

## **Your Stories Will Feed You: An Oral History Unit Within a High School-University Partnership**

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This chapter describes how the authors in a high school-university partnership implemented an oral history unit to answer the following question: “How does oral history value and validate local and community knowledge?” Findings from this project illustrate that an oral history unit can critically enhance student knowledge through community engagement.

My grandfather used to say, “Nizaad niza’iidooltsol,” which means, “Your language will feed you.” And, literally, that’s what it does for me today. My language feeds me and has become my job and passion. It’s something I would like to further. I don’t know how long I will be a teacher, but I know I will teach language for the rest of my life—Loren Hudson, Diné government and language teacher

As the opening quote underscores, “your language will feed you,” this chapter describes how we, as authors, implemented an oral history unit in a Diné (aka Navajo) government class to explore how oral history could enhance a curriculum to include community members’ voices and knowledge in the hope our Indigenous students would understand how the stories they gathered, both in process and product, included cultural knowledge that will nourish them. Extending the opening quote, and switching “language” with “stories,” we hoped the students would see how stories from Native communities could teach and feed them for a lifetime (Vizenor, 2008).

We used oral history to transform the content and purpose of history. Oral history:

can be used to change the focus of history itself, and open up new areas of inquiry; it can break down barriers between teachers and students, between generations, between educational institutions and the world outside; ...it can give back to the people who made and experienced history, through their own words, a central place (Thompson, 2000, p. 2).

We wanted to gather information from community members, and in the process of centering this knowledge, show them respect for their wisdom. We complemented oral history inquiry with Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies (CIRM) through notions of relationality, respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and accountability (Brayboy, Goehl, Leonard, Roehl & Solymon, 2011). We particularly highlighted the importance of traditional relationships in Native communities and the importance of giving back to Native elders.

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This project originated from a high school-university partnership that merged Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems. We wanted to connect schooling Western knowledge systems with Indigenous communities and Native knowledge systems. Barnhardt (this volume) illustrates this connection as “converging streams of knowledge.” His work with Oscar Kawagley (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005) highlights how collaboration between and among these knowledge systems enables Native students to access all knowledge more readily. Acknowledging that cultures are much more than songs, music and clothing, these converging streams of knowledge represent ways to access deeper knowledge systems. These streams tap into local knowledge and work with this knowledge in holistic ways. We, a white university educator (Christine), an Indigenous Diné government and language teacher (Loren), and a white university graduate student (Mikaela), collaboratively facilitated lessons to integrate an oral history unit in the Diné government class. In this chapter, we draw from the teachings of harvesting corn to describe the oral history unit and how students accessed Western and non-Western knowledge systems. In conclusion, we explain what we came to know from the partnership.

### **Facilitation of the oral history project —Growing and harvesting corn**

The teachings of harvesting corn represent the concept of respect. We honor the teachings involved in the stages of growing and harvesting corn by identifying and aligning these stages with considerations we made throughout the oral history project. We make this alignment to demonstrate how Native and Western knowledge systems converged to make information readily accessible to the Native students in the Diné government class.

### **A partnership to go beyond the text—Gathering corn kernels to plant**

Through this oral history project, we wanted to see how high school students could engage community members in respectful and meaningful ways. We talked about how the unit would enable the high school students to learn how to talk to elders and show respect for native knowledge. Almost like a “how to” manual, oral histories are like how to be a person, a full person, because they encourage us to ask, to listen and to learn. Many students have not seen this role modeled because they grew up in the city, away from elders, or they grew up in a household without elders.

We thought, “Why limit ourselves to second hand knowledge?” We know the students read many non-Native authors. So, the students were getting a version of their history that was not the same history their grandfather would talk about in the wintertime. We wanted to encourage them to join conversations with their grandparents that could go something like, “Sit here. Take some coffee. This will make you feel good. This is the story of you, your clan, and your community.” We wanted to use oral history to re-implement this experience, which we believed could be a more correct way of teaching.

