

WINTER 2027

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

IN PERSON
& ONLINE
COURSES



Stay Curious.



COURSE CATALOG

Winter 2027

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Phone: 848-932-6554

Email: olliregistrations@lli.rutgers.edu

Web: olliru.rutgers.edu

About OLLI-RU

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Rutgers University (OLLI-RU) is proud to be part of The Bernard Osher Foundation's nationwide network of outstanding centers providing continuing education to individuals over 50 who are looking for an opportunity to expand their horizons, learn in an engaging environment, and meet new friends. OLLI-RU offers noncredit education that is stimulating, friendly, and informal. There are no tests and no grades! You will be part of a learning community that is full of diversity, insight, wisdom, intellectual and cultural stimulation, and friendship.

The Online Class Experience

Zoom links are emailed to registered students approximately 3 to 5 days before the first class. Please make sure to check for the link at least 24 hours before your class. If it is not in your inbox, check your junk or spam folder. If it is not there, email olliregistrations@lli.rutgers.edu.

At times technology can fail one or all of us. We do our best to help when we can, but some things are beyond our control. The ability to connect to a class and the quality of the connection depend on many factors, and we will not always be able to troubleshoot or solve every issue. OLLI-RU has no control over issues with a student's own technology that may prevent them from logging in to a class.

The In-Person Class Experience

We are pleased to have in-person courses at the Rutgers Lifelong Learning Center, 3 Rutgers Plaza, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. Parking is free for students.

OLLI-RU Staff

Adrian Cameron

Director

Kristen Michaels

Program Coordinator

Erica Brenes

Program Coordinator

Kelly Jaques

Office Assistant

Advisory Council

George Lesch (*Chair*)

Mark Tanner (*Secretary*)

Tim Brosnan

Sanford Josephson

Mary Ann McGuigan

Susan Tanner

Jerry Wichinsky

Robert Paski (*Vice Chair*)

Sandy Bergelson

Urmi Duttgupta

Elizabeth Marquez

Joan Poole

Judy Wahrenberger



REGISTER ONLINE

Scan to register

Scan this QR code to go straight to the OLLI-RU website.

Membership

To ensure we can continue to serve our community — like many sister OLLIs across the nation — we have a separate annual membership cost of \$50. Once a year (starting before our spring session) our community renews their membership so they may take courses at the member rate and enjoy other benefits. Should an individual opt out of membership, we welcome your participation and offer an alternate course-fee structure to accommodate non-members. Membership can be purchased at any point in the year but is not pro-rated.

When

OLLI-RU membership runs from the spring session to the winter session — pay once a year to enjoy the benefits all year. Memberships begin with spring session registration in January.

What

The once-a-year \$50 membership fee provides the following:

- **Member-rate registration** for courses and other programming. Non-members can still take courses, but at an increased rate.
- **Longer withdrawal periods for a full refund.** Members can get a full refund if they notify OLLI-RU before the start of the 4th class meeting; non-members only have until before the start of the 2nd class.
- **Refunds for one-day programs** when notifying OLLI-RU staff in writing 48 hours before the program. Non-members are not provided refunds for one-day programs.
- **Local theater discounts.** Discount codes are sent to members after membership purchase.

How

On our website (olliru.rutgers.edu) click “Register.” You will see “OLLI-RU 2027 Membership” as a course listing; proceed to register for it just as you would sign up for a course.

Secure membership before registering for courses to receive the member rate.

OLLI-RU staff needs to manually activate your membership after purchase to ensure you receive the member rate.

Registration

Registration opens

Tuesday November 10

**Register online at olliru.rutgers.edu or call 848-932-6554.
Popular courses fill quickly!**

How to Register Online

1. Go to the OLLI-RU website (olliru.rutgers.edu) and click the “Register” tab. Scroll down to see course listings.
2. Click “Register” next to the chosen class.
3. Scroll to the bottom of that page and click “Register/Sign-in Now.”
4. Follow the directions through the rest of the process.
5. Receive two confirmation emails — one for registration and one for payment. If you do not receive both, check your spam or junk folder; if they are not there, contact us at olliregistrations@lli.rutgers.edu or 848-932-6554.

**If you are unsure about online registration,
contact us and we will get you signed up.**

Call 848-932-6554

Email olliregistrations@lli.rutgers.edu

Policies

REFUND POLICY

All refund requests must be made in writing via email to olliregistrations@lli.rutgers.edu. Refunds are provided using the original form of payment and only to the individual who paid for the course.

Members

- **Courses 5 weeks and above:** the request must be received via email at least 24 hours before the start of the fourth class.
- **Courses 2–4 weeks:** the request must be received via email at least 24 hours before the start of the second class.
- **One-day programs:** the request must be received via email at least 48 hours before the program takes place.

Non-Members

- **Courses 2 weeks and above:** the request must be received before the start of the second class.
- **One-day programs:** no refunds are provided.

Trips: There are no refunds for trips for members or non-members. You may transfer your registration to another person.

HOLIDAYS

OLLI-RU is a secular organization that is part of a public university. As such, we follow the University schedule and do not close for any religious holiday. If you plan to miss a class to observe a religious holiday, please contact our office well in advance and we will gladly work with you and the instructor to ensure you stay abreast of important content. Email olliregistrations@lli.rutgers.edu with your request.

RECORDINGS

OLLI-RU does not record online classes on a regular basis, but students may ask their instructor if they need a specific class recorded. Please be aware that instructors may decline. Course material is an instructor's intellectual property, developed over many hours; some may protect it by not allowing a recording of their course to be disseminated. Please respect an instructor's decision.

MISSED CLASSES

Individual classes that are canceled for any reason by OLLI-RU or the instructor will be made up, either by adding time to each remaining class or by extending the course with an additional meeting.

CANCELED COURSES

Students registered for a course that is canceled will be notified approximately one week before the class is scheduled to start. You may transfer to an alternate open class or receive a refund.

Code of Conduct

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Rutgers University endeavors to create a positive and affirming environment that fosters learning and social connection. As members of the broader Rutgers community, individuals are subject to Rutgers University's Student Code of Conduct and other policies that prohibit discrimination, sexual harassment, disruptive behavior, and other disrespectful or inappropriate conduct. Additionally, OLLI-RU is a department of the Division of Lifelong Learning and Innovation, and we embrace the core values adopted by the Division: Integrity, People, Excellence, DEIA, Consideration, Service, and Lifelong Learning. Individuals are expected to demonstrate mutual respect, personal and academic integrity, kindness, and a commitment to civil discourse. Ensuring OLLI-RU is a welcoming, inclusive, and affirming learning community is a responsibility we all share.

These principles apply to all OLLI courses, in person and via Zoom. We welcome the lively and passionate exchange of ideas and perspectives; opposing viewpoints are welcomed and appreciated. Instructors are responsible for leading and moderating classroom discussion to allow for diverse perspectives while maintaining an inclusive atmosphere.

