

Gerontology 6130 (UMSL Reference 11941)

Interviewing Older Adults & Life Review (Summer, 2008)

May 12 - June 30, 2008

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 6:00 - 8:40 PM
South Campus Classroom Building, Room 103

Faculty: Thomas M. Meuser, PhD
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Required Reading: Gibson, F. (2004). *The past in the present: Using reminiscence in health & social care*. Health Professions Press, Baltimore, MD.

This text is available in the UMSL Bookstore in the MSC Building. *Additional readings and resources will be posted as PDF files on MyGateway or handed out in class.*

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

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. Video editing is time intensive and students will be expected to conduct some of this work outside of scheduled class sessions.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- a) Understand the various forms of life review that all aging adults experience, whether through formal intervention or personal introspection;
- b) Appreciate the benefits of pursuing formal, guided life review;
- 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 (DV technology) and edit a basic interview using Windows Movie Maker 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).

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 that cannot complete an assignment on time should speak with the instructor ahead of the class session when the assignment is due. The instructor will consider individual circumstances and needs with regards to assignment due dates. Evaluation criteria and other policies/expectations are listed below.

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 (highlighted in yellow). A number of guest speakers (highlighted in blue) will visit and share their perspectives. 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. *Be sure the check the MyGateway site for this course at least once per week for updates and announcements. Important announcements may also be sent to student e-mail accounts.*

Session	Outline & Objectives	Assignment
Session 1 (5/13/08) <i>Introduction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introductions & Expectations ▪ <i>Life Review Exercise (pair up)</i> ▪ Review of Syllabus & Course Plan ▪ Hospice Foundation Video on Life Review ▪ Origins & Benefits of Life Review (LR) ▪ Butler's Seminal 1963 Paper ▪ Erikson's Stages of Development ▪ Theories, Definitions, Goals, Outcomes ▪ Story Corps (http://www.storycorps.net/) ▪ How comprehensive &/or structured? ▪ Case Example (<i>Millie & Bud</i>) & Discussion 	<p>Gibson (2004) is the required text and available in the bookstore.</p> <p>Other readings are posted to the MyGateway site as PDF files.</p>
Session 2 (5/15/08) <i>Strategies & Outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LR in Hospice Care <i>(Brenda M... & Patricia G..., Unity Hospice)</i> ▪ Life Span Research, Personal & Social History, & the Reconstructed Self ▪ Types of Life Reviewers ▪ Memory Processing & the "Reminiscence Bump" ▪ LR as a "Therapeutic" Intervention ▪ Efficacy Studies & Special Populations ▪ Case Example (<i>Shirley</i>) & Discussion 	<p>Butler (1963)</p> <p>Gibson (2004) Chapters 1 & 2, & Appendix E</p>
Session 3 (5/20/08) <i>Interviewing Process</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ "Tapestries" & Guided Autobiography <i>(Mary J..., MSG, Friendship Village)</i> ▪ Clinical vs. Interactive-Relational Models 	<p>Birren (2006)</p> <p>Gibson (2004)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roles & Responsibilities in LR Interviewing ▪ Being a “Therapeutic Listener” ▪ Setting the Ground Rules ▪ Trust, Safety & Privacy - Ethical Practice ▪ Building Rapport (Therapeutic Alliance) ▪ Questioning, Reflecting & Reframing ▪ Respect & <i>Going Too Far</i> (Rollie Clip) ▪ Harnessing the Power of Silence ▪ Transference & Counter-transference ▪ Strong Emotions & Traumatic Memories ▪ Checking In & Bringing Closure ▪ Case Example (<i>Mary</i>) & Discussion 	Chapters 4 & 5