We valued the oral history project because it was more meaningful and more valuable than a book. As opposed to reading a text, the students became

the knowledge seekers, going out into the community to learn from community members. We have seen many teachers teach what's in the book and thereby have been limited by the book. Loren admitted to doing that, because that is what had been modeled for him. For Native culture, though, only a few books exist. The curriculum he used in the government class, focused mainly on a textbook, *Diné: A History of the Navajos* (Iverson, 2002). So, when he heard about the oral history unit he believed this method would connect the students to their communities in relevant and significant ways that his current curriculum did not.

### **The Diné government class and students—Finding a good place with good soil to plan the corn**

The oral history unit took place in one Diné government class, with 24 junior and senior high school students. Over a fourteen-week semester we all co-facilitated oral history unit lessons. Throughout the unit, we sought to understand how a mode of inquiry (oral history) could inclusively integrate Native students' funds of knowledge *and* our funds of knowledge (Gonzalez, Moll & Amanti, 2005), community members' stories and community knowledge in the curriculum.

The partnership was important to Loren, especially because it was connected to higher education. As an administrator and educator, Loren thought that he could use this experience to show how we could bridge the gap between high school and college. During his own high school career, Loren didn't see partnerships; no colleges were involved in his school. The only outsiders he saw were representatives coming with pamphlets to recruit students. Loren engaged this partnership because it provided literal and figurative building blocks of interest for his students.

Figuratively, having a university professor come to the classroom and teach the Diné students, we hoped the students would feel cared for by the university and may consider university as a possibility for their future. Literally, Loren was interested to co-facilitate the oral history unit in the hopes that it could enhance his present curriculum. So, the content (native issues) and the method (gathering stories) provided a unit that represented what many of the students already knew. We wanted to make a positive connection between college classroom coursework and the students.

### **Topic choices and ways to engage students—Planting the corn at the right time of year**

We guided the students to consider the class text, class discussions and personal interests to determine oral history topics, topics in which they were interested. We brainstormed ideas with the students and encouraged them to choose to work individually or in groups, however they preferred to engage the project. We wanted the students' interests and funds of knowledge (Gonzalez et al, 2005), the knowledge the students had from their family and cultural background, to guide the oral history process and product. Students chose a variety of topics including, but not limited to weaving, medicine men, Native

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American Church (NAC), Navajo code talkers, life lessons and relationships between elders and children.

We visited the university library to expose Loren's students to how oral history was valued and validated by local archives and to have them learn how to use on line sources to research their chosen topic. The Colorado Plateau Archives at the local university library, "Explore thousands of vintage and contemporary photographs, diaries and letters, oral history interviews, films, and maps which document the history and development of the Colorado Plateau from ancient cultures to the present" (<http://archive.library.nau.edu/>). The archives include oral history interviews and artifacts from multiple tribal nations. An archivist at the library showed us ways to document oral histories and various individual interviews with Indigenous people, discussing effective ways to engage conversation. Another librarian showed us how to access web sites and narrow down searches to learn from various artifacts (i.e., interviews, journals, books, photos and articles). The students spent time locating information on their individual topics from the archive and web sites.

### **How and from whom to gather stories—Watering the corn**

We asked the students whom they thought they could interview. Most wanted to interview relatives; some students did not have a source. Loren told the students that through the process of gathering stories, they needed to realize that knowledge is not free. He further described how Native knowledge is earned and specifically explained two ways: (1) you have a relative who is a knowledge mentor or (2) you earn knowledge, through offerings and work. Loren explained that sometimes when you are born you have a relative from your mother's side of the family who is ready and able to become your mentor. He realized some students did not have relatives who were mentors, so he wanted them to know there were several different ways to gain traditional knowledge. Another way to earn knowledge would be to make offerings to talk to traditional Indigenous people willing and able to share knowledge. Loren wanted the students to know (a) acceptable people to ask to share information, (b) respectful ways to request gathering stories, (c) appropriate actions involved in the offering and (d) traditional offerings to consider making. He explained that if you go and ask anyone, they may say, "This is not my place." In a situation like this, he explained that the students would need to go ask someone else.