Members and instructors are encouraged to contact an OLLI-RU staff person with concerns regarding violations of our code of conduct (olliregistrations@lli.rutgers.edu). Violations may result in suspension or termination of membership, volunteer, or teaching privileges, as well as other conditions as determined by OLLI-RU staff and the Code of Conduct committee.

CODE OF CONDUCT PROCEDURE

Upon receiving a concern in writing regarding a violation of our code of conduct, the staff will convene a meeting of the Code of Conduct committee and the complainant to further discuss the matter. The committee may ask for additional information (witnesses, clarifying statements, history, etc.) to help make an informed decision. Information will be collected and shared with the committee and staff. A final decision regarding outcomes will be sent to the complainant and any related parties.

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Week-At-A-Glance

IN- PERSON

NEW BRUNSWICK

Winter 2027 · January 5 – February 5

MONDAY

 **The Laughter Thing: What's So Funny About Well-Being?**
Noreen Braman
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 11

TUESDAY

Vibe Coding Workshop
(Artificial Intelligence)
Frank Wallace
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 5 – Feb 2
(5 weeks)

The Art of Tennessee Williams
George Schroepfer
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 5 – Feb 2
(5 weeks)

The Stories Between Us: Writing, Sharing & Building Community
LaRhonda Boone
1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 5 – Feb 2
(5 weeks)

Mardi Gras Party
 *Paul Howe*
1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Feb 9
HYBRID

WEDNESDAY

Paper Quilling
Komal Mehra
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 6 – Feb 3
(4 weeks)
No class Jan 20

Einstein in America: 1933 to 1955
Steve Yacik
1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 6 – Feb 3
(4 weeks)
No class Jan 20

THURSDAY

Watercolor Art
Komal Mehra
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 7 – Feb 4
(4 weeks)
No class Jan 21

FRIDAY

 **Mangiamo! A History of Pizza**
Jason Love
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 8

The Daughter of Laughter and Chaos -Writing a Personal Story
Noreen Braman
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 8 – Feb 5
(5 weeks)

A Very Short Intro to Artificial Intelligence (AI)
Frank Wallace
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 8 – Feb 5
(5 weeks)

Acrylic & Mandala Art
Komal Mehra
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 8 – Feb 5
(5 weeks)

 One-day program

MONDAY

Song of the Islands: American Music Goes Hawaiian

Paul Howe

10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 25 – Feb 1 (2 weeks)

1 The Saga of "Louie Louie"

Paul Howe

10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 11

1 Confections & Causes: Exploring Social Change Through Decorative Desserts

Linda Khachadurian

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Feb 1

Deeper Dive: Building and Managing your Family Tree on Ancestry.com®

Carla Zimowsk

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 11 – Feb 1 (3 weeks)
No class Jan 18

Wide Awake at 3 A.M.: Sleep After 60

Donna Lisi

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 25 – Feb 1 (2 weeks)

TUESDAY

Shakespeare: Law, Justice and Mercy

Steve Eisdorfer

10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

Poems in January

Maxine Susman

10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 5 – Jan 26 (4 weeks)

Hidden Agenda: Nazi's in America 1945

Bruce Tucker

10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

Winter Sketch Class

Jeff Cohen

10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

Poetic Voices of the Holocaust

Ronni Rose

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm
Jan 5 – Jan 19 (3 weeks)

Eugenics: Misguided Science and Its Catastrophic Consequences

Jamie Mullen

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

1 Mardi Gras

Party

Paul Howe

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Feb 9

HYBRID

Winter Painting Studio

Jeff Cohen

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

WEDNESDAY

American Intervention: The First Barbary War (1801-1805)

Bruce Tucker

10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)

Two Novellas on Friendship: *Under Water* and *The Summer Book*

Vandana Walia

10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)

Brain Games: A Cognitive Gym for the Curious Mind

Monica Shah

10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 6 – Jan 27 (4 weeks)

The Hebrew Scriptures: The Sacred Writings for Jews and Christians

Lou Ruprecht

10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)

How To Talk When The Band Is Too Loud-A Sign Language Primer

Naomi Miller

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)

The Forgotten Self: Dementia in Literary Short Fiction

Mary Ann McGuigan

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)

THURSDAY

Living Well: Evidence-Based Strategies for Happiness, Resilience, and Purpose

Jodi Heywood

10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 7 – Feb 4 (5 weeks)

Agatha Christie's *A Pocket Full of Rye*

Hugo Walter

10:30 am to 11:30 am
Jan 7 – Jan 14 (2 weeks)

Raising the Curtain on the Greatest Musicals

Sam and Candy

Caponegro
10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 7 – Feb 4 (5 weeks)

Hemingway's Posthumous Novel

Nicholas Birns

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 7 – Feb 4 (5 weeks)

Family Relationships in the Bible Part Two

Steve Frankel

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm
Jan 7 – Jan 28 (4 weeks)

Medical Mystery: Steven Johnson's *The Ghost Map*

Jeanie Menz

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
Jan 7 – Jan 28 (4 weeks)

Beginning Chess: Learn the Basics

Thoshan Omprakash

3:00 pm to 4:30 pm
Jan 7 – Jan 28 (4 weeks)

FRIDAY

Classic American Films: A Brief Exploration

Sally Bauer Cohen

10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Jan 8 – Feb 5 (5 weeks)

1 One-day program

Community News

Catalog Changes

You may notice that our catalog looks a little different. We're looking to do some tweaks so we would love to get your feedback!

Email us at olliregistrations@lli.rutgers.edu with your feedback about the catalog's format, looks, information, general vibe (as the kids say)! We'd love to hear any suggestions you may have about what would make the catalog work best for you!

OLLI-Rutgers staff meets Bernard Osher!

Our new director Adrian Cameron and program coordinator Erica Brenes had the special opportunity to meet Bernard Osher, the philanthropist whose vision and generosity helped establish a nationwide network of Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes, at the 2026 Osher Institutes National Conference in Minnesota.

He established the Bernard Osher Foundation in 1977 in part to fulfill his commitment to making education accessible and enriching at every stage of life. The Osher Foundation has helped support a network of more than 120 Osher Institutes across all 50 states and Washington, D.C.

We are proud to be an OLLI and grateful to Mr. Osher for making it possible!



Figure 1 Adrian Cameron, Bernard Osher, Erica Brenes

In Memoriam

We are saddened to share the news of the passing of two former instructors: Jeffrey Davis and William (Bill) Fireman.

Jeffrey Davis passed away in June 2026. He started with us as a student in 2016. He took over as moderator of the Hot Topics/Current Events course in 2023 generously sharing his time, talents and interests in politics and issues of the day with fellow students. He had true excitement in newsworthy things and had so many ideas for more learning opportunities. He is greatly missed by the entire OLLI-Rutgers community. Jeff is survived by his wife, son and many other beloved family members. We send our condolences to them.