<p>Session 4 (5/22/08) <i>Interviewing Styles</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Defining your Interviewing Style ▪ Role Playing Exercise ▪ Instructor’s Semi-Structured LR Format ▪ Comparing Professional & Student Styles - the Myrtis Interviews ▪ Do’s & Don’ts in LR Interviewing ▪ Interview Assignments ▪ Making Contact with your Interviewees ▪ Signing Out Equipment & Target Dates 	<p>Birren & Deutchman (1996)</p> <p>McAdams (1995) Interview Guide</p> <p>McDonald & Haney (1997) Chapters 1-3</p>
<p>Session 5 (5/27/08) <i>Basics of Shooting Video</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Special Topic 1: Reviewing Childhood & Adolescence</i> ▪ Analog vs. Digital Video ▪ Flip Video Camera Tutorial (humorous) (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sS_vm6whRal) ▪ Planning the Shoot ▪ Setting up & Framing the Shot ▪ Lighting & Sound ▪ Keeping Time ▪ Ending & Packing Up ▪ Case Example (<i>Howard</i>) & Discussion 	McAdams (1996)
<p>Session 6 (5/29/08) <i>Class as Interviewer</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perspectives on Aging & Life Review (Guest Speaker, Myrtis S...) ▪ Class as Interviewer - Questions about Childhood and Adolescence ▪ <i>Special Topic 2: Reviewing Young Adulthood</i> ▪ <i>Special Topic 3: LR & African Americans</i> 	<p>Mini Life Review Paper Due Today</p> <p>Shellman (2004) Black et al (2007)</p>
<p>Session 7 (6/3/08) <i>Digital Video Editing 1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Guest Speaker - Clarence M..., Instructional Technologist, UMSL ▪ Using Windows Movie Maker ▪ Importing Footage & Adding it to the Timeline 	<p>Ang (2005) - Editing</p> <p>Gibson (2004) Chapter 6</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simple Editing Techniques ▪ Adding Titles & Transitions ▪ Adding Music & Overlaying Images ▪ Exporting a Finished Product ▪ <i>Special Topic 3: Reviewing Older Adulthood</i> 	
<p>Session 8 (6/5/08) <i>Digital Video Editing 2</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Special Topic 4: Dementia, Depression and Life Review</i> ▪ Elements of the Keepsake Video ▪ Supervised, in-class practice with Windows Movie Maker ▪ Learn the elements of making a keepsake video. ▪ All students will work with the same video segment, and edit it based on a set of written instructions. 	<p><i>Gibson (2004) Chapters 8 & 9</i></p> <p><i>Footage for Interview 1 is due today. Bring your camera and we will download the video file to the shared drive.</i></p>
<p>Session 9 (6/10/08) <i>Reviewing Interview 1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each student will show a 10-15 minute clip from his or her first interview. We will discuss and critique these segments. ▪ Begin the editing process towards Keepsake Video 1 (as time allows) ▪ Review process of developing brief 1-5 minute video clips for library. In addition to creating a keepsake video for each of two full interviews, students will be required to create <i>at least 8</i> library clips on different topics (4 per full interview). 	
<p>Session 10 (6/12/08) <i>Creating Keepsake 1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supervised editing in the classroom. 	<p><i>Footage for Interview 2 is due today. Bring your camera and we will download the video file to the shared drive.</i></p>
<p>Session 11 (6/17/08) <i>Finishing Keepsake 1 & Reviewing Interview 2</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supervised editing in the classroom. ▪ Rendering and exporting the finished product. ▪ Each student will show a 10-15 minute clip from his or her second interview. We will discuss and critique these segments. 	<p><i>Keepsake Video 1 due today or later this week. Arrange with Dr. Meuser.</i></p>
<p>Session 12 (6/19/08) <i>Creating Keepsake 2</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supervised editing in the classroom. 	
<p>Session 13 (6/24/08) <i>Finishing Keepsake 2 & Developing Brief Clips for Education</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supervised editing in the classroom. ▪ Using footage from Interviews 1 & 2 to create brief clips for educational library. 	<p><i>Keepsake Video 2 due today or later this week. Arrange with Dr. Meuser.</i></p>