First Nations scholar Marie Battiste (2008) writes, "The role of Indigenous knowledge and languages in any sphere must arise from the first principle that Indigenous people must be custodians of that knowledge" (p. 501). We talked about gaining knowledge through observations, artifacts (photos, music, art, articles, books, the internet) and interviews. We discussed how asking people for knowledge may take some time, specifically that we may need to meet with people several times before actually conducting interviews. Showing the students that knowledge is earned through building relationships and giving back to the community, they came to understand their responsibility to the knowledge they gained.

### **Students encounter challenges—Taking the bugs off the corn**

One student, whom we will call Weston, went home to interview his grandfather. Weston lives at a local border town dormitory during most of the year, attending the high school and only going home for holidays. He decided to interview his grandfather for the project, so he had to make a special trip home. When Weston conducted the interview, Weston's grandfather answered all of the questions in Navajo. Weston knows a bit of Navajo, but not enough to transcribe or translate the interview.

We felt the project could be a good way to promote learning. And for Weston, it's something he's still working on. Loren left it at that. Loren told him, "Navajo is a lifelong process. You need to make sure you gain an attitude to want to learn." They listened to the interview in Navajo together. Weston said, "I'm done with it. But I don't understand it." Loren asked him, "What do you think? Usually when people present a project, they're knowledgeable about it. You have the recording, so, you're right, it's done." Weston replied, "I think I'm gonna go back." Unprompted, he went back a second weekend, to ask his grandfather the same questions. This time, Weston asked his grandfather to give answers in English. What would have been one visit, became two. This project and how it all unfolded accomplished multiple unforeseen goals.

Loren shared with Christine and Mikaela that he has seen how language barriers can shut down the learner. Combatting language barriers, Loren shares with his students that this could be possible and that they have to learn to say, "I don't know this. I need to learn it." Loren encourages them to understand that they need to develop an ability to say this, realize they need to be ready to commit to learning more, without him, or someone else, pushing them to do it. He shares how he has committed his life to continually learning about Diné language and culture. Through this process, he has seen many students become more attentive and more observant.

Some other challenges included students who could not find people to interview. Loren suggested names at times, and then for other instances, he invited guest speakers to class. A tribal council member visited class and the entire class asked questions. The son of a Diné World War II code talker visited class and an individual student asked the questions, while the class listened to the responses.

### **Research methodologies—Nourishing the soil**

The oral history unit was informed by Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies (CIRM) and its notions of relationality, respect, responsibility, reciprocity and accountability (Brayboy et al, 2011). We wanted to understand the implications of the unit and how, through an Indigenous perspective, we could identify the oral history unit and pedagogical strengths. Drawing on CIRM, we analyzed the oral history pedagogical practices through the following five concepts: (1) relationality, building relationships between the student interviews and their community narrators; (2) responsibility, requiring deliberate "consultation, and collaboration to care for both the ideas, or knowledge, it generates and the living

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beings those ideas influence” (p. 438), (3) respect, knowing and honoring protocols of individuals and communities, (4) reciprocity, engaging actions in which “we take so that we can give to and provide for others—in order to survive and thrive” (p. 439) and (5) accountability, developing transformative outcomes for the participant narrators and community involved in sharing their stories.

Relationality, respect, responsibility, reciprocity and accountability were considered to intentionally include the students’ language and culture and demonstrate the importance of local and cultural knowledge. Relationality was nurtured throughout the unit with continual discussions of building rapport and establishing trust with project participants. We talked about the pros and cons of interviewing people we knew versus people we did not know. We also talked about how community members perceived our investment to understand their lived experiences, giving back by valuing local knowledge.