William (Bill) Fireman passed away in October 2026. Bill started teaching with OLLI-Rutgers in 2013 and his passion was Broadway! He retired from teaching in 2020 but remained an active student with a keen appreciation for musicals. Bill was a kind man, ready with a smile and to ask how you were doing. We are grateful he shared his time and his expertise with us. Bill made this community a better place and we miss him. Bill is survived by his wife, sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren. Our condolences to them and all of Bill's family and friends.

Course Descriptions

ONE-DAY CLASSES

Mangiamo! A History of Pizza

SCHEDULE

Friday, Jan 8

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$15 · Non-Member \$23

Pizza has been around for centuries. The "modern" pizza was first made by Raffaele Esposito for Queen Margherita in Naples, Italy in 1889. Since then, pizza has become popular throughout the world and is big business. It is estimated that global pizza sales annually exceed \$200 billion per year. In the United States alone, there are approximately 70,000 pizzerias. Americans on average eat about 100 acres of pizza every day. Pizza Hut even once delivered pizza to the International Space Station. This class will explore not only the history of pizza, but it will also focus on famous pizzerias throughout New York City and New Jersey.

Materials: no course materials or books are required. *(course code NBD5-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Jason Love

The Saga of "Louie Louie"

SCHEDULE

Monday, Jan 11

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$15 · Non-Member \$23

A truly American story of an obscure tune by a gifted doo wop singer and composer transformed by teenage rock and rollers into a surprise smash hit and eventually investigated by the FBI! We'll listen to the Latin and pop songs that inspired the original, and some of the more than 5000 versions (pop, soul, R & B, reggae, rap, etc.) that have been made over the years. No preparation necessary, but you can practice singing "dunh dunh dunh--DUNH DUNH" if you like! *(course code RD33-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Paul Howe

The Laughter Thing: What's So Funny About Well-Being?

SCHEDULE

Monday, Jan 11

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$15 · Non-Member \$23

This is a one day class sharing the importance of laughter to mental and physical health. Attendees will learn the difference between wellness and well-being, the basic emotions we all have, and how laughter supports each. A list of resilience-supporting habits will be introduced, with special attention to the importance of laughter, (including diabolical baby laughter). Attendees will be given materials to take home, one page of which is a test the class will take together. The culmination of the class is actual laughing, facilitated by laughter yoga exercises that are adaptable for all levels. *(course code NBD23-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Noreen Braman

Confections & Causes: Exploring Social Change Through Decorative Desserts

SCHEDULE

Monday, Feb 1

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$15 · Non-Member \$23

This part lecture, part virtual baking class is based on Linda's forthcoming book, *Confections and Causes*, which highlights twelve social causes with accompanying original dessert recipes -- one for each month of the year. February's cause is modern day slavery and responsible purchasing. The lecture portion will focus primarily on the slavery issue on cacao plantations in Western Africa and the ties to American corporations.

Afterwards, Linda will demonstrate how to prepare chocolate liqueur heart cakes with bittersweet chocolate liqueur ganache, pomegranate juice caviar, and peppermint crème dots. Students are encouraged to bake along in their own kitchens, but those who choose not to will have a copy of the recipe to recreate at a later date. Students will leave the class with the skills to craft an impressive dessert for Valentine's Day, and with an awareness of the prevalence of modern day slaves, the positive impact of responsible purchasing, and the inspiration to make a positive change in the world! *(course code RD6-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Linda Khachadurian

Meet new instructor **Linda Khachadurian**

Linda Khachadurian is a Beirut-born medical editor, multimedia edible artist and activist, who uses her whimsical creativity as a tool for meaningful social change. Her edible art has been sold at retailers such as UncommonGoods and Ben & Jerry's Boston, and displayed everywhere from multiple East Coast art galleries to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in LA to the Marriott Marquis in NYC to the New England Botanic Gardens. Linda's edible art skills were also showcased on the Food Network show *Candy Land*, as well as on *The Charitable Confectioner* -- a series she created for Cambridge Community Television. Linda teaches edible art and Armenian cuisine classes at schools in MA and NJ. She holds degrees from Johns Hopkins and Harvard.

Mardi Gras Party

SCHEDULE

Tuesday, Feb 9

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Hybrid (online & in-person)

Member \$15 · Non-Member \$23

Parade floats. Second-line marches. Bead throws. Feathered Indian costumes. It's Carnival season in New Orleans! Fat Tuesday is right around the corner, so join Big Chief Paul Howe as he celebrates Mardi Gras with a presentation of breathtaking images, fascinating facts, and (of course) that jazzy, funky, joyous *laissez les bon temps rouler!* (course code HYD32-W27)

INSTRUCTOR Paul Howe

MULTI-WEEK CLASSES

MONDAY · MORNING

Song of the Islands: American Music Goes Hawaiian

SCHEDULE

Mondays · Jan 25 – Feb 1 (2 weeks)

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$25 · Non-Member \$38

The story of how the myth of an island paradise and the culture of region made an indelible impression on the music of Broadway, movies, and the record industry from pop to jazz to blues to country and beyond. Scores of smokin' steel guitars and swingin' ukuleles, accompanied by vintage photos and artwork, will illustrate the presentation. No preparation necessary, and aloha shirts and hula skirts are optional! (course code RM31-W27)

INSTRUCTOR Paul Howe

MONDAY · AFTERNOON

Deeper Dive: Building and Managing your Family Tree on Ancestry.com®

SCHEDULE

Mondays · Jan 11 – Feb 1 (3 weeks)

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

No class Jan 18

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$35 · Non-Member \$53

Do you have a family tree growing on Ancestry.com®? Are you just getting started? Either way, come take a deeper dive into building and managing your digital family tree on Ancestry.com®! In this 3-week virtual course, you'll learn how to build, organize, and manage your family trees effectively, evaluate and attach sources, collaborate with relatives, synchronize with other tree-building software, and integrate DNA results. Each 90-minute session will combine instruction, live demonstration, and your specific questions! *(course code RM10-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Carla Zimowsk

Wide Awake at 3 A.M.: Sleep After 60

SCHEDULE

Mondays · Jan 25 – Feb 1 (2 weeks)

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$25 · Non-Member \$38

Why does sleep change as we get older, and why can a good night's sleep become harder to achieve? This two-session course will explore normal changes in sleep with aging and common factors that may affect sleep, including daily habits, caffeine and alcohol, and prescription and over-the-counter medications. We will also discuss commonly used approaches to improving sleep and questions older adults may want to ask their health-care providers. *(course code RM13-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Donna Lisi

TUESDAY · MORNING

Hidden Agenda: Nazi's in America 1945

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)
10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

