



9/11 Pace University Oral History Project

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COURSE GUIDELINES FOR ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

You are required to interview two individuals who personally experienced the 9/11 tragedy.

You should have your interviews scheduled soon. Allow extra time for travel to avoid being late.

Interview time lengths will vary. Plan on two hours. If your interviewee has more to say you can arrange for a return visit.

Expect to spend a few minutes making small talk helping to put your interviewee at ease and to establish rapport.

Some emotion can be expected during discussion of traumatic events and can be part of the recording. However, if your interviewee becomes very emotional and cannot go on for awhile, you can shut off the recorder and give them time to regain composure. If you turn the recorder on and off during the interview briefly state that you are doing so. In this way it is noted that on and off of the tape recording is deliberate.

Check to make sure the tape recorder is recording when it should be recording.

Have extra cassette tapes on hand for longer interviews and replacement in case of breakage.

Clearly label each cassette. Printing is preferable. Identify yourself, the interviewee, the date, Project name and the number of the tape. For example, Side 1, Cassette 1 of 2.

Audio-transcription should be word-for word and typewritten.

A second interview is recommended but not required. However, follow-up contact with the interviewee is required.

After transcribing the interview and studying it, you may have some follow-up questions. If you cannot return for a second interview, you may submit these questions electronically or by mail to the interviewee with a clear understanding of your deadline for a reply.

In doing follow-up, the interviewee should read the transcript, make any corrections, additions or deletions and sign the legal release. They also will be given a copy of the transcript to keep for themselves. If you do not meet with the interviewee again after the first interview then this follow-up review can be done electronically, by fax or mail.

