

# RLST 4000 / 6000

## Having Fun: Doing Oral History Interviews about Leisure

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RLST 4000 Special Problems in RLS, call # 79-413, 3 credits

RLST 6000 Special Problems in RLS, call # 99-414, 3 credits

3:30-6:15 Thursdays  
225 Ramsey

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### Course Description

Recreation, fun, play, games, sports, free time—these experiences give richness to people's lives but they aren't often recorded in history. In this class, students will identify an historical event or era related to leisure and will conduct oral history interviews with people who have memory of that event. Class time will be devoted to hands-on exercises that develop students' skills for listening, observing, and interviewing. These skills will be combined as each student completes an oral history project.

### Course Goals

By the end of this course students will:

1. Gain experience with oral history interviewing including developing effective questions, using probes to elicit detail, handling a tape recorder, and writing field notes;
2. Understand the technical and ethical issues entailed in transcribing and writing up other people's stories;
3. Gain insight into people's experiences with recreation or leisure in relation to a specific historical event or era.

### Required Materials

1. There is no textbook for this course but there will be a reading packet. In addition, students will be responsible for accessing assigned materials online.
2. Students must have a tape recorder capable of recording for at least 90 minutes and an external microphone that plugs into the tape recorder. In addition, they will need several blank tapes and sets of replacement batteries (headphones and an AC adapter are recommended but not required). We will discuss this equipment on the first day of class.
3. At the end of the term all assignments, documents, transcripts, and field notes must be compiled and turned in using a 3-ring notebook.

This class will enforce guidelines outlined in [UGA Culture of Honesty](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm) as described online at [http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic\\_honesty/culture\\_honesty.htm](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm). Students are expected to be familiar with and follow all guidelines associated with academic honesty.

### Classroom Setting and Conduct

We expect students in this class to be mature and self-motivated. This is not a lecture-based class; instead, we will spend time in discussion and exercises that build interviewing skills. Students should prepare for class by doing the assigned readings or activities. Peer feedback will be a regular part of class and students will share their work with each other; we expect that students will give and receive constructive feedback in a helpful and respectful manner.

- ✓ A variety of instructional techniques will be utilized to stimulate student interest and accommodate a full range of learning styles. These techniques include lecture, handouts, small and large group discussion, student exercises, experiential learning, readings, and reflection papers. *If you have a special learning need, please let the instructors know. Every effort will be made to accommodate your need.*
- ✓ Every effort will be made to create a learning environment that is free of bias and favoritism. The instructors *and all students in class* must respect each student's viewpoint as individual and unique, and treat each student as a valuable, contributing member of the class. Students are encouraged to express their individual perspectives, ask questions, and contribute to discussion in the spirit of free, open, and nonjudgmental exploration of the topic, and to respond to each other's comments in a respectful fashion.
- ✓ Students are expected to actively engage with course material, participate in class discussion, respect individuals who are speaking during class, avoid side conversations, provide constructive feedback to other students, and complete all written and reading assignments by the designated due dates.
- ✓ Given the length of this class, each class period will be divided up with a variety of activities or exercises and a 15-minute break about midway through the period.

### Attendance

Regular attendance is important and expected. Since class meets only once per week, an absence means that a student will miss a significant amount of material. Students are responsible for anything that happens in class during their absence, and some activities such as peer feedback will be difficult or impossible to make up if a student is absent. *Notify the instructors at least one week in advance* if you have a scheduling conflict that will cause you to miss class. Two or more unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the course.

- ✓ Job interviews, religious holidays, family situations, and officially sanctioned college activities (athletics and competing academic duties) are considered permissible absences if the student shows official documentation to the instructors one week *in advance of the absence*.
- ✓ Illness is considered an unexcused absence unless accompanied by a statement signed by medical personnel that specifically describes a medical emergency or medical condition that prevented class attendance on a designated date. A stamped receipt from Gilbert Health Center does not provide sufficient documentation for an excused medical absence.
- ✓ Coming late to class or returning late when class takes a short break are other forms of unexcused absence.



### Academic Integrity

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty” ([http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic\\_honesty.htm](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty.htm)). Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. Any evidence of academic misconduct will be referred to the College judicial system.

- ✓ *Cheating*: Students will avoid all forms of cheating. Cheating includes but is not limited to giving or receiving answers on assignments and tests or using any materials or aids pertinent to assignments and tests without permission of instructor. Plagiarism would be a serious form of cheating.
- ✓ *Plagiarism*: Plagiarism means offering the work of someone else as your own. This may range from isolated sentences or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodicals, the web, or the writings of other students. Honesty requires that you acknowledge any material taken from another source for either written or oral use. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas or materials obtained from another source is guilty of plagiarism. For more information, see UGA’s “A Culture of Honesty” or check online sites such as <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>

### Assignments

In addition to in-class activities and small practice activities that may be assigned from week to week, the following assignments reflect the major activities and reports that students will work on throughout the semester. *More complete descriptions will be posted on WebCT.*

*Shadowing Assignment*: This exercise is designed to sharpen students’ observational skills. Your assignment will be to select an individual and, with his or her permission, shadow that person for one full hour, recording what they do, where they go, and other descriptions of their behavior during that period.

