LIS 642-201, ORAL HISTORY
(3 credits)
SPRING 2011
University of Kentucky
School of Library and Information Science

Instructor: Doug Boyd Ph.D.
Director, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History
University of Kentucky Libraries

Time: Course material posted every Monday Evening at 6:00 pm est.

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SKYPE: douglasaboyd

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course is an introduction to oral history methodology, theory, and professional practice. It is designed for persons intending to use oral history interviews in the practice of historical or other qualitative research and/or for persons intending to manage oral history collections in libraries and archives. The course examines how oral history projects are constructed and administered, how interviews are conducted, and how oral history interviews are preserved in archives and libraries. The course will also explore the technologies involved in the collection and preservation of interviews, the reliability of memory and the utilization of oral histories in various forms of publications including print, radio, television, internet, and museum exhibitions. Students will gain practical experience in oral history interviewing and related aspects of oral history, such as archiving, transcribing, editing, and publishing oral histories.

COURSE OBJECTIVE:
By the end of the semester, students will:
• Gain an overall understanding of oral history as a process and an information package in a library/archival and an outreach/public history context
• Students will get practical experience in oral history interviewing and related aspects of oral history such as all elements of the archival process (accessioning, description, collection management), transcribing, editing, and publishing and preservation of oral histories
• Establish a fundamental knowledge in the technologies of recording, preservation, and publication of oral history interviews.
• Gain a familiarity of the theoretical underpinnings of oral history
• Students will explore how oral history can be utilized in a library or archival context to engage communities and to document a more diverse, relevant and useful history.
COURSE FORMAT:
Online/Blackboard. This course will not have a synchronous meeting time, which poses certain challenges for you as the student. Because we are not meeting face to face, students are expected to interact with all course materials (recorded lectures, multimedia, readings), participate in weekly discussions, and to fulfill all of the research tasks and assignments. Asynchronous online classes can seem like a lot of work and require a great deal of self-discipline. I encourage you to schedule time each week and to log on to this course via Blackboard several times throughout the week to check for announcements and to participate in the flow of the course.

TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION & RESOURCES
Distance Learning Students are expected to have a minimum level of technological competencies and the availability of operating technological resources. Students must have regular access a computer with a reliable Internet connection and audio/video capabilities. Internet Explorer 7 (IE) or Firefox 2.x are the recommended browsers for those using a Windows-based PC. Those using Firefox 3.x may encounter problems with assignment uploads. Those using an Apple computer with MAC OS X (10.5.x) may use Firefox 3.x or Safari 3.x. Please be certain that your computer and/or browser allow you to view Adobe Reader documents (.pdf). Microsoft Office and other software products are free for students: [https://iweb.uky.edu/MSDownload/](https://iweb.uky.edu/MSDownload/).

Contact your instructor first if you are having technology-related problems. If you need more immediate assistance, please contact TASC or UKIT.

Teaching and Learning Services Center (TASC)
http://www.uky.edu/TASC/; 859-257-8272

Information Technology Customer Service Center (UKIT)
http://www.uky.edu/UKIT/; 859-257-1300

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSESSMENT:
• Weekly Written Responses/Discussion 25%
• Assignments 40%
  Assignment 1: “Interview Review” short paper
  Assignment 2: "Oral History in the archive" or Media review
• Final Paper/Project 35%

COURSE REQUIREMENT/ASSESSMENT DETAILS:
Weekly Written Responses/Discussion (25%)
Reading and Research Task Response
Every week students will post a 2-page response to a question pertaining to the readings and the research task assigned for the week. Questions will be posted on Tuesday evenings to the course blog: Weekly Reading Response Questions located in ‘Course Documents’ in blackboard. Weekly reading responses focus on the readings assigned during the previous class. Weekly Reading Responses are due Sunday evenings by 5:00 pm est.
Discussion
During the first class (January 24th), discussion groups will be established. Each group will be assigned a week during which that group will lead online discussion. Assigned weeks are on blackboard in ‘Course Documents.’ Students are responsible for contacting the other students within the group and organizing the discussion. The group will pose that week’s question or topic and actively moderate and participate in discussion. All students are expected to participate in discussion each week and incorporate readings into the discussion. Weekly discussion focuses on the readings and research tasks assigned during the previous class.