This course examines the now declassified story of how Nazi Germany's secret wartime technology & the hundreds of Nazi scientists, engineers and spies were secretly & illegally smuggled out of Europe by representatives of the United States state department, justice department & branches of the military. These men were experts in the fields of Rocketry, Engineering, Chemistry and Biology and were also members of the Nazi party & or the SS. They were all provided entrance & citizenship in the United States as well as provided government jobs with government pensions and free medical care. Their wartime backgrounds were sanitized at the time of entry and thereby beyond the reach of any potential judgement by the Nuremberg war crimes trials. (*course code RV19-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Bruce Tucker

Poems in January

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Jan 26 (4 weeks)
10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$40 · Non-Member \$60

For this poetry class, we will write poems about what Robert Frost called our “inner and outer weather”—what’s in the news, our hearts, and our minds. We will read published poems by a variety of poets present and past, with lively discussions about meaning, craft, voice, the poem’s look on the page, and other creative choices. Each week’s discussion will lead to a prompt for writing a new poem. Class members have a chance weekly to read their work to the group, and to participate in critique in a non-competitive, supportive atmosphere. (*course code RM8-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Maxine Susman

Shakespeare: Law, Justice and Mercy

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)
10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Law, justice, and mercy are recurring themes in Shakespeare's plays. We will explore three plays-- *The Merchant of Venice*, *Measure for Measure*, and *The Winter's Tale*—from the point of view of law, justice and mercy. We will view videoed performances of these plays with script in hand and then discuss them in class. The mode of instruction will be discussion and debate. (*course code RV3-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Steve Eisdorfer

The Art of Tennessee Williams

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

One of the great playwrights in the past century Tennessee Williams created some of the most memorable characters in his dramas. This course will examine who they are and why their lives—and actions—continue to present such profound influence in world drama. We will read (in this order) *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Summer and Smoke*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and *Sweet Bird of Youth*. Through the kindness of strangers we will delve into some of the greatest dramas in modern literature. (course code NBV38-W27)

INSTRUCTOR George Schroepfer

Vibe Coding Workshop (Artificial Intelligence)

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Come to this workshop to turn your ideas into working prototypes. You will want to bring your laptop every week. No previous programming experience needed. Be prepared for an interesting adventure. We may encounter bugs along the way. We might need to pivot a bit here and there, but if we persevere, we will find that we can make actual working software that does something interesting and useful by speaking (or typing) to an AI. In this workshop we will take your ideas and work together to make them real, to bring them to life, so to speak, in the form of a working prototype. We will iterate and refine as needed. Our prototypes will largely consist of working web pages which I will deposit on a public website as we progress through the weeks of our workshop. Please bring ideas you are comfortable sharing – you can work on your “most excellent” ideas in private. Of course, I’ll have a couple ideas in mind to get us started, and we’ll spend a little bit of time each week talking about ideas and concepts relevant to vibe coding. But most of our time is going to be spent vibe coding our prototypes. I expect we will experiment with some group work to get started. We may find that breaking up into small groups or working individually may be desirable. While vibe coding is a platform-agnostic concept, we will use OpenAI’s Codex in the workshop. You will require a free OpenAI account to get started. To get the most from the workshop, you should consider upgrading to the Plus plan (\$20) for the month we will be meeting. We will discuss this at the first session. (course code NBV26-W27)

INSTRUCTOR Frank Wallace

Winter Sketch Class

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Capture the essence and beauty of Winter scenes with the simplest lines. We will cover line, tone, texture, perspective. No previous experience is necessary. It's great fun. I will guide you along the way, so you can expect plenty of individual attention. Come draw with me.

Supplies needed: F Faber/Castell graphite pencil, 3B Faber/Castell graphite pencil, 7B Faber/Castell graphite pencil, pink beveled eraser, 11"x14" 50lb. stock Bienfang or Strathmore sketch pad. (*course code RV36-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Jeff Cohen

TUESDAY · AFTERNOON

Eugenics: Misguided Science and Its Catastrophic Consequences

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Eugenics stands as one of history's most sobering cautionary tales — a movement embraced by scientists, physicians, lawmakers, and educators who believed they were improving humanity while causing profound harm. This course examines the rise and fall of eugenic thought, exploring how mainstream institutions lent credibility to policies of coercion, exclusion, and human suffering. Students will grapple with difficult questions about scientific authority, social justice, and the ethical obligations of professionals. We will explore the implications for contemporary genetic engineering and social policies and how authoritarian governments misuse and distort science. (*course code RV16-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Jamie Mullen

Poetic Voices of the Holocaust

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Jan 19 (3 weeks)

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$35 · Non-Member \$53

This course presents the poetry of those who perished and those surviving the Holocaust who out of the darkness of inhumanity found words for an experience devoid of humanity and in their poetic images created humanity. The poetry of the children of Terezin Concentration Camp preserved in the book *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* will be dramatically read with analysis and class discussion. Class will learn the historical background of Terezin and of the artistic teaching of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis. From the definitive anthology of the Holocaust, *Art From the Ashes*, the poetry of Nelly Sachs, Abraham Sutzkever, Paul Celon and Miklos Radnoti will be dramatically read with background presented beforehand for each poet, analysis and class discussion. Students can choose to obtain the two books, *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* (Schocken Books) and *Art From the Ashes* (Oxford University Press). An enlightened understanding and perception of the Holocaust will be experienced by students and the gift of the art of poetry. (course code RM15-W27)

INSTRUCTOR Ronni Rose

The Stories Between Us: Writing, Sharing & Building Community

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Stories have a unique way of helping us see one another—and sometimes ourselves—a little differently. The Stories Between Us is an interactive five-week course designed to bring people together through storytelling, writing, conversation, and shared experiences. Through creative prompts and activities inspired by memories, observations, images, culture, and the world around us, participants will reflect, create, share, listen, and explore different perspectives. Some activities will be individual, while others will invite collaboration and conversation. This is not a traditional creative writing or memoir course; no writing experience is necessary, and the focus is not on critique or perfecting a piece. The goal is to create opportunities for connection, discovery, and community. Sharing is encouraged, but always voluntary. (course code NBV12-W27)

INSTRUCTOR LaRhonda Boone

Meet new instructor LaRhonda Boone

LaRhonda Boone is a writer and longtime nonprofit professional with experience as an educator and facilitator in writing, literacy, and professional development. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from Emory University and a Master of Communication and Information Studies from Rutgers University. She has designed and led writing programs that use storytelling, reflection, and creative exercises to encourage expression, conversation, and connection.

Winter Painting Studio

SCHEDULE

Tuesdays · Jan 5 – Feb 2 (5 weeks)

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

This course will focus on how to paint. You decide the medium you would like to paint in -- either watercolor, acrylics, or oils. Come to the first class with a subject you are interested in tackling -- a copy of an artist's work, a photo, or something from life, and be ready to get started. For beginners, I will guide you through the painting process. For experienced painters, I will offer suggestions to help sharpen your skills.