*Short Interviews*: These exercises are designed to help students improve their interviewing skills before conducting the longer oral history interview. Your assignment will be to conduct a 5-minute interview, and later a 20-minute interview, with someone of your choice. You will also transcribe a portion of the 20-minute interview.

*Oral History Project*: This is the capstone activity for this class. Your assignment will be to select an historical event or era related to leisure and research that topic so that you’re well grounded in it. Then, interview an individual who has first-hand memories of that event or era to collect their stories of that time. You are encouraged to do several interviews on that topic with either the same person or different people. A final report will summarize the interview(s), including transcription of selected passages. Students will present their projects in a poster session the last day of class.

*Journal* Learning how to do effective journaling is an important skill for qualitative researchers. Throughout the term, you will maintain a journal in which you record the thoughts, questions, issues, and problems that you are facing as you become a qualitative researcher. This journal will be collected periodically and it will become the basis for a reflective paper written at the end of the semester.

### Graduate Credit

Students enrolled as RLST 6000 will have higher standards applied when grading their work. In addition, they may be asked to take a leadership role in facilitating some class activities. The final polished report for the oral history project *will increase to 50 points* and must be written up in an integrated, cohesive fashion similar to a research report or a publishable manuscript.

### Overview of Grading

There will be a total of 400 points throughout the semester, as shown below. Students will be given more information about how each assignment will be graded including information on the breakdown of point values within each assignment will be composed of several smaller pieces which each have a point value..

#### *Field Series\* (100 pts)*

Shadowing	25 points
5-minute interview	20 points
10-minute interview	35 points
Transcription	20 points

A = 90-100%
B = 80- 89%
C = 70- 79%
D = 60- 69%
F = 59% or less

#### *Oral History (150 pts)*

Various steps totaling	100 points
Poster presentation	25 points
Final polishing	25 points (50 points for graduate students)

#### *Journal (125 pts)*

Regular journal entries	100 points
Final reflections	25 points

*Effort and Participation\** 25 points

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*Total* 400 points (425 points for graduate students)

\*Note: The *Field Series* includes the projects as well as points for written peer evaluations. *Effort and participation* refers to regular attendance, active engagement in class discussion and activities, and good class citizenship as judged by the instructors.

### **Having Fun: Doing Oral History Interviews About Leisure**

***Instructors' Comment:*** The name of this class has a double meaning. Not only do we want to do historical research about people's experiences during recreation and free time, we also want to have fun ourselves. This is a new class for the instructors and they want to foster a tight-knit, inquisitive group of students who have fun while they explore what it means to do qualitative research. We encourage you to claim this class as your own—get excited, participate, and contribute to what's going on. Enthusiasm is contagious and it takes only one student to make or break the atmosphere of a class. Be positive and open to new experiences and always encourage one another.

### RLST 4000 / 6000: Oral Histories Overview of Project Due Dates

	<b>FIELD ACTIVITIES</b> 100 points	<b>ORAL HISTORY PROJECT</b> 150 points	<b>JOURNAL REFLECTIONS</b> 125 points
<b>8/18</b>			
<b>8/25</b>			
<b>9/1</b>	Shadowing assignment (25 pts)	Select topic for oral history project (5 pts)	
<b>9/8</b>			Turn in journal (at least 2 entries) (20 pts)
<b>9/15</b>	5-minute interview assignment (15 pts)		
<b>9/22</b>	Peer evaluation of interviews (5 pts)	Turn in background report on topic (10 pts)	
<b>9/29</b>	20-minute interview (30 pts)	Turn in draft of interview guide (5 pts)	
<b>10/6</b>	Peer evaluation of interviews (5 pts)	Turn in revised interview guide (10 pts)	Turn in journal (at least 3 new entries) (30 pts)
<b>10/13</b>	5-minute transcript (15 pts)		
<b>10/20</b>	Peer evaluation of transcripts (5 pts)		
<b>10/27</b>	HOLIDAY		
<b>11/3</b>			
<b>11/10</b>			Turn in journal (at least 3 new entries) (30 pts)
<b>11/17</b>		Turn in field notes and summary (40 pts)	
<b>11/24</b>	HOLIDAY		
<b>12/1</b>		Turn in selected transcripts (30 pts)	
<b>12/8</b>		Poster presentation (25 pts)	Turn in journal (at least 2 new entries) (20 pts)
<b>12/15 final</b>	<b>Turn in all of the above materials in your portfolio plus:</b>		
		Final polished report (25 pts for undergrads and 50 pts for graduate students)	Final reflections (25 pts)

This schedule is tentative and due dates or point values might be changed; all changes will be announced in class. The final grade will be based on 400 points including all activities listed above plus an additional 25 points reflecting effort and participation throughout the term.