Assignments (40%)

#1: Interview Review (20%)
Choose an oral history interview from an archive and review the tape and/or transcript. In no more than 5 double-spaced pages describe the nature of the interview and assess the information the interview provides. Discuss the role of interviewing in the oral history process. Use class readings and discussions as well as outside sources to discuss the role of preparation in interviewing, the importance of interviewing "styles" and the role of the interviewer in the interviewing process.

#2: Media Review or Oral History in the Archive [Choose One] (20%)

Media Review
Choose a media production (documentary, exhibit, website) in which oral history plays a prominent role. Write an essay (3 page maximum, double-spaced typed pages), summarize the primary arguments in the media production, analyze the role of oral history in the narrative, make some judgment about the author’s/producer’s oral history expertise (if possible), and make some conclusions regarding the value of the use of oral history in the book/media production. Utilize The Oral History Review media reviews for style suggestions.

or

Oral History in the Archive Write an essay Write an essay (3 page maximum, double-spaced typed pages) on an archival issue facing oral history archivists. The topic is of your choosing and can have to do with access, preservation, costs, technological etc... Your will need to be approved by your instructor.

Final Project: Oral history interview, metadata and analysis: (35%)
You are required to conduct at least one recorded oral history interview. The interview may be on a topic of your choice.

• A brief interview proposal must be approved by March 21.
• An interview release form must be signed and turned in with the assignment.
• Following the interview prepare a summary of your interview experience (no more than 10 double-spaced pages) in which you compare and analyze your experience with the information regarding interviewing gleaned from the class readings and discussions.

• You will also transcribe at least 5 double-spaced pages of what you consider the “best” or "most interesting or informative" portion of your interview.

• Prepare interview level metadata for your interview including interview summary as well as descriptive keywords. Feel free to use Library of Congress subject headings if you feel comfortable and/or keywords or tags.

• You will be encouraged to deposit your original interviews in a local or relevant oral history archive. You will be expected to FTP the audio/video recording by the paper due date.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
All papers written for this course should follow the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style. Plagiarism, see 6.3.1 under University of Kentucky Student Rights and Responsibilities:
http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
All papers and take-home assignments must represent the student’s original work. When using material from other sources, proper citations must be given. Papers or assignments prepared for other classes cannot be used to fulfill the requirements of this class.

Grading Scale
90 – 100 = A (Exceptional Achievement)
80 – 89 = B (High Achievement)
70 – 79 = C (Average Achievement)
0 – 69 = E (Failing)

LOGISTICS
• Each week (Tuesdays at 5:00 pm) there will be course materials provided in ‘Course Documents’ section of Blackboard. Often this will include a podasted mini lecture and PowerPoint slides, and multimedia materials when needed, to accompany the lecture.

• Each week, students will submit a reading response as detailed above. Written responses are assigned Tuesday evenings and are due 5:00 pm each Sunday evening.

• Each week, students will participate in the discussion pertaining to the week’s topics. Discussion must commence by Wednesday (if not before) during the corresponding week.

• Students will be expected to regularly monitor Blackboard for class announcements.
• Students will receive email announcement that course materials for the week are available.

• All assignments are due by 5:00 PM EASTERN TIME on stated due dates.

• All assignments are to be submitted via Blackboard. They are NOT to be emailed to the instructors unless in the case of technical failures.

• Email will be the preferred correspondence. For all email correspondence, **preface your subject with the following: “LIS642: “**.

• Since there is no “meeting time” for this class, students are expected to access the course materials and to stay in regular communication. Failure to fulfill course assignments on time will result in lowered grades (1/2 letter grade each day late).