Supplies needed for watercolor: #1, #4, #8 round watercolor brushes (camel, sable hair, or synthetic), Yarka watercolor set (12 color, pan, not tube), Strathmore 9"x12" cold press watercolor pad or Bienfang 9"x12" watercolor pad of ph neutral paper, 2B pencil with eraser.

Supplies needed for acrylics: Liquitex six pack basics (feel free to bring any additional colors you may own), acrylic synthetic round brushes (#2, #5, #8), 9"x12" pad of canvas paper, plastic or china plate to use as palette, small cup for water, 2B pencil and eraser.

Supplies needed for oils: Starter oil set (including primary colors and black and white – feel free to bring any additional colors you may own), synthetic round brushes (#2, #5, #8), 9"x12" pad of canvas paper, palette or plastic plate to use as palette, small amount of turpentine in small jar (odorless, if possible), 2B pencil and eraser. *(course code RV37-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Jeff Cohen

WEDNESDAY · MORNING

American Intervention: The First Barbary War (1801-1805)

SCHEDULE

Wednesdays · Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Piracy on the high seas continues to be a problem today. It still dominates headlines in its modern form: International Terrorism. Terrorism impacts domestic & international politics, international relations, global stock markets and the movement of goods across oceans & continents. In this class we will examine one of America's first international challenges: the Pirates of the Barbary Coast. We will explore how in 1801 the United States attempted to address its piracy problem with a clandestine intervention that involved secret diplomacy, a potential armed invasion by sea and the overthrow of a foreign government. *(course code RV20-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Bruce Tucker

Brain Games: A Cognitive Gym for the Curious Mind

SCHEDULE

Wednesdays · Jan 6 – Jan 27 (4 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$40 · Non-Member \$60

This lively class offers fresh mental challenges every week. For example, you may be retrieving a half-forgotten fact, spotting a pattern, untangling a conundrum, or discovering an unexpected solution. This variety gives attention, memory, reasoning, flexible thinking, and problem-solving a regular workout. It also supports neuroplasticity - the brain's lifelong ability to adapt, make connections, and respond to new challenges. Expect focused thinking, shared discovery, occasional surprises, and plenty of satisfying "aha!" moments. No prior puzzle prowess needed! (*course code RM22-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Monica Shah

Paper Quilling

SCHEDULE

Wednesdays · Jan 6 – Feb 3 (4 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

No class Jan 20

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$40 · Non-Member \$60

Paper quilling is the art of rolling, swirling, shaping, and gluing together colorful paper strips to create some aesthetic designs.

Students will learn:

- How to roll colorful paper strips and create a variety of paper quilling shapes, such as tight coils, open coils & tear drops.
- How to arrange and put together the quilled and shaped pieces to form nice compositions, patterns & designs.

The course will give an opportunity to the students to learn the basic paper quilling techniques, create a finished paper quilling project & gain confidence to continue paper quilling independently! Step-by-step guidance and personalized attention will be provided to each participant during the sessions. The participants can add their own touch and creativity to the art piece.

Required supplies:

- Colorful paper quilling strips (preferred size: 5mm wide)
- White card stock paper pad (preferred size: 8.5 inches by 11 inches)
- Paper quilling pen (slotted)
- Quilling template board
- Quilling comb
- Tweezer
- Liquid glue
- Self adhesive gemstones
- Scissors. A complete materials list, including links to suggested suppliers, will be emailed to registered participants. (*course code NBM30-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Komal Mehra

The Hebrew Scriptures: The Sacred Writings for Jews and Christians

SCHEDULE

Wednesdays · Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)
10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

The Hebrew scriptures are the foundational texts of Judaism. They are similarly foundational for Christianity and make up the first two-thirds of the Christian Bible. This course will examine issues common to both faiths--where did these writings come from? How were they produced? What do they consist of? How have they been interpreted over the centuries? These are not questions particular to just one of the two great faiths--they are common to both and we can learn about them together. (*course code RV39-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Lou Ruprecht

Two Novellas on Friendship: *Under Water* and *The Summer Book*

SCHEDULE

Wednesdays · Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)
10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Under Water is a 2026 debut novella by Tara Menon, assistant professor of English at Harvard University about two friends and two cataclysmic events set apart in time. It explores themes of grief, guilt and healing. *The Summer Book* is a 1972 book by Finnish author Tove Jansson and tells the story of a six-year old girl who spends a summer with her grandmother and the bond that develops between them. (*course code RV21-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Vandana Walia

WEDNESDAY · AFTERNOON

Einstein in America: 1933 to 1955

SCHEDULE

Wednesdays · Jan 6 – Feb 3 (4 weeks)
1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
No class Jan 20

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)
Member \$40 · Non-Member \$60

The class will focus less on Einstein the brilliant scientist, and more on Einstein the fellow (and fallible) human being--specifically the 20+ years Einstein was a NJ resident. We will discuss/debate his views on such "non-controversial" topics as politics, race, religion and human relationships. (What could go wrong?) A primary source will be *Einstein: His Life and Universe* by Walter Isaacson--specifically chapters 18 thru 25. (*course code NBD27-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Steve Yacik

How To Talk When The Band Is Too Loud-A Sign Language Primer

SCHEDULE

Wednesdays · Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)
1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Students will learn fingerspelling the sign language alphabet, phrases, songs and short conversations. In addition, students will be sensitized to the needs of a deaf or hard of hearing community. (*course code RV9-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Naomi Miller

The Forgotten Self: Dementia in Literary Short Fiction

SCHEDULE

Wednesdays · Jan 6 – Feb 3 (5 weeks)
1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Of all the ailments that plague us, dementia may be among the most cruel. Its pace may be slow and recognizable, but its effects on loved ones can be rapid and unimaginable. Literary short fiction offers ways not only to look closely at the pain of the experience but also to witness the unexpectedly restorative and oddly inspiring moments that come with it. We'll read and discuss five stories—including some by Alice Munro and Yoon Choi—that portray some of the poignant responses to losing a loved one before they're gone. PDFs or links will be provided. (*course code RV14-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Mary Ann McGuigan

THURSDAY · MORNING

Agatha Christie's *A Pocket Full of Rye*

SCHEDULE

Thursdays · Jan 7 – Jan 14 (2 weeks)
10:30 am to 11:30 am

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$25 · Non-Member \$38

Agatha Christie is one of the most important writers of detective fiction in the history of world literature. In this course we will read and discuss Christie's novel *A Pocket Full of Rye* which features the brilliant, perceptive, and impressive investigator Miss Marple. In this two-day course we will discuss Chapters One through Fourteen on the first day and Chapters Fifteen through Twenty-eight on the second day. **Text for the course:** any edition of *A Pocket Full of Rye*. (course code RM7-W27)