We talked about respect in regards to the people we asked to interview; we were responsible to explain different ways they could participate and then be ready to respect what they chose. We were accountable to and needed to be approved by the university’s and the school district’s institutional review boards. Christine was approved to observe and interview teachers implementing oral history units in their K-12 classrooms. She had a consent form that Loren signed in agreement to participate. For the oral history project, we were accountable to the participants and the high school community. We collaborated to develop a consent form for this particular high school project, ensuring that the participants the high school students invited to share stories could determine how they would want to participate (See Appendix A). We discussed the importance of respecting how the participants chose to participate.

We spent time in class creating overarching questions, interview questions and discussing which native topics could be talked about and which ones could not (See Appendices B and C). Similar to the teachings of harvesting corn to educate youth, we hoped to use the teachings of oral history to educate youth. Founded in storytelling, oral history has students gather stories of people’s lived experiences to better understand a specific topic or event. Understanding the narrator’s perspective, the student comes to new understandings through the story. Eventually during the unit, students asked, “Is it okay for me to do more than one interview?” We felt proud to know they saw the value in the process and product. They were becoming lifelong learners of their own volition. This project instilled in them how to value stories and the teachings the stories held.

### **Classroom presentations and unit considerations—Harvesting the corn**

For presentations, students decided they would present in class, to each other. In the future, we would like to have the students give community presentations, in order for the community members who participated as well as parents, friends, school members and interested community members to attend. We discussed mediums to use for presentation (audio clip, Powerpoint, Prezi, poster, digital story, documentary) and offered the opportunity to upload interviews to Loren’s school web site.

Some additional considerations we would recommend for facilitating an oral history unit include the following:

- **Deadlines:** Time passes quickly. Have deadlines set from the start.
- **Guest speakers:** For some topics, students could not find people to interview. So, invite speakers to class.
- **Interview questions:** Make time in class to practice questions. Have confident students interview in front of the class and provide positive as well as critical feedback on process, question substance, and question flow.
- **Consent Forms:** Explain the importance of consent forms and respecting participants' choice on how to participate. Remind students to send the consent form and the interview questions ahead of time, so participants have time to look at them before the interview.
- **Support:** See if other teachers would be interested to co-teach the unit, supporting the students in this project through multiple courses.
- **High-School-University Partnership:** Establish trust and build rapport with students through icebreaker activities. Analyze this process with the students to illustrate how you get to know people and brainstorm ways they could get to know their interview participants before the interview.

## **Conclusion**

We used Leslie Marmon Silko's poem, "Ceremony" (Silko, 1997, p. 2), to talk with students about assimilation and genocide and how certain populations have faced this throughout historical and contemporary times. We underscored how stories allow people to share information that has sometimes been unspoken. The process of gathering stories provided the students with tools and knowledge that we hope will feed them throughout their lives. Stories are powerful tools and young people need to have the ability to listen and collect these stories in order to understand their relationships and responsibilities. Often times the students do not know these stories because they do not know they exist or do not know how to ask about them. We intended that the oral history partnership could provide the students with the tools to reconnect with their communities.

Discussing Diné clan structures enabled students to know their relationships and responsibilities within and across clans. The process of gathering stories fed the students first by empowering them with the knowledge of offerings to make when requesting stories. They also learned how certain community members had the responsibility to share stories. Through this knowledge, the students considered their relationships with family and community members when they decided what and from whom to gather stories.

The process of gathering stories fed the students with familial knowledge. Interviewing family members, some students recounted that they reconnected with certain people and learned about immediate family members that they did not know. Making time to sit and talk, they came to new understandings of how to respect knowledge and reciprocate to their communities by valuing the knowledge family members possessed. This process also helped the students to

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begin to realize how pervasive assimilation has been to disconnect them from their language and culture through making them learn and speak a non-Indigenous language and culture. Students described language barriers as their interviewees spoke an Indigenous language that the students did not understand; assimilated to speak English and survive in the Western world had been achieved by these students, but they could not literally understand family members.

