University of Maryland Department of History  
HIST 428M: Foreigners as Citizens: Recording Oral Histories of Immigration  
Spring 2015: Tuesday & Thursday 2:00-3:15 (TLF 1103)

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Office Hours: Tues & Thus 12:30-1:30 & By Appointment

Course Description and Goals
Since the mid-20th century, the demographics of the United States of America have dramatically altered, as decade by decade, increasing numbers of people have arrived from around the globe. This vast movement of people has had as profound an impact on our country as it has on the immigrants themselves. In this class you will explore the impact of this migration on the DC Metro Area through the eyes of local immigrants. As the founding participants in the Metro DC Area Immigrant Voices Project, your goal in this course is three-fold. You will learn the techniques and skills of the oral historian in order to produce (in collaboration with your immigrant interviewee) an oral history interview and thus an original historical source. Through class activities and individual research you will explore your immigrant’s experience in the context of his or her home country, the history of the Metro DC area, and of the U.S. more broadly. In the process, you will work to develop your cultural competency as a member of the diverse community in which we live. The interviews you conduct will become part of the Immigrant Voices Archive of UMD’s Center for History of the New America, meaning that you will directly contribute to ongoing research on immigration.

Learning Outcomes:
- To understand the concept of culture, and to effectively compare and contrast various immigrant cultures in the Metro DC area.
- To understand how cultural beliefs about immigrants (held by communities and individuals, including immigrants and students) have influenced behaviors and attitudes toward immigrants in America at the individual and societal levels.
- To develop cultural competency skills so as to enable students to effectively negotiate cross-cultural situations or conflicts involving immigrants.
- To select, critically evaluate, and apply scholarship about immigration, cultural competence, and oral history to become successful contributors not only to the Metro DC Area Immigrant Voices Oral History Project but to similar projects in the future.
- To explore how oral history work affects and is affected by political, social, cultural, economic and ethical issues related to migrants.
- To produce a primary source (the oral history interview) that reflects knowledge of oral history and immigration in the Metro DC region.
- To collaborate and use knowledge about oral history/immigration/cultural competency to support your own and other’s research work and effectively communicate findings.

Required Texts
Other than materials chosen by each student for his/her individual research all texts for this course are available either as documents or links through CANVAS (http://ng.elms.umd.edu/) or
otherwise provided by the instructor. See the Class Schedule portion of this syllabus (pp. 5-10) for details about texts – listed weekly.

**Required Equipment:** Students are responsible for obtaining their own recording equipment. We will discuss options in detail early in the class, including borrowing equipment from UMD.

**Grading & Assignments**

**Value of Assignments & Dates Due:**
- **Class Participation** = 20% [throughout the semester, includes specified Journal Reflections]
- **Interviewee Choice Statement** = 5% [Feb 10]
- **Proposal** = 10% [Feb 24]
- **Recording of Interview** = 5% [March 24]
- **Transcript of Interview** = 10% [April 7 or 9, as assigned]
- **Peer Review of Transcript** = 10% [April 14]
- **One Immigrant Life Research Paper** = 20% [Apr 28, Apr 30, May 5, or May 7, as assigned]
- **Presentation** = 10% [Apr 28, Apr 30, May 5, or May 7, as assigned]
- **Journal & Final Analysis Paper** = 10% [due on date of Final Exam]

All assignments are due AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS on the date specified unless otherwise noted. Any late work will be penalized 1/3 grade for each day late. Be sure to check with the instructor about the required method via which you must turn in each element of the assignment. BE AWARE: To get a C or better in this course you must complete ALL major assignments!

**Class Participation:**

- **Preparation:** It is extremely important that you have read/viewed, intellectually processed, and taken notes on the assigned texts before class. The Class Schedule tells you which of the weekly readings are due each class period, and you are expected to bring a copy of these readings with you that class. Reflections (part of your journal) are also an important part of your preparation for class.

