meuser (2011) <i>LR Interview Review Paper is due at the start of class.</i>
3/5/13	7)	Videography & Video Editing 101 <i>Bring your laptop to class today. No assigned readings for class tonight.</i>
3/9/13	8-9)	Saturday Interview Blitz at LSS Retirement Community @ Meremac Bluffs
3/12/13	x	NO CLASS (Instructor at Conference)
3/19/12	10)	Debrief LR Interview 1 / Review Clips of Student Interviews <i>No assigned readings for class tonight.</i>
3/26/12	x	NO CLASS (Spring Break)

3/27/12	x	Video Editing Lab 1 (1-5 PM)
4/2/13	11)	Special Population 1: Developmentally Disabled Persons Puyenbroeck & Maes (2005), Kropf & Greene (1993)
4/5/13	x	Video Editing Lab 2 (2-5 PM)
4/9/13	12)	Special Population 2: Dying Persons Allen et al (2008); Soltys (2007)
4/16/13	x	Video Editing Lab 3 (3-7 PM) <i>Final Keepsake 1 due today on DVD or Jump Drive.</i>
4/23/13	13)	Special Population 3: Persons with Dementia DeBaggio (2002); Clare et al (2012); Cotelli et al (2012)
4/30/13	14)	Debrief LR Interview 2 / Review Clips <i>No assigned readings for class tonight.</i>
5/7/13	15)	Special Topic 4: African American Elders / Potluck Meal / Debrief the Course Shellman (2004); Black & Rubinstein (2009) <i>Final Keepsake 2 due on DVD or Jump Drive</i>

Evaluation (Grading)

Students will be evaluated based on attendance, class participation, in-class presentations, written assignments, demonstrated interviewing skills, and video products. Grades will be assigned on a point system, with each graded item receiving up to 100 points. There are eight graded items with a total of 600 possible points. A weighted average of all graded items will determine the final grade, which follows the same point/letter distribution as shown in the table below. In other words, a specific point/letter grade will count differently depending on the assignment in question. For example, 91.5% would translate into a final letter grade of A-. *Please address any questions or concerns about this grading system and policy with the Instructor.*

Letter Grade	Point Ranges (for single assignments and graded items below)
A+	97 - 100 points <i>Assigned as "A" for final grade and transcript purposes.</i>
A	94 - 96
A-	90 - 93
B+	87 - 89
B	84 - 86
B-	80 - 83
C+	77 - 79
C	74 - 76
C-	70 - 73

F	69 or less <i>For final grade only. Individual assignments may be graded in 60-69 point range (D). A weighed average < 70 points will yield a final grade of F.</i>
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Grade Allocations: *Attendance & Participation (25%)*
 Interview Review Paper (15%)
 Interview of Older Adult Volunteer & In-Class Presentation (2 x 10%)
 Edited Keepsake Videos (2 x 20%)

Attendance & Participation (100 points, 25% of final grade) ¹

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate actively in classroom discussion and hands-on, role playing exercises. Attendance will be taken each week. A student may miss one class session without penalty. Students experiencing significant extenuating circumstances (i.e., major life events or challenges) may petition to miss a second class session without penalty. Such petitions must be submitted in writing (e-mail preferred) prior to the scheduled session to be missed. The instructor will determine the merit and outcome of such requests.²

The participation portion includes submission of three, 2-4 page (double spaced, 12 pt type) GAB papers during class sessions 2, 3 and 4. This assignment will be discussed during Session 1 on 1/22/13.

A maximum of two excused absences may be allowed (1 + 1 extra if petition is made and approved) before points will be deducted from this graded item. The Saturday Blitz on 3/3/12 counts as two class sessions. Each instance of an unexcused absence will result in an increasing loss of points up to failure of the whole course as listed below:

Instance 1 minus 20 points
Instance 2 minus additional 30 points
Instance 3 minus additional 40 points
Instance 4 ALL points lost for this graded item (if not subtracted already)
Instance 5 Automatic failure of the course, regardless of points earned in other areas

Students missing substantial portions of individual class sessions (i.e., arriving 30+ minutes late or leaving 30+ minutes early without approval for an excused absence from the instructor) will have points deducted on a pro-rated basis.

An "A" student (e.g., earning 95 points) misses no more than one class session, comes prepared with thoughts to share having read assigned materials, actively participates in hands-on activities, and provides answers and suggests pertinent questions/issues related to the topic of the day and course content as a whole.

¹ University policies concerning appropriate behavior and academic honesty apply in this class at all times (see Student Code of Conduct - http://www.umsi.edu/studentlife/dsa/student_planner/policies/conductcode.htm). Points may be deducted for conduct infractions at the discretion of the instructor. Conduct infractions that are substantially disruptive to the classroom environment and learning of others may result in expulsion from the course and other university-level consequences. Students submitting written work plagiarized from other sources will receive zero points for the assignment and may be subject to formal charges for academic dishonesty.

² **Please Note:** 6130 serves a number of instructional purposes for Gerontology. The course is sometimes linked to a practicum experience, other directed study course, and/or community project. This attendance policy may apply differently for students involved in the class for such reasons.

EXAMPLE: An active participant that misses two sessions (unexcused) might receive a grade of 80 points (B-) for attendance/participation. Strong performances in other assigned areas could still yield this student a final grade of A.

