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**ORAL HISTORY PROJECT PLAN**

*The first portion of this form is to be completed by the student interviewer. The second portion is to be completed by the student’s faculty supervisor or by an additional faculty reviewer. Both the student and the faculty supervisor should retain copies of the completed plan.*

**Interviewer (student):**

**Contact information:**

**Faculty supervisor:**

**Contact information:**

**Course number and title** (if applicable)**:**

**Project title:**

**Date:**

**FOR THE STUDENT INTERVIEWER:**

Your preparation for an oral history project includes the following activities, all of which must be completed before you begin contacting prospective narrators:

1. **Reviewing professional guidelines for designing and conducting an oral history project.** In consultation with your faculty supervisor, please review the following two resources:
	* + - [Principles and Best Practices for Oral History](https://www.oralhistory.org/principles-and-best-practices-revised-2018/) published by the national [Oral History Association](http://www.oralhistory.org/)
			- [Oral History Project Guidelines](http://www.mnhs.org/collections/oralhistory/ohguidelines.pdf) published by the [Minnesota Historical Society](http://www.mnhs.org/people/mngg/stories/oralhistory.htm)
2. **Completing this Oral History Project Plan.** The purpose of this planning document is to help you to think about the purpose and direction of your oral history project, while also helping you to consider carefully how you will carry out your interview(s), and in particular how you will protect the rights and well-being of your narrator(s).  Some of the information in your Plan will also be included on the Project Information and Consent Form you will provide to your narrator(s) (see below). This and other forms can be found on the [Oral Histories page](https://wp.stolaf.edu/irb/oral-history/).
3. **Preparing a Project Information and Consent Form for your narrator(s).** Your interview(s) and your use of the results must be carried out only with full understanding and voluntary consent of those involved.  Your Oral History Project Information and Consent form will provide the information about your project that a prospective narrator will need in order to determine whether he or she would like to participate in your project. The form also records the agreement you will make with each narrator concerning the use and dissemination of the information you obtain. You will ask each narrator to review and sign three copies of your Project Information and Consent form before you conduct each interview; one copy will be retained by the narrator, one will go to your faculty supervisor, and you will keep the third.
4. **Preparing a video/photo or audio recording permission form for your narrator(s), if applicable.** If your project involves videos, photos, or audio recordings of your narrator(s) that will be shared publicly, you must secure the signed permission of your narrator(s) for the dissemination of those materials as well, using the appropriate form. Once your project has been approved, you will need to prepare three copies of the Project Information and Consent form – one for your narrator, one for your instructor, and one for yourself.
5. **Securing the approval of your faculty supervisor.** Your faculty supervisor, and in some cases an additional reviewer, must approve this Project Plan, your Project Information and Consent form, and any additional permission forms required for this project, before you can begin contacting prospective narrators.  Some projects may require additional review by another St. Olaf faculty member; if yours is such a project, your faculty supervisor will arrange for the additional review and will let you know when it has been completed. The second portion of this form provides space for your faculty supervisor or an additional reviewer to comment on your project and indicate whether it needs revision prior to approval.

If you have any questions about any of these activities, please confer with your faculty supervisor.

**After you have reviewed the oral history guidelines described above, please respond to the following questions.**

**1. Describe the project for which you will conduct one or more oral histories.  In this brief discussion, please outline a working thesis or overarching research question(s), your approach to the inquiry (methodology), and the scope of the project (i.e. temporal, geographic).**

**2. Why will oral history help you to answer the research questions you are investigating?**

**3. Whom do you intend to interview?  Why did you choose this person or these people to interview? *Please note:*** Interviewers who conduct oral histories with people who are economically or educationally disadvantaged, children and adolescents under the age of 18, mentally disabled people, residents of health care or long-term care facilities, prisoners, or others at legal risk, incur special legal and ethical obligations to avoid coercion or unintentional harm.  If your current project plan requires interviews with any individuals in any of these demographic categories, please reconsider your project design and/or talk with your faculty supervisor before completing this form.

**4. How will you identify and contact the people you hope to interview in a way that respects their privacy?** Do you foresee any privacy issues that might affect your identification of and initial contact with narrators, and if so, how will you deal with these issues?

**5. Please provide a preliminary list of the questions you intend to ask.** (Remember that oral history requires both preparation and flexibility, so your final questions may differ somewhat.)

**6. Because** **an oral history project may involve uncomfortable and even difficult questions about the past, you also must conduct your project with concern for the people you interview and in accordance with the ethical guidelines for oral historians.  Do you foresee any psychological, physical, or legal risks that your interview(s) might pose?  If so, why is it appropriate to ask your narrator(s) to incur these risks?**

**7. You also need to consider your own safety and liability in carrying out these interviews.  Where will you conduct your interview?  Consider the comfort, safety, and convenience both of yourself and of your narrator(s) in choosing a public or private setting for your interview(s). Do you anticipate any significant physical, legal, or psychological risks for yourself?  If so, how do you intend to address these issues?**

**8. How long will each interview take?  Will narrators be asked to commit any additional time to the project, and if so, how much and for what purpose?**

**9. How will you use and present your findings (written paper, poster, public display, website, etc.)?  Do you plan to share your findings with audiences outside St. Olaf?  If so, please identify those audiences.** You should remind your narrator(s) that the public display of photographs, voice recordings, transcripts, or other artifacts may allow viewers to identify narrator(s).

**10.** **What plans do you have for storing/archiving or disposing of the interview recordings and/or transcripts following completion of the project?**

**FOR THE FACULTY SUPERVISOR/REVIEWER:**

**Please review the student’s Oral History Project Plan as described above and provide your assessment of the student’s preparation for this project and these interviews.**  Consider the following:

* Is the project design developed sufficiently?
* Is the student clear about the function of oral history in this project?  If not, what resources might be useful?
* Has the student adequately prepared for and anticipated the interviews?
* Has the student considered potential risks to either the interviewer or narrators?
* Has the student thought through both the use of findings and the presentation of the project?
* What issues will the student need to address before moving ahead?
* What steps can the student take to achieve a workable and ethically responsible plan?

Please state any concerns and suggest any changes below.  In addition, please recommend a process for the student to return a revised form to you, if necessary.

**Reviewer’s name and email address:**

**Reviewer’s role:**

[ ]  Project supervisor/course instructor

[ ]  Additional faculty reviewer

**Date:**

***Important:* Consistent with the** [**St. Olaf College Record Retention/Destruction policy**](http://wp.stolaf.edu/treasurer/record-retention-policy/)**, this completed Oral History Project Plan, the accompanying signed Oral History Project Information and Consent form, and any additional permissions forms, constitute a final record of agreement between the interviewer, the narrator(s), and the faculty supervisor/course instructor.  It is the responsibility of the faculty supervisor to provide for the retention of all documents for seven years after the conclusion of the project.**