- **Active Engagement:** You are expected to actively participate in the classroom. The first step toward participating is to be present! Students are encouraged to attend all classes and arrive on time. If you know in advance that you will miss class due to medical reasons or religious observances please let the instructor know. You are expected to be an engaged listener and active contributor in all classroom activities, including discussion, role playing, partner and group work, debates, peer-review, in-class response papers, conference planning, and possibly even eating! Keep in mind that the point is to learn (often through trial and error) so mistakes are expected and even encouraged. There is seldom just one right answer and asking questions is as important as answering them! Your engagement in the class will be assessed on an ongoing basis as part of your participation grade. Be aware that JUST showing up for class cannot earn you better than a low C (if that) as a participation grade. If for some reason you feel you cannot actively participate in class come and see me during the first two weeks of the semester.
The Metro DC Area Immigrant Voices Project:
In this class you will all be working on the Metro DC Area Immigrant Voices Project – a project which has as its goal creating a body of work that tells the story of Washington area immigrants by engaging with members of local communities. In addition to work with your fellow students in class as described above, you will thus also be planning, developing, producing, and presenting your own ‘One Immigrant Life’ oral history research. This process is divided into a number of graded components, which are as follows (more detailed information will be provided on each assignment as it comes due):

1. **Interviewee Choice Statement** (1 page) - Introduction of individual you plan to interview, explaining why this person would be an appropriate subject for the project.
2. **Proposal** (3 pages) - Description of your proposed approach to your interview and research paper, with bibliography & list of interview questions.
3. **Interview Recording** - Copy of interview recording provided to instructor.
4. **Interview Transcript** – Written transcript of your interview provided to BOTH instructor and student partner.
5. **Peer Review of Transcript** (1-2 pages) – Review of student partner’s transcript provided to both instructor and partner.
6. ‘**One Immigrant Life ‘Research Paper** (7-8 pages) - Paper in which you consider cultural, social, economic and political aspects of immigration from the perspective of your interview subject. You will place this individual’s personal experience into the context of the history of immigration into the DC metropolitan area and of emigration from his or her homeland, paying particular attention to what her or his experiences convey about the impact of migration on the Washington community. Your paper should be focused on an interpretive argument, with a clear thesis backed up by evidence from your interview and other primary and secondary material.
7. **Presentation** – 10 minute presentation about your research paper given to the class during the Class Conference near the end of the semester.
8. **Journal & Final Analysis Paper** – Throughout the course you will keep a journal in which you describe your feelings about particular activities in response to prompts given throughout the semester (and additionally as you wish). At several points in the semester you will provide journal entries (Reflections) to the instructor for review. At the end of the course, you will turn in the journal along with a short essay (3 to 5 pages) that addresses the following questions:
   1. What did you like about doing oral history? What did you find most difficult?
   2. What advantages did working with a student partner bring to your development as a cultural competent oral historian? Any disadvantages?
   3. What was the most important thing you learned about immigrants in the DC area in this class?
   4. In what ways do you think this course affected your understanding of and ability to cope with cultural beliefs/challenges/conflict related to immigration and migration?
   5. What do you think are the main strengths and weaknesses of oral history as a research method for exploring the topic of immigration/migration? For learning about cultural competency?

**Performance Standards:** The following scale out of a total of 100 points will determine your grade.

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Academic Integrity

Violations of the University’s Code of Academic Integrity (http://www.shc.umd.edu/code.html) will not be tolerated in this class. Violations include (but are not limited to) cheating on tests, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, facilitating academic dishonesty, submitting fraudulent documents, forging signatures, and plagiarizing written work. **Plagiarism** is broadly defined as follows:

- Repeating another's sentence as your own
- Adopting a particularly apt phrase as your own
- Paraphrasing someone else's argument as your own
- Presenting someone else's line of thinking in the development of a thesis as your own

All quotations taken from other authors (including from the Internet) must be indicated by quotation marks and properly referenced using Kate Turabian *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (latest edition) as your guide. You are also expected to write and sign the UMD Honor Pledge “I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination” on all assignments.

A Note on General Internet Use: Students are encouraged to expand their knowledge about class topics by seeking information on the internet. However, if an assignment specifies that students should not consult outside sources, you must refrain from consulting internet sources as well as outside paper sources. In addition, due in part to copyright considerations, students must not post ANY material about the course on the internet without the permission of the instructor.

If you have any questions about Academic Integrity, especially about plagiarism and proper use of the internet (which can be confusing), please consult your instructor early in the semester.