INSTRUCTOR Hugo Walter

Living Well: Evidence-Based Strategies for Happiness, Resilience, and Purpose

SCHEDULE

Thursdays · Jan 7 – Feb 4 (5 weeks)
10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Would you like to experience more joy, better navigate stress and change, and bring a greater sense of meaning and purpose to your life? This engaging and interactive course draws on the science of positive psychology to explore what helps us feel and function at our best. Through discussion, self-reflection, and experiential activities, participants will explore happiness and well-being, managing stress, navigating challenges, optimism, character strengths, positive emotions, relationships, mindfulness, purpose, and healthy habits while learning practical, evidence-based strategies applicable in everyday life. Participants will leave with greater insight into their own strengths and values, practical well-being tools, and a personalized plan for cultivating greater happiness, resilience, and purpose in their lives. *(course code RV4-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Jodi Heywood

Meet new instructor Jodi Heywood

Jodi Heywood, MPA, CAPP, is a positive psychology educator and public health professional who helps individuals and organizations apply the science of well-being to work and everyday life. With more than 25 years of experience in education, health care, wellness, fitness, and behavior change, she combines positive psychology, public health, exercise science, and mindfulness to translate scientific research into practical strategies that are engaging, accessible, and immediately applicable. Jodi is also a National Continuing Education Provider for NASM and AFAA and has presented at universities, healthcare organizations, and national fitness conferences.

Raising the Curtain on the Greatest Musicals

SCHEDULE

Thursdays · Jan 7 – Feb 4 (5 weeks)
10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online
Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Take an in-depth look into the classic, world's greatest musicals. Using a multitude of clips, we will explore the history, structure and execution of such esteemed musicals as *Les Miz*, *Company*, *Oklahoma*, *Gypsy*, *West Side Story* and *Sound of Music* to name a few. Jump into musical theater land with us as we watch and discuss the actors, directors and production, the ins and the outs, the problems and success associated with the great classic shows. *(course code RV34-W27)*

INSTRUCTORS Sam and Candy Caponegro

Watercolor Art

SCHEDULE

Thursdays · Jan 7 – Feb 4 (4 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

No class Jan 21

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$40 · Non-Member \$60

For beginners and semi-beginners alike, we will create art together while learning and practicing the basic techniques of watercolor art. I will provide step-by-step guidance and personalized attention to help you create beautiful paintings during class and help you develop skills so you can feel comfortable painting on your own. Each student will receive a pre-sketched watercolor paper, so you can focus on painting and learning the watercolor techniques. Students can add their own touch and creativity to the painting!

Required Supplies: White watercolor paper (preferred sizes: 9" by 12" and 7"by 10"); watercolor paint set; paint brushes: 1 flat brush, 1 round brush and 1 thin brush (for details); paper towels; cup for water; masking/art tape; pencil, eraser, sharpener and ruler. Full list of supplies and the suggested purchase links will be emailed to the registered participants. (*course code NBM28-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Komal Mehra

THURSDAY · AFTERNOON

Family Relationships in the Bible Part Two

SCHEDULE

Thursdays · Jan 7 – Jan 28 (4 weeks)

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$40 · Non-Member \$60

We will continue our exploration of the complex, human family dynamics depicted in the Hebrew Bible. Turning our focus to the Books of Judges and Samuel. No prior biblical knowledge is required. Among the relationships we will explore: **Couples:** Samson and Delilah, Elkanah and Hannah, David and Michal; **Siblings:** Amnon and Tamar, Solomon and Adonijah; **Other:** David and his father-in-law, King Saul, David and his Brother-in-law Jonathan.

Each session balances textual learning, historical context, and group analysis. We will encourage all participants to share their insights, reflections, and personal takeaways. Together, we will suggest insights these ancient stories offer for navigating our own complex modern relationships. (*course code RM17-W27*)

INSTRUCTOR Steve Frankel

Hemingway's Posthumous Novel

SCHEDULE

Thursdays · Jan 7 – Feb 4 (5 weeks)

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

This course will explore Ernest Hemingway's posthumous fiction through *Islands in the Stream* and *The Garden of Eden*. We will analyze his evolving, surprisingly complex portrayals of gender dynamics, fluid identities, and creative desire. We will also examine the way the novels depict their settings in the Caribbean and the French Riviera, as well as their representations of war, life, tragedy and the sea. We will read, as a companion book, Paul Hendrickson's biographical book *Hemingway's Boat*, which explores how the writer could not find happiness, even after earning both wealth and fame. (course code RV2-W27)

INSTRUCTOR Nicholas Birns

Medical Mystery: Steven Johnson's *The Ghost Map*

SCHEDULE

Thursdays · Jan 7 – Jan 28 (4 weeks)

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$40 · Non-Member \$60

Step into the dirty, overcrowded streets of Victorian London during the terrifying 1854 cholera outbreak that killed ten percent of a neighborhood in just ten days. This course explores the historical narrative of Steven Johnson's bestseller, *The Ghost Map*, a gripping story of a deadly bacterium, a panic-stricken city, and two very different men who teamed up to stop a plague.

Using Johnson's historical account as our guide, each session features a short didactic talk and group discussion. Together, we will explore how data-driven reasoning conquered the epidemic, birthed modern epidemiology, and fundamentally revolutionized public health. Students will need to buy or borrow a copy of the book prior to the first class. (course code RM18-W27)

INSTRUCTOR Jeanie Menz

Beginning Chess: Learn the Basics

SCHEDULE

Thursdays · Jan 7 – Jan 28 (4 weeks)

3:00 pm to 4:30 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$40 · Non-Member \$60

This beginner-friendly chess course is designed for students who are new to chess or want to build a stronger foundation. Students will learn how each piece moves, the rules of the game, how to set up the board, basic patterns and core ideas. The class will also cover how to think through moves, spot threats, avoid common mistakes, and build confidence through guided practice and friendly play. By the end of the course, students should be able to play a full game with confidence, recognize basic tactical opportunities, and use simple strategies to improve their decision-making. *(course code RM1-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Thoshan Omprakash

Meet new instructor **Thoshan Omprakash**

Thoshan Omprakash is a state chess champion with experience teaching students of all ages, from young children as early as 3 years old to adults up to 65 and has exposure training with the top players of the world for over a decade. His teaching approach is patient, encouraging, and adapted to each student's age, skill level, and learning style.

FRIDAY · MORNING

Classic American Films: A Brief Exploration

SCHEDULE

Fridays · Jan 8 – Feb 5 (5 weeks)

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

Online

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

What makes a film a classic? Not all films that are popular or enduring have become classics. Film lovers respond to four defining elements common to film classics. These include, to varying degrees: Cultural Impact, Artistic Innovation, Timeless Relevance and Industry Influence. Join us as we explore the ways in which each of these five directors has used film techniques to craft a work reflecting these elements, and to assure that film a special place in American film history. You will view each film before the corresponding class discussion date, but after a brief assigned reading in our online Film Glossary.

The tentatively selected titles are: 1/8 - *It Happened One Night*; 1/15 - *Citizen Kane*; 1/22 - *The Best Years of Our Lives*; 1/29 - *The Apartment*; 2/5 - *12 Angry Men*.

