**How to Conduct an Interview**

**Prior to the Interview**

* ***Determine your purpose:*** Consider why you want to speak to this expert and why you think they are credible enough to provide information regarding the topic you are studying.
* ***Do background reading:*** You have already been doing quite a bit of research on your topic. In many ways, you are becoming an expert yourself, so as you think about what you want to get out of the interview, reflect on the sources you have read already. Since you are engaging in scholarship, your knowledge on the subject will make you seem like a credible interviewer. This will help to bridge the gap between you and the person you are interviewing.
* ***Formulate questions and be flexible:*** Write out the questions you plan to use ahead of time. Be sure that every question is aligned to your purposes for conducting the interview. That said, be prepared for the unexpected directions the interview might take as the person you are interviewing might bring up some new things you had not considered previously. These twists can prove useful and illuminating with regard to the focus of your topic and argument.
* ***Prepare for the interview:*** Make sure that you are prepared to take notes and that you have all necessary supplies on hand.

**During Interview**

* ***Be on time and thankful:*** Be prompt and on time. Present yourself primarily as a listener looking for clarity on an issue. You do not need to note your position on your topic. Instead, listen to your interviewer and play the role of a believer. You can play devil’s advocate when you review and transcribe your notes later.
* ***Take concise notes:*** No need to write volumes. Take notes on the main ideas. When quoting, be as accurate as possible. Circle around for clarification if you do not understand a point your interviewer is making.

**After Interview**

* ***Flesh out your notes immediately following the interview:*** While your memory is fresh, transcribe your notes and rewrite them, adding in details so they are more complete.