Miscellaneous Announcements

Contacting the Instructor:
You are always welcome to visit me during office hours and I encourage you to do so! If you cannot come during these times, I will be happy to make an appointment with you. Other than office hours the best way to contact me outside of class is via email. I will make announcements and contact you individually via email – **check your email regularly**!

Available Resources: You are encouraged to take your papers to the UMD Writing Center for help improving your writing and to consult with Learning Assistance Services as needed:
- Writing Center, 1205 Tawes Hall (http://www.english.umd.edu.academics/writingcenter)
- Learning Assistance, 2202 Shoemaker Building (http://www.counseling.umd.edu/LAS/)

Policy on Electronic Devices:
Unless otherwise notified by the instructor, ALL electronic devices (including cell phones) must be **TURNED OFF** during class. The only exception to this rule is the use of laptops for taking
notes only, and only if this does not prove to be a distraction. During activities, you may be asked to put laptops away, so be sure to bring paper & pen for taking notes. If any student uses an unauthorized electronic device during class time, he or she may be required to leave the room for the remainder of the class period. If there are more than 3 instances of students using unauthorized electronic devices during class, the entire class will be given a pop quiz that will count toward your participation grade.

Inclendent Weather Policy:
If UMD closes the campus due to inclement weather during the time when this class normally meets, our class will automatically be cancelled. Go to the UMD website http://www.umd.edu or call 301–405–SNOW for information about university weather cancellations or delays. If a class is cancelled due to inclement weather conditions, but campus is not closed, you will be informed via email and an announcement on CANVAS. Your instructor will also inform you, via email, or by other means as necessary, if there are any changes in due dates for assignments, tests, or exams due to class cancellations.

Disabilities:
If you have a documented disability, please inform the instructor of your needs in the first two weeks of the semester. See www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/ for information on UMD’s support services.

This syllabus is subject to change by the instructor at any time. Students will be notified in advance of changes that could affect grading and assignments.

Class Schedule

Week One: Immigration, Oral History & Cultural Competency
Jan 27 – Introductions: Oral History, Immigrants & Cultural Competency
Jan 29 – Telling the Immigration Story of the New America


Week’s Class Activities: Overview of syllabus, texts, expectations. Students complete Student Information Sheets. Define ‘safe space’ ground rules for discussion. Discussion of oral history, immigrants & cultural Competency (What is oral history? How has it been used with immigrants? How might we use it to understand the Metro DC community? What is culture? What role might cultural competency play in our ability to be effective oral historians?) / Discussion of immigration in America since the 1960s (What is the “New America”? What role have immigrants played in developing it? How has this impacted the Metro DC area?). Discuss individual experiences presented in ‘Nine Stories’ in this context.

Week Two: The Metro DC Area and Migration
Feb 3 – Who wants to talk? Choosing Oral History Narrators
Feb 5 – Washington DC as a Migrant Metropolis


**Week’s Class Activities:**
Open with discussion of students & instructor’s cultural backgrounds. Discuss possible interviewees & choose project partners (Who would we like to interview? What are our own cultural identities & how does this affect our choices? What is the interviewer’s relationship with interviewee/narrator? How can we partner to allow for best understanding of cultural differences/similarities?) / Planning discussion of the Metro DC Area Immigrant Voices Project (How do we define the parameters of the Metro DC Area community? How can we best choose narrators to represent immigrants in the Metro DC area? How can we best map how ‘our’ individual immigrants relate to each other in space/time?) Do GIS mapping exercise.

**Week Three: Cultural Competence & Interviewing**
Feb 10 – Interviewing: Questions & Answers *Interviewee Choice Statement Due*
Feb 12 – Latin American Stories: Migrants & Immigrants (Guest Speaker)

**Week’s Readings/Preparation: For Tuesday:** Complete & turn in Interviewee Choice Statement. Read Mary Kay Quinlan “The Dynamics of Interviewing” to prepare for mock interviews. Make contact with potential interviewees and schedule appointments. Arrange for recording equipment as needed. **For Thursday:** Read Horacio Ramirez “My Community, My History, My Practice” and Kate Brick “Local Goes National: Latino Immigrants in DC.”

