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UHLC Professor Olivas braves snow to take law of Rock 'n Roll to Cornell

Feb. 4, 2016 - In the heat of summer, University of Houston Law Center Professor Michael A. Olivas agreed to teach an inter-term course on music law in upstate New York - in the dead of winter.

"It seemed like a good idea at the time," Olivas said in the wake of a harrowing/frustrating three-day ordeal during which he and his wife were stranded in the latest "storm of the century" that left New York, and much of the eastern seaboard, snowbound last month.

Olivas, the William B. Bates Distinguished Chair of Law who moonlights as the "Rock and Roll Professor" with a radio show on music and the law, agreed to teach the weeklong course at Cornell Law School. His godson and lead guitarist for the popular band Gym Class Heroes attended the class and shared his views on legal issues facing entertainers.



Olivas and his godson, Disashi Lumumba-Kasongo, lead guitarist of Gym Class Heroes, during a class on music and the law.

Temperatures dropped to a bone-chilling, but "dry," -2 degrees, but all went well until it was time to pack up and head back to NYC for the trip home. Buses and shuttles for the 4½-hour trip to LaGuardia were cancelling one after the other as the storm moved in. "We got out on the last bus outta Dodge," he said, with thoughts of home and sunshine.

Reality and snow, however, struck them in the face as flight after flight was canceled. Olivas and his wife, Tina Reyes, also a UH professor, spent three days stuck in a hotel room, snow, ice, and slush preventing them from even venturing

outside.

The couple finally caught a flight out of Newark and Olivas claims when he landed at Houston's Hobby airport, like the pope, he knelt and kissed the warm ground.

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Tina Reyes, a UH professor and wife of Law Center Professor Michael A. Olivas, bundled up to briefly brave the snow and cold while stranded in New York City during last month's storm.

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