Interview Review Paper (15%)

Students will observe a full, raw (unedited) life review conducted by another student in the past (link provided on MyGateway) and write an 8-10 reflection paper with the following headings in order: (a) thematic summary and overall impressions of the encounter (a brief 1-2 paragraph review); (b) rapport between interviewer and interviewee (describe how they interacted with examples); (c) topical flow of the interview (include examples of key moments/highlights during the review, especially important or helpful questions asked by the interviewer; (d) missed opportunities (e.g., topics overlooked or not addressed sufficiently); (e) how you might approach the same interviewee if given the opportunity; and (f) possible benefits experienced by the interviewee from the LR interview (your inferences and speculation). Paper characteristics: typed, 8-10 pages, title page with your name, double-spaced, correct spelling and grammar. Points may be deducted for misspellings and grammatical errors, notably run-on paragraphs and incomplete sentences.

Interviews & Presentations 1 & 2 (100 points each; 20% of final grade; 10% + 10%)

Students will interview 2 older adults (assigned by the Instructor) in two different settings (Retirement Community, Videography Studio, Interviewee's Home, Other) following instructions given in class. Up to 100 minutes of footage may be shot. On 3/19/13 and 4/30/13, respectively, students will give two interview presentations, sharing 5-10 minutes of consecutive footage shot during each assigned interview (1 & 2), and followed by comments on the process (what went well, what didn't go so well, what could be improved, etc.). The presenter (or instructor) may pause the video at various points to provide comments or encourage discussion. An "A" presentation will include substantive comments on the process between interviewer and interviewee that also engages group interaction.

Keepsake Videos 1 & 2 (100 points each; 40% of final grade; 20% + 20%)

Students will edit footage under the supervision of the Instructor to form a keepsake video to be provided to the interviewee on DVD. The Keepsake Video will be described extensively in class with key documentation appearing on the MyGateway site. The keepsake video should include title screens, music, and transitions - all with the goal of telling a coherent, but not necessarily comprehensive story. The editing process involves interpretation and retelling to get the main points across. For example, segments from different points of the original interview may be re-ordered during editing for story-telling purposes. A chronological order is often helpful, but thematic organization can be quite powerful, too. Questions asked by the interviewer might be edited out (or replaced by text) so that the interviewee's voice is primary. Each student's experience will be different, and grading will be based on demonstrated effort, rapport and interviewing style (as evidenced in each Keepsake video), willingness to accept constructive feedback, and the overall look/feel of the final DVD product. An "A" effort will have a polished (if not totally professional) look, include appropriate titles and transitions, and tell a clear, coherent story.

Student Conduct (in addition to items listed above)

The success of this course depends, in large part, on how well the students and instructor interact and work together. It is important that all participants strive to be respectful of each other and engaged in the shared activity of learning. Should a problem arise on an individual or group level, the instructor will work constructively with those involved to resolve the issue in the best interests of the class as a whole.

Noise from electronic devices can be disruptive. Students should turn cell phones, smart phones, tablets, computers, MP3 players, pagers, and other sound-making electronic devices to vibrate (or off) while in class. Students may take notes on a laptop, but should not be checking e-mail, using Facebook or other social media, doing other work, or surfing the web during the class session. The instructor

reserves the right to ask any student to turn off an electronic device which causes disruption or distraction.

Learning how to conduct a life review interview also means looking at yourself and telling of your own life. Be prepared to share your story in class as you are comfortable. All students are asked to keep personal stories confidential. Openness and trust are important qualities in this work. "What's said in class, stays in class."

Students are responsible for their conduct in class and on campus. This is especially the case with respect to academic honesty. Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without crediting that person. Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and may lead to failure on an assignment, of the class as a whole, and even dismissal from the University (view the current conduct code at <http://www.umsi.edu/~studentplanner/policies/conductcode.html>).

Disability & Special Needs

Students requiring special accommodations should meet with me during office hours so that we can discuss how to meet your needs this semester. Prior to our meeting be sure you have met with someone in the campus offices that supports student with disabilities (MSC 144).

This University abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which stipulates that no student shall be denied the benefits of an education solely by reason of a disability. Disabilities covered by law may include, but are not limited to, learning disorders, attention deficit disorders, hearing, sight or mobility impairments. If you have a disability that may have some impact upon your work in this class for which you may require accommodations, please contact the Disability Access Services Office in 144 Millennium Student Center at 516-6554.

CAMPUS SAFETY

All members of the UMSL community are invited to register their cell and office phone numbers to receive notification of any pending danger on campus. [Find instructions online](#).

In the event of an emergency on campus, call Campus Police at 314.516.5155. A call to 911 on a cell phone only, will go to the St. Louis County Police. The St. Louis County Police will notify UMSL Police, but this may cause a delay in response. Campus Police know the best way to escort emergency vehicles to locations on campus.

If you do not feel comfortable walking to a parking lot, MetroLink stop, or anywhere else on campus, contact the Campus Police for an escort: 314.516.5155.

Computer Resources

This course will make regular use of MyGateway. Information Technology Services at UMSL provides detailed instructions on the use of MyGateway and other computer-related resources available to students (see <http://www.umsi.edu/technology/publications/stutechguide>). Those who have any difficulty using or accessing course-related materials on-line should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to work out a solution.

*******Questions or concerns about this syllabus should be directed to the instructor. Failure to review this syllabus and follow instructions could impact negatively on the student's assignment-specific grade(s) and/or final grade in this course.**