**Week’s Class Activities:** Do mock interviews with partners (conducted in pairs in front of class, recorded & posted to CANVAS to be transcribed for homework). / Guest speaker on Mexican immigration and oral history. Discussion of Latin American migrants (What is the difference between a migrant and an immigrant? What is trans-national? Trans-local? How might cultural research in Central/South America help us understand the ‘New America’ & the ‘new DC’?)

**Week Four: Behind the Scenes – Race, Culture & Identity**
Feb 17 – Interviewing: From Technical to Cultural Issues
Feb 19 – Caribbean Stories

**Week’s Readings/Preparation: For Tuesday:** Transcribe both in-class interviews conducted by yourself and partner (work individually!) & bring these transcripts to class. Read Kathryn Anderson and Dana Jack, “Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses” and Valerie Yow “Interpersonal Relations in the Interview.” **For Thursday:** Complete Journal Reflection (1 page) on what you learned from the mock interview & transcribing exercise. Read Violet Showers Johnson “What, Then, Is the African American? African and Afro-Caribbean Identities in Black America.”
**Week’s Class Activities:** Check that interview appointments are scheduled & arrangements made for recording equipment. Review mock interview transcripts as partners and as a class. Discuss solutions for issues raised by mock interviews & transcribing work (Are transcripts accurate? Are questions appropriate? Any cultural disconnects?) Go over **Proposal** requirements. / Discuss immigrants, race & class with focus on Caribbean immigrants (How are race & class viewed in the Caribbean? What does history have to do with this? Why might American understandings of identity be confusing for migrants from the Caribbean? What happens when your own ethnic/racial/cultural identity clashes with the ways others see you? How might this be an issue in your interviews?) Listen to West Indian immigrant (Lila Melville) interview excerpt & do related role-playing exercise.

**Week Five: Oral History, Immigrants & the Law**
Feb 24 –Legality & Ethics in Oral History *Oral History Proposal Due*
Feb 26 – South Asian Stories


**Week’s Class Activities:**
Go over interview appointment schedule & troubleshoot any last minute problems. Discuss oral history permissions, legal and ethical issues (What is required? What pitfalls might you encounter? What accommodations can be made? How does research enhance your cultural competence in this area?) Use role playing exercises to practice dealing with ethical issues that may arise during the interviewing process. Prepare necessary legal documents for interviews. / Discuss the South Asian experience, immigration and gender in context of Asian Americans in DC area. Group work and class debate.

**Week Six: Meetings with Students *Interviews are Ongoing this week!***
Mar 3 – Scheduled Individual Meetings
Mar 5 – Scheduled Individual Meetings

**Week’s Readings/Preparation:** Complete **Journal Reflection** (2 pages) comparing two immigrant cultures we’ve addressed thus far & **bring to your meeting**. Conduct interviews as scheduled. Begin individual research for paper.

**Week’s Class Activities:** No regular class – students conduct interviews and meet with instructor to discuss their Proposal.

**Week Seven: Remembering Immigration Stories *Interviews are Ongoing this week!***
Mar 10 – The Nature of Memory & the Significance of Place
Mar 12 – Asian Pacific Stories

Week’s Class Activities: Discuss how the nature of memory affects historical sources. (What is memory? How reliable is it? Is there a collective memory? Is oral history unique in facing the problems of memory? What role does culture play?) Play the Memory Game. / Discussion of Asian Pacific communities in DC (How are DC Asians linked to other Asian communities in America? What divisions are there within the Asian community in DC; how does class work in a ‘classless society’?)

Week Eight: Mar 16-20 - SPRING BREAK *Interviews Must be Completed!*

Week Nine: Clarifying Voices – It Takes Time
Mar 24 – Transcription & Translation *Recording of Interview Due*
Mar 26 – African Stories (Guest Speaker)


Week’s Class Activities: Interview de-briefing – talking together about what we learned during the interviews. Discuss transcription (What are the issues/choices relating to transcription? How have transcriptions been used? Is transcription necessary in the digital age? Can cultural competence assist with transcribing?) / Guest Speaker and discussion of Somali-American immigration and other African immigrants in the DC area.