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**


• **MacKay, Nancy. *Curating Oral Histories: From Interview to Archive*, Left Coast Press, 2006.**

### COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>January 17</td>
<td><strong>MLK Holiday, No class</strong>&lt;br&gt;RESEARCH TASK DUE: <strong>Listen to the Nunn Center's Interview with Martin Luther King conducted by Robert Penn Warren March, 18,1964.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>COLLECTING ORAL HISTORY: THE INTERVIEW</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>READINGS DUE:</strong></td>
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<td>• Ritchie, <em>Doing Oral History</em>, Chapter 3: Conducting Interviews</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• <a href="#">Oral History Association: Evaluation Guidelines/Principles and Standards</a></td>
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<td><strong>RESEARCH TASK DUE:</strong></td>
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<td>Listen to ENTIRE interview with Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis conducted by Terry Birdwhistell.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td><strong>ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>READINGS DUE:</strong></td>
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<td>• Ritchie, <em>Doing Oral History</em>, Chapter 3: Setting Up an Oral History Project</td>
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<td><strong>RESEARCH TASK DUE:</strong></td>
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<td>Review Baylor University's Transcription Guidelines and the Nunn Center's <em>Transcription Guidelines</em> (derived from Baylor's). Be prepared to compare and contrast.</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>COLLECTING ORAL HISTORY: RECORDING TECHNOLOGIES</td>
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|       | README DUE: | - Ritchie, Doing Oral History, Chapter 5: Videotaping Oral History<br>  
  
| Date  | February 28 | CURATING ORAL HISTORY: ARCHIVES |
|       | README DUE: | - Mackay, Curating Oral Histories, pp. 1-65<br>  
  
  
  - Neuanschwander, Oral History and the Law, Preface, Chapters 1, 2 |
|       | RESEARCH TASK DUE: | Review an online catalog (archive or library) containing oral histories as well as an oral history based archival finding aid. Be prepared to discuss. Pay particular attention to metadata associated with these records representing these interviews. |
| Date  | March 7    | CURATING ORAL HISTORY: ARCHIVES: PRESERVATION |
|       | README DUE: | - Mackay, Curating Oral Histories, pp. 66-150<br>  
  
  - Ritchie, Doing Oral History, Chapter 6: Preserving Oral History in Archives and Libraries<br>  
  
  - Neuanschwander, Oral History and the Law, Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 |
<p>|       | RESEARCH TASK DUE: | Review local, state, federal grants that support preservation. Be prepared to discuss grants for preservation/digitization and be able to cite specific grants/agencies in this discussion. |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>March 14</th>
<th><strong>SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>March 21</td>
<td><strong>CURATING ORAL HISTORY: ACCESS AND THE INTERNET</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ASSIGNMENT #3 PROPOSAL DUE</strong></td>
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<td>READINGS DUE:</td>
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<td>• Neuanschwander, <em>Oral History and the Law</em>, Chapters 7,8,9, conclusion.</td>
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<td>RESEARCH TASK DUE:</td>
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<td>Examine several different styles of providing online access to oral history. Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of different techniques and approaches.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>March 28</td>
<td><strong>ORAL HISTORY AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE</strong></td>
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<td>READINGS DUE:</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Shircliffe, Barbara. “‘We Got the Best of that World’: A Case for the Study of Nostalgia in the Oral History of School Desegregation,” Oral History Review (September/Fall 2001), 59-84.</td>
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<td>RESEARCH TASK DUE:</td>
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<td>View “Living the Story” documentary. Interact with the Nunn Center’s Anne Braden Collection: <a href="http://kdl.kyvl.org/cgi/b/bib/bib-idx?c=abohkuk&amp;cc=abohkuk;page=simple">http://kdl.kyvl.org/cgi/b/bib/bib-idx?c=abohkuk&amp;cc=abohkuk;page=simple</a></td>
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|   | April 4 | **ORAL HISTORY: METHOD AND THEORY**  
|   |        | **READINGS DUE:**  
|---|--------|--------------------------------------------------|
|   |        | **RESEARCH TASK THIS WEEK**  
|   |        | View/listen to assigned interviews in entirety (TBA)  
|   | April 11 | **ORAL HISTORY: MEMORY AND NARRATIVE**  
|   |        | **READINGS DUE:**  
|   | April 18 | **ORAL HISTORY AND TRAUMA**  
|   |        | **READINGS DUE:**  
|   | April 25 | **No Readings, No Research Task This Week, No Reading Responses No Discussion**  
|   | April 29 | **Exam Week: ASSIGNMENT #3 DUE; NO FINAL EXAM**