Session 14 (6/26/08) <i>Course Review & Student Presentations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students will give a brief presentation on a topic in aging using 1 or 2 clips from their full interviews to make key points. Show up to 8 PowerPoint slides. <i>For example, you might want to speak briefly on early grief reactions following spousal death, and show a clip of an interviewee sharing this experience.</i> 	
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Evaluation (Grading)

Students will be evaluated based on attendance, class participation, in-class presentations, written assignments and video products. Grades will be assigned on a point system, with each graded item receiving up to 100 points. There are five graded items with a total of 600 possible points. A final 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. The final grade will be based on the final weighted total percentage in the MyGateway gradebook. 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>

Attendance & Class Participation (15% of final grade)

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate actively in classroom discussions, role playing, and video editing efforts. Attendance will be taken each week. A student may miss one class session without penalty. Each missed class session above this will result in a loss of 10 points for this graded item. An "A" student attends all sessions, comes prepared with thoughts to share having read assigned materials, and provides answers and suggests pertinent questions/issues related to the topic of the day and course content as a whole.

EXAMPLE: A student that participates actively in class, but misses two sessions, might receive a reduced grade of 90 points (A1) for this item.¹

“Mini Life Review” Paper (15% of final grade)

Students will interview an older family member, friend or acquaintance, focusing on one phase of life (below). This interview can be conducted in person, by telephone, or even by e-mail (talk to Dr. Meuser first if the latter is your plan). You may audio record this interview or simply take notes. Write a 6-10 page paper (double spaced, 1” margins, 12 pt type, spell checked) that includes the following headings:

- *Interviewee & Setting - Describe the person being interviewed, that person’s relationship to you, and the interview situation or setting.*
- *Life Review - Consider the interviewee’s responses to the questions you asked, and write a first person account (i.e., as if you are the interviewee) that captures the gist (basic meanings) of what you were told. You can tie the responses to the specific questions, or simply develop an integrated narrative. Do not simply provide straight transcription.*
- *Interviewer Reflections - This is your opportunity to tell what it was like to conduct this interview. How did you establish rapport? How conversational or formal (structured) was the interview? Comment on any specific interviewing techniques you used and give examples. What else did you learn in this exercise?*

An “A” paper will be clearly written, include the three main elements listed above, and provide sufficient detail for the reader to understand the content and process of the interview.

Early Childhood: What is the very first thing you remember in your life? Go back as far as you can. Tell me about it.
Did you feel cared for as a child? How so?
Did you have childhood friends and playmates? A best friend?
Were you a leader or a follower as a child? How so?
Looking back, what are you most proud of now from your childhood years?

Later Childhood: Did you feel well guided growing up?
Did you feel good about yourself as a teenager?
Were there cliques or special groups in your day?
Did you have a sense of belonging at school or in groups?
Looking back, what are you most proud of now from your teen years?

Young Adulthood: As a young adult, did you do what you were supposed to do in life?
Did you think of yourself as responsible?
Were you happy with your choices?
What important decisions did you make at this time?
Looking back, what are you most proud of now from your 20-30’s?

Older Adulthood: In your entire life, what relationship stands out as most important? Why?
Was there a critical turning point in your life, when you took a new and important path?
Do you think you have helped the next generation?
What pieces of wisdom would you like to hand down to the next generation?
What are you most proud of in your current life?

¹ University policies concerning appropriate behavior and academic honesty apply in this class at all times (see Student Code of Conduct - http://www.umsl.edu/studentlife/dsa/student_planner/policies/conductcode.htm). Points may be deducted for conduct infractions, and other University-level consequences may apply.

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

Students will interview 2 older adults (assigned by the Instructor) in various community settings following instructions given during class. Students may interview a person in 1-2 sittings and shoot 50-100 minutes of footage. On 6/10/08 and 6/17/08, 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 may pause the video at various points to provide comments, or save all comments until the end. An "A" presentation will follow the instructions above and should include substantive comments on the process between interviewer and interviewee.

Keepsake Videos 1 & 2 (50% of final grade; 25% + 25%)

Students will edit footage under the supervision of the Instructor to form a keepsake video to be provided to the interviewee on DVD and/or VHS. The Keepsake Video will be described extensively in class sessions. It should include title screens, music, and transitions - all with the goal of telling a coherent, but not necessarily comprehensive story. As with the Mini Life Review paper, 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. Questions asked by the interviewer might be edited out (replaced by text?) at times so that the interviewee's voice is primary. Each student's experience in this will be different, and grading will be based on demonstrated effort, willingness to accept constructive feedback, and the overall look of the final product. An "A" effort will have a polished (if not professional) look, and tell a clear, coherent story.

Presentation of the Professional Interview (not graded)

Students will showcase their finished work in the final class session, sharing clips from one or both interviews, and telling about what they learned from the overall experience.

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, PDA devices, 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, doing other work, or surfing the web during the class session.

Students should read and be familiar with the student code of conduct at UMSL (http://www.umsl.edu/studentlife/dsa/student_planner/policies/conductcode.htm) and, in particular, the sections concerning cheating and plagiarism. Students who violate the university guidelines involving academic dishonesty will fail the assignment and may receive additional sanctions from the Office of Academic Affairs. If you have any question about what is or is not plagiarism, it is your responsibility to ask the Professor BEFORE submitting an assignment.

Disability & Special Needs

Students with a disability or special need requiring accommodation must register with Disability Access Services (DAS) as described below. The instructor will maintain strict confidentiality concerning DAS information and will only discuss a DAS-related concern at initiation/request of the student in question.

- To request academic accommodations (for example, a note taker or accommodations for access to library materials on reserve), **students must register with Disability Access Services, 144 Millennium Student Center, 516-6554**. This office is responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting academic accommodations, and for accommodations planning in cooperation with students and instructors, as needed and consistent with course requirements.
- Students with disabilities or health conditions who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the **Disability Access Services Office in 144 Millennium Student Center at 516-6554** as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are arranged in a timely fashion.
- 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**.
- Students with disabilities, including invisible conditions such as chronic medical conditions, learning disabilities, head injury and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, are urged to contact the **Disability Access Services Office in 144 Millenium Student Center at 516-6554**. This office will appropriately assess your individual needs, maintain your disability documentation confidentially on file, request and coordinate appropriate classroom accommodations on your behalf.

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.umsl.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.