Week Ten: Preservation
Mar 31 – Preserving the Voices: Collections, Archives, & Oral History
Apr 2 – Middle Eastern Stories

Week’s Readings/Preparation: Continue individual research for paper. For Tuesday: Read “Stephen Paschen “Archiving Oral History.” For Thursday: Read Gregory Orfalea “Center of the World (Washington DC).”

Week’s Class Activities: What happens when everything changes? Discussion about traditional methods of archiving of oral history and how to best preserve oral history in the Digital Age (Possible Guest Speaker) / Discussion of Arab Americans and immigrants, xenophobia & cultural competence in the New America. Role playing and group work on dealing with cultural conflict before and after 9/11.
Week Eleven: Meetings with Students *Interview Transcript Due*
Apr 7 & 9 – No regular Class - Scheduled Meetings with instructor & partner this week.

Week’s Readings/Preparation: Bring 2 copies of your Interview Transcript (one for instructor, one for student partner) to your scheduled meeting. Continue individual research for paper.

Week’s Class Activities: No class – students meet as partners with instructor to discuss peer review of transcripts, progress on research and any other ongoing issues.

Week Twelve –Interviews in a Transnational Context
Apr 14 – Putting it all together: Our Project Emerges *Peer Transcript Review Due*
Apr 16 – Citizenship & Trans-nationalism: Migrants, Immigrants or Something Else?

Week’s Readings/Preparation: Complete Journal Reflection (1 page) on cultural conflict. Continue individual research for paper. For Tuesday: Read partner’s transcript carefully & bring that transcript and your Peer Review of it to class. Read Trevor Lummis, “Structure and Validity in Oral Evidence.” For Thursday: Read Elliott Barkan “Immigration, Incorporation, Assimilation, and the Limits of Transnationalism.”

Week’s Class Activities: Discuss Peer Transcript Reviews in pairs and as a class – share advice for individual papers. Write thank you notes to send to interviewees along with recording and transcript copies. Consider themes for the DC Metro Area Immigrant Project suggested by the transcripts. / Whole class trans-nationalism debate (The citizenship dilemma; is it just about legality? Should assimilation be the goal? Do the ideas of trans-national and/or trans-local fit into our current social/political structures? How does cultural competency help us navigate new ideas about belonging?)

Week Thirteen: Presenting Your Findings
Apr 21 – Keeping the Voices Alive: Presenting & Using Immigrant Oral History
Apr 23 – How to Speak in Public

Week’s Readings/Preparation: Continue individual research for paper. For Tuesday listen to Alessandro Portelli “I can almost see the lights of home – A Field Trip to Harlen County.” For Thursday: Complete abstract for your paper (1 paragraph) and turn in. Read Paul Edwards “How to Give an Academic Talk.”

Week’s Class Activities: Discussion of the presentation of oral history (In what ways has oral history has been presented to the public? Would the Harlen County approach work with DC immigrants? Why or why not? What other approaches might work?) / Preparing for our conference – class divides into 4 groups to put together the conference (prepare a program, organize panels, address technical elements - audio/visual aids, timing, best way of delivering abstracts, should we invite guests?) Group role-playing work - practice in conference style presenting.
Week Fourteen: Class Conference - Setting Voices Free I
*Research Paper Due at Beginning of Class on Day of Your Presentation*
Apr 28 – Student Presentations
Apr 30 – Student Presentations

Week’s Readings/Preparation: Review Abstracts for this week’s presentations.

Week’s Class Activities: Engaged listening and active participation with comments & questions is expected from everyone during our conference.

Week Fifteen: Class Conference - Setting Voices Free II
*Research Paper Due at Beginning of Class on Day of Your Presentation*
May 5 – Student Presentations
May 7 – Student Presentations

Week’s Readings/Preparation: Review Abstracts for this week’s presentations.

Week’s Class Activities: Engaged listening and active participation with comments & questions is STILL expected from everyone during our conference.

Week Sixteen: Pulling it All Together
May 12 – Final Class: Our city, our country, our world


Week’s Class Activities: Reviewing our work – what did our conference tell us about how our individual oral histories fit together? What gaps need to be filled? Where should the Metro DC Area Immigrant Voices Project go from here? What did our work on the project suggest to us about cultural competency, immigration and oral history?

DATE, TIME TBA - *Entire Journal & Final Analysis Paper Due *in lieu of Final Exam