The process of gathering stories additionally fed the students by providing knowledge on gaps that existed between elders and youth. Students explained that elders narrated how traditional ceremonies were celebrated more infrequently, and these elders observed less interaction with youth. These students considered how many youth were encouraged to leave their homes to gain a better education and the implications of returning or not returning had on them individually and their Indigenous communities at large. The process also fed the students through teaching them about traditional customs and practices. Students noted learning traditional ways about topics like weaving, religion, and medicine from their participants. Classmates noted learning new information from and with each other throughout the unit.

Finally, the process of gathering stories fed the students about painful and celebratory historical and contemporary knowledge, like the boarding school era. They considered the traumatic mission of the boarding schools in the late 1800s through mid-1900s in the words of the founder of the first government funded off-reservation boarding school to “kill the Indian in him, and save the man” (Pratt, 1892/1973, p. 261) in contrast to the present boarding schools that focused on empowering students with Native knowledge and Native pride. Through this knowledge, the students oriented themselves to reconnect to tribal, communal and societal landscapes.

Like the position of the sun, stories orient us in order to make meaning of relationships and responsibilities. Through the oral history unit, students empowered themselves with (a) Native knowledge from text and discussions to determine a topic to further pursue and (b) tools, like interviews, observations and artifacts, to continue gathering this knowledge. As instructors, we learned ways to merge our Indigenous and Western knowledge bases to make the oral history unit accessible to the students. We identified various types of stories, like symbolic lessons, instructions from spiritual leaders, survival accounts, oral maps for travel, magical tales of transformation, and adventures in love in order to talk about the various meanings and purposes stories hold for different times, different cultures, and different peoples. We discussed how central stories have been to Indigenous peoples to survive, resist, and thrive in their communities and society at large.

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#### **Some Useful Websites**

- Northern Arizona University Cline Library Archives at <http://archive.library.nau.edu/> that includes Colorado Plateau Archives, University Archives, Hopi Cultural Preservation Office, Navajo Nation Museum, Arizona Historical Society/Flagstaff.
- Using First Nations Literature in the Classroom at <http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/resources/firstnationsliterature/oraltradition.html>
- Watch video clips of elders telling stories and provides multiple teaching ideas for oral history units at <http://www.pbs.org/circleofstories/educators/index.html>
- A description of how a teacher can develop a unit on Native Americans is described at <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/Curr.html>

## Appendix A: Oral History Consent Form

Dear Participant:

You are being asked to participate in a project conducted through \_\_\_\_\_ High School Diné History and Government class that involves research. I am required to receive your informed consent before you participate in this project.

\_\_\_\_\_ (student's name) will explain to you in detail: (1) the purpose of the project; (2) what you will be asked to do and how long your participation will last; (3) how your personal information, if collected, will be kept confidential; (4) potential benefits of participation; and (5) foreseeable risks.

Your participation in research is voluntary. If you refuse to participate, there are no penalties or loss of benefits or services that you are otherwise entitled. If you decide to participate and then withdraw or skip a question there are also no penalties or loss of benefits or services. Whether or not you choose to participate in this project will have no effect on your relationship with Flagstaff High School now or in the future. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation and discuss it with \_\_\_\_\_ (student's name).

Feel free to ask questions to help you understand the project. After any questions you may have are answered and you decide to participate in the research, please sign on the last page of this form.

1. **PROJECT PURPOSE:** For this project, I will be collecting stories from community members about Indigenous knowledge, especially in regards to cultural issues. This collaboration was formed in order to gain information and stories about Indigenous issues from local experts like yourself.

2. **EXPLANATION OF PROCEDURES:** For this project, I would like to invite you to participate by allowing me to interview you one-two times, for about 30-45 minutes each, with specific questions about Indigenous knowledge. With your permission, your interview will appear on our class website. For the conversations during the interviews, you may choose to respond or decline response to any of the questions.

3. **CONFIDENTIALITY:** To guarantee confidentiality, I will invite you to choose a name to use in any write up produced from this project. You may choose your name, a nickname, or another name.

4. **BENEFITS:** The interview process is meant to give you an opportunity to reflect on your life experiences, which may lead to greater understanding and self-awareness. In addition, the collection of stories is intended to add to community knowledge that can benefit members to thrive and survive.