You can find streaming sources on Justwatch.com. The Internet Archive offers free access to most of these films at Archive.org. *(course code RV11-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Sally Bauer Cohen

A Very Short Intro to Artificial Intelligence (AI)

SCHEDULE

Fridays · Jan 8 – Feb 5 (5 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Artificial Intelligence (AI) makes headlines every day—but what is AI and what does it mean for each of us? This short course will help you put AI to work effectively through lectures, live demonstrations, and open discussions. We'll look at how to use AI in practical day-to-day situations, for example, fixing a broken device, solving a problem, learning a new subject, planning a vacation, or just satisfying a curiosity. We'll examine what AI is, where it came from, and where it's headed. We'll also learn about some of the pioneers who started it all and the innovators who are shaping its future today. Along the way, we'll learn what prompts are and how to write effective prompts. We'll examine the difference between AI, artificial general intelligence (AGI), and artificial superintelligence (ASI). We'll explore the potential benefits and risks of this increasingly powerful technology, ranging from breakthroughs in medicine to serious long-term societal concerns. We'll also demystify some of today's buzzwords, from "multimodal models" to "GPUs," and look at a few of the companies central to AI's rapid advances. Participants will come away with a better understanding of AI and its many applications. No prior technical experience is required—just curiosity and a willingness to explore. Participants are encouraged to bring a laptop to experiment directly with AI tools. *(course code NBV25-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Frank Wallace

Acrylic & Mandala Art

SCHEDULE

Fridays · Jan 8 – Feb 5 (5 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

Learn and apply the basic techniques of Acrylic art and the meditative Mandala art to create an aesthetic painting on canvas. Mandala art is a meditative form of art that involves creating intricate geometric shapes and patterns. The process of creating repetitive patterns helps an individual relax and rejuvenate!

Students will learn about blending acrylic colors, applying brush techniques and creating some intricate designs with a pen, while bringing together a beautiful art piece. Each student receives step-by-step guidance and personalized attention. Students will have a reference painting (created by the instructor) to refer to during this class to which they can add their own creative touch as well.

Supplies Needed: White primed canvas board/panel (preferred size: 11"x 14"); acrylic paint set (preferably "Apple Barrel" bottled paint set); acrylic paint brushes (preferably "Artecho" set with a variety of flat, round and thin brushes); fine-liner pens; drawing compass, protractor, paint palette tray or disposable plate (for mixing and blending colors); masking/art tape; cup for water; paper towels; pencil, eraser, ruler and sharpener; table top easel stand (optional). A complete materials list, including links to suggested suppliers, will be emailed to registered participants. *(course code NBV29-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Komal Mehra

The Daughter of Laughter and Chaos - Writing a Personal Story

SCHEDULE

Fridays · Jan 8 – Feb 5 (5 weeks)

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

LOCATION · COST

New Brunswick (in-person)

Member \$50 · Non-Member \$75

By using her own personal story, Noreen will guide attendees in how to write their own personal, first-person, story. Attendees will be guided in style, format, and subject matter. Each class will focus on a different kind of story, including writing a funny story, writing a "what I learned from" story, and a never told to others story. Attendees will be encouraged to think of other thematic personal stories, with the goal to have a meaningful 300-500 word personal story at the end of the class. *(course code NBV24-W27)*

INSTRUCTOR Noreen Braman

Instructor Biographies

Nicholas Birns (pg. 26) Nicholas Birns teaches at NYU and is the author of many books and articles of literary and cultural criticism. He is the Fall 2024 recipient of the Marlene M. Pomper Distinguished Teacher Award.

LaRhonda Boone (pg. 18) LaRhonda Boone is a writer and longtime nonprofit professional with experience as an educator and facilitator in writing, literacy, and professional development. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from Emory University and a Master of Communication and Information Studies from Rutgers University. She has designed and led writing programs that use storytelling, reflection, and creative exercises to encourage expression, conversation, and connection.

Noreen Braman (pgs. 12, 29) Noreen Braman is an award-winning strategic communications professional, a certified laughter wellness instructor, and member of the Association for Applied & Therapeutic Humor (AATH). She is author of *Treading Water - The Pandemic Edition* and *What Gets You Out of Bed in the Morning?* Her motto is "Don't go gently, go laughing!"

Sam and Candy Caponegro (pg. 24) Sam and Candy Caponegro are passionate about American musicals. They met in a musical and have acted, co-directed, and taught theater courses for over 40 years. Their base is OLLI-RU, but they have lectured on Princess Cruise Lines, at libraries, senior centers, and universities throughout the United States. Their motto: If music be the food of life, let's gorge ourselves.

Sally Bauer Cohen (pg. 27) Sally Bauer Cohen holds a M.Ed. degree in Media Ecology (NYU) and a Master of Library Science degree (Rutgers). A successful career teaching English and Film Studies in NYC high schools culminated in her 2009 retirement. She has enjoyed creating exciting film courses and developing the cinema literacy of her dedicated students at OLLI-RU since 2011.

Jeff Cohen (pgs. 17, 19) Jeffery Cohen is an award-winning professional artist. He received a BA from Upsala College and did graduate work at New York University. He is a commissioner at the Barron Art Center in Woodbridge, NJ, and a recipient of the Marlene M. Pomper award for teaching excellence.

Steve Eisdorfer (pg. 15) Steve Eisdorfer is a graduate of Haverford College and Harvard Law School. He clerked for the New Jersey Supreme Court, practiced law for 45 years, and was an adjunct professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He is also a lifelong student of Shakespeare. He organized and coordinated a municipal playreading group during the pandemic, that produced online readings of 21 plays, including *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*.

Steve Frankel (pg. 25) Steve Frankel was born in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, and educated both in the NYC public school system and an Ultra-Orthodox High School. Steve graduated from Brooklyn College, majoring in Judaic Studies and Political Science. He has lived in Israel for the past 51 years, organizing tours and educational experiences and lecturing internationally about Jewish Life at the end of the Temple Period. He recently retired from The Israel Experience as the Director of their Birthright Onward Israel programs, and now guides at "The Menachem Begin Center" in Jerusalem.

Jodi Heywood (pg. 24) Jodi Heywood, MPA, CAPP, is a positive psychology educator and public health professional who helps individuals and organizations apply the science of well-being to work and everyday life. With more than 25 years of experience in education, health care, wellness, fitness, and behavior change, she combines positive psychology, public health, exercise science, and mindfulness to translate scientific research into practical strategies that are engaging, accessible, and immediately applicable. Jodi is also a National Continuing Education Provider for NASM and AFAA and has presented at universities, healthcare organizations, and national fitness conferences.

Paul Howe (pgs. 11, 13) Paul Howe taught college writing and English courses from 1980-88 and English and Film Appreciation for high school from 1988-2019. During that time, he has also taught continuing education classes at various locations. His classes have included poetry, music and culture, and film.

