

*Interdisciplinary Studies Program in the Humanities
Service Learning
North Greenville University*

Oral History Project Building Community, Structuring Hope

The Sterling Hope Center
Greenville, South Carolina

Overview:

The Oral History Project will collect and archive the narratives of senior residents in the Sterling Community and make them part of the curriculum of the Sterling Hope Center. The goals of the project are to build a stronger sense of community in the area and to lend further structure to the hope offered by the Center. An overarching mission is to bridge past, present, and future in a way that adds to the prosperity and peace of Greenville as a whole. Interdisciplinary Studies majors from North Greenville University will collect and document the stories (via transcriptions, videos, etc.) *and then* assist students at the center in appreciating their deeper meaning (using the various creative means indigenous to interdisciplinary territories).

Skills/Dispositions Utilized

- Synthesis
- Sensitivity to bias (especially as it concerns the aged, and “sections of town”)
- Cognitive-affective learning
- Creative thinking, conceptual blending, inquiry-based learning
- Public documentation
- Interpersonal relations
- Integration of faith and learning in a practical setting

Examples of Relevant Disciplinary Couplings

Any student with history as a component would obviously be a natural “fit” here. But just about any coupling has a place: American Studies (for rather obvious reasons relating to American culture) and Linguistics (also as it tends toward cultural and sociological questions), but the project could also easily be slanted in the direction of Christian Studies (working toward the shalom of the city), English (orality and literacy), Mass Communications (video documentary), Art (painting stories or storytellers), theater (getting the students to put on a play based on some aspect of the Sterling history), etc., etc.

Specific Project Assignments:

- Documenting the narratives of the Sterling community, AND/OR
- Assisting the students at the Center in the process of appreciating of the narratives