5. **RISKS:** There are no foreseeable risks of participation in the research than otherwise encountered in everyday life.

6. **CONSENT:** I have read the above information about the research project that is being conducted through \_\_\_\_\_ High School and have been given an opportunity to ask questions. I will check the following ways that I wish to participate.

\_\_\_ I agree to participate in the above mentioned oral history project.

\_\_\_ Teachers/students may audio-tape me about my experiences.

\_\_\_ Teachers/students may use the information that I provide in my interview in their research project in the Diné History/Government class.

\_\_\_ Teachers/students may post above mentioned information on a class website

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant (Parent/guardian if participant is under 18)      Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Research Representative      Date \_\_\_\_\_

This project has been approved by (teacher, principal, or district evaluation representative, as needed). If you have any questions, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ at the following phone number or email address:

## Appendix B: A Suggested Oral History Unit

### Days 1 & 2: Discuss Oral Tradition:

- Using First National Literature in the Classroom: <http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/resources/firstnationsliterature/oraltradition.html>
- Explore how North America can be divided into several different cultural areas before first contact. See e.g., <http://www.kstrom.net/isk/maps/cult-map.html>
- Discuss Oral Traditions: <http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/resources/firstnationsliterature/oraltradition.html#1>
- What is oral tradition? What role does oral tradition play in First Nations culture? Who is the author of the folklore passed on through oral tradition? Did the stories ever change? What is the difference between a myth, legend, fable, and folktale? Do different cultural areas have different stories?
- My name: Have students share how they got their name (first, middle and last); any important features. Then have group members introduce each other. Ask how easy that was/remembering all the facts. Discuss additional ways to consider information shared (recording, taking notes, etc.)
- Share topic ideas (depending on how organic you want the process to be, consider sharing topic ideas that could help them determine a topic that interests them)
- Have students determine topic/write an “overarching question” (again, depending on how organic you want the process to be, consider sharing overarching questions)

**Days 3 & 4: Listen to and collecting stories:** Model listening/asking questions to students. Have class watch an interview (consider watching TV or radio celebrities or having two people engage interview in front of class). Discuss what was effective/what could be improved. Remind students to consider this for their own interviews. If possible, invite Elder(s) to come to class/meet in a community gathering place and share stories important to them. An additional idea would be to watch video clips of elders telling stories, PBS link, Circle of Stories: <http://www.pbs.org/circleofstories/educators/index.html> (use this site for other teaching ideas). While the person is speaking, have students take notes on 1-2 things they learned and 1-2 questions they have for the speaker. If an interview, have students take notes on what went well/what could be improved. Encourage questions as time allows. Discuss their notes at end or next day. Assignment: Have students complete “mini-interview” and ask family/friends “Tell me about yourself?” and “Tell me how stories are important to you?” Have them take notes (and record, if possible). Have them write up/present to class. Ask students what went well/what was rewarding and challenging with this assignment (learning something new, finding someone, having them talk less/more, etc.). Ask them what additional questions they have for that person. Compile list of different ways stories are important. Compile list of challenging/rewarding parts to interview. Consider these aspects as you continue the unit.

**Day 5: Archiving stories:** If possible, visit local library or oral history archives to listen to more stories/see how people archive the stories. Students can also visit online archives such as the Northern Arizona University, Special Collection and Archives at <http://archive.library.nau.edu/>, the Colorado Plateau Archives at <http://archive.library.nau.edu/cdm4/browse.php?CISOROOT=/cpa>.

**Days 6 & 7: Identifying oral history topics and overarching questions:** From yesterday, discuss how the library/archives receive permission from participants

(consent forms). Note: some oral history collections have their own consent form and process, so ask them about this if you want to archive with them. Identify topics of interest: On butcher paper/chalk board, Have students write down topics they'd like to explore individually or as a group and person/people they will invite to interview (have them add to the sheet each day).

Discuss importance of “overarching questions” to guide the exploration of knowledge through interviews and additional sources (books, internet, magazines, photos, etc.). Have students write an overarching question and provide feedback (compliment, comment, question). Also identify prospective participant narrators/interviewees. (See Appendix B: Sample Overarching Questions). Students can then illustrate the story they imagine their interviewee will tell and share that illustration with a partner. Then volunteers can share with the whole class.

Know your people, know your content: How can you learn about the people involved with your topic? On the back of your drawing write your research topic at the top of the page. Draw a line down the middle. Put “people” at the top of one side and “topic” at the top of the other. List the people you want to involve (either to interview or ask general questions to inform your topic). Under “topic” identify artifacts (photos, articles, music, art, theatre, video, objects), observations and interviews that you will want to collect to inform your topic. Then have the whole class share what they have collected and add additional ideas they receive from classmates.

### **Days 8 & 10: Discuss effective interview techniques**

Discuss effective interview techniques: (a) invite interviews/explain project... offer gift when inviting, if appropriate (b) give interview questions/consent form ahead of time, (c) bring paper copies of consent form and interview questions to interview, (d) request permission, (e) conduct the interview, (f) send transcripts after the interview, for the participant narrators to confirm/edit as needed (g) send thank you note, (g) invite participants to presentations/show them what you've done with their material (h) others? Have students individually, or in groups, create interview questions. Include opening questions, topic questions, closing questions (See Appendix B for sample oral history interview questions). Note: Have students consider what topics their interviewee may be able to answer and have students give feedback on the questions to one another (compliment, comment, question). Finally have students in pairs/threes practice their interview questions, provide feedback to one another.

### **Day 11: Archiving oral histories**

Oral histories can be archived. Determine an appropriate place to archive (and a consent form to ask participants for their permission to archive it; some oral history collections have their own consent form and process, so ask them about this if you want to archive with them). If you want, create your own web site. Collaboratively with students, write purpose statement. Look at the following links for ideas:

NAU Colorado Plateau web site description: <http://archive.library.nau.edu/cdm4/about.php>

Links to Oral History Websites: <http://www.unc.edu/depts/phe/oralhistorylinks.htm>

Duke Collection of American Indian Oral History: <http://digital.libraries.ou.edu/whc/duke/>

### **Day 12: Complete interview & discuss presentation possibilities**

## **Appendix C: Overarching Oral History Question Samples/Feedback**

Reminders:

- What story do you want to tell? This is the overarching question and it guides the study
- How are you going to tell it? Data: interviews, photos, information from Diné history book, articles, observations, other sources (you could use just interviews or a mixture of interviews and any of the other data source to answer the question in different ways)
- Look at the sample questions below. Then on the back of this sheet, write a sample question. Leave the compliment/comment/question blank. That is for two other people to fill out to provide feedback.

What is the significance of the tribe's sacred sites?

What tribal teachings/knowledge would you like to pass down to the next generations? (What are some things you feel you "have" to teach your children and grandchildren?)

How did your military involvement influence the person you are today?

What is the significance of \_\_\_\_\_ meetings? or How do \_\_\_\_\_ meetings support your culture?

How does a medicine person influence the culture and society of our nation?

What are the historical origins of silversmithing, weaving or some other tribal craft?

How was boarding school a life-changing experience?

What was the impact of "removal" and/or "relocation" on you and your family?

What does tribal leadership mean to you?

Why should we as Native people share our stories and traditional teachings?

Reminders:

- Include obvious opening/Topic/Closing Questions
- Provide a mix of open-ended and close-ended questions
- Sometimes you might add questions, for clarification and expansion. Also, they might share information you did not know they knew. So, be ready to jot down follow up questions that you'd like to ask.
- Provide questions/consent form to participant before interview, if possible. Bring copy to interview in case they cannot bring them.
- Have them sign consent form prior to the interview.
- Make sure your text recording device works before interview. If your interviewee does not want to be recorded, respect that and be ready to take notes.