Linda Khachadurian (pg. 14) Linda Khachadurian is a Beirut-born medical editor, multimedia edible artist and activist, who uses her whimsical creativity as a tool for meaningful social change. Her edible art has been sold at retailers such as UncommonGoods and Ben & Jerry's Boston, and displayed everywhere from multiple East Coast art galleries to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in LA to the Marriott Marquis in NYC to the New England Botanic Gardens. Linda's edible art skills were also showcased on the Food Network show *CandyLand*, as well as on *The Charitable Confectioner* -- a series she created for Cambridge Community Television. Linda teaches edible art and Armenian cuisine classes at schools in MA and NJ. She holds degrees from Johns Hopkins and Harvard.

Donna Lisi (pg. 16) Donna Lisi, PharmD, BCPS, BCGP, BCACP, BCPP, BCMTMS, CPAFH, CDP, MPLC, FASCP, FAAPP, is a Clinical Pharmacist who has worked in the field of Geriatrics since 1985. She holds 5 board certifications in Pharmacy and is both a Certified Professional in Age-Friendly Healthcare and a Certified Dementia Practitioner. Dr. Lisi has authored numerous publications on immunizations, mental health, medication therapy management, and medication safety in older adults.

Jason Love (pg. 13) Jason Love has a history degree from West Chester University. He is the author of "A Pizza Journey with Family and Friends: Visiting More Than 200 Pizzerias Throughout New Jersey, New York City, and Philadelphia." He has previously taught for Rutgers OLLI-RU.

MaryAnn McGuigan (pg. 22) Mary Ann McGuigan's short fiction has appeared in The Sun, Prime Number, North American Review, and many other journals. Her collection PIECES includes stories named for the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. THAT VERY PLACE, her new collection, was praised by Kirkus as "a literary tour de force." Her creative nonfiction is published widely—SmokeLong quarterly, Brevity, The Rumpus, and X-R-A-Y. The Junior Library Guild and the New York Public Library rank Mary Ann's young-adult novels as best books for teens, and WHERE YOU BELONG was a finalist for the National Book Award. She loves visitors: www.maryannmcguigan.com.

Komal Mehra (pgs. 20, 25, 28) Komal Mehra is an artist, a crafter and an art instructor, who is passionate about creating life on canvas. She works with a variety of art mediums like watercolors, oil pastels, acrylics, pencils (pencil sketching), colored pencils, cords (macramé), thread (embroidery), paper strips (paper quilling), and digital art (graphic designing). She continues to hone her skills, learn new art techniques and loves to share her passion for art with creative friends around the community.

Jeanie Menz (pg. 26) Jeanie Menz is a Pharm.D. with over 30 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry, where she was known for creating training programs that made complex science both accessible and engaging. She is excited to bring that same creativity and energy to OLLI-RU.

Naomi Miller (pg. 22) Naomi Miller has a deaf son and she started learning sign language to communicate with him at age 2 when he was diagnosed. She and her late husband are the co-founders of a NJ statewide organization called Parents For Deaf Awareness—a support group for parents and families who have a deaf child. She has worked as a speech therapist teaching deaf students at Passaic County Technical Institute, a vocational high school where she worked with these students in various vocational shops such as culinary and automotive. She has received several awards for her unique and creative style of teaching language, including the Marlene M. Pomper teaching award in Spring 2025.

Jamie Mullen (pg. 17) Jamie Mullen is a retired psychiatrist who trained and taught at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Pittsburgh. He conducted international clinical trials in psychiatry and neurodegeneration. He has taught courses in cognitive biases and eugenics at OLLI-Temple.

Thoshan Omprakash (pg. 27) Thoshan Omprakash is a state chess champion with experience teaching students of all ages, from young children as early as 3 years old to adults up to 65 and has exposure training with the top players of the world for over a decade. His teaching approach is patient, encouraging, and adapted to each student's age, skill level, and learning style.

Ronni Rose (pg. 18) Ronni Rose is a poet who celebrates life through nature. As an instructor, she has taught the poetry of the Holocaust for years and more recently on the national, international Judaic study, synagogue website Keeping It Sacred. Ronni has given professional poetry readings at colleges, schools, synagogues and festivals in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Colorado. She developed a poetry course for children which she taught as Poet in Residence in Central New Jersey and Colorado. Ronni was a jazz director at three New Jersey venues for over a decade working with leading performers and recording artists. As Adult Education Chair at Temple B' nai Shalom, East Brunswick, she has been directing an Adult Education Film Series for a decade.

Lou Ruprecht (pg. 21) Lou Ruprecht has taught many courses at OLLI-Rutgers related to law and politics as he has been a lawyer for more than 60 years. He also has been an ordained minister for several decades and is a graduate of New Brunswick Theological Seminary- the forerunner of Queens College- later Rutgers University. He has taught the Hebrew scriptures in Bible courses for over 30 years and has a special interest in how they came into being as foundational texts for Judaism and Christianity.

George Schroepfer (pg. 18) George Schroepfer is a recently retired Assistant Teaching Professor in the Writing Program at Rutgers. He has taught for many years at OLLI-RU and looks forward to a great semester with the students.

Monica Shah (pg. 20) Monica Shah is a professional educator who holds a BS from Penn State, and an EdM from Harvard University focused on adult development. The author of multiple published essays, poems and several books, her background also includes the performing arts. With extensive experience in teaching a variety of subjects, the common thread weaving through her diverse experiences and interests is an intrinsic spirit of exploration and discovery and the expertise to support others in their own learning journeys.

Maxine Susman (pg. 15) Maxine Susman holds a Ph.D. in English from Cornell University. She was an Associate Director of the Writing Program at Rutgers, taught also at Seton Hall University and Duksung Women's University (Seoul, Korea), and retired as Professor of English from Caldwell University. She has written eight books of poetry, published her work in dozens of journals, and gives community readings and workshops. A winner of the Marlene M. Pomper Distinguished Teaching Award, she has taught at OLLI-RU since 2013.

Bruce Tucker (pgs. 15, 19) Bruce Tucker holds a B.A. in political science and history and an M.S. degree in information technology and project management from Stevens Institute of Technology. Bruce has been a member of the Rutgers OLLI-RU faculty since 2009 and was a recipient of the Marlene M. Pomper Distinguished Teacher Award in 2015.

Vandana Walia (pg. 21) Vandana Walia has a master's degree in literature and thirty years teaching experience in India. She has been an instructor at OLLI-RU for more than ten years and is the recipient of the Marlene M. Pomper Distinguished Teacher Award for Fall 2022.

Frank Wallace (pgs. 16, 28) Frank Wallace is a retired Ericsson software engineer with more than 40 years of experience spanning nearly every phase of the software lifecycle — from requirements gathering and design through development, testing, deployment, and maintenance. He began his career teaching high-school seniors to program digital computers, before moving into industry roles at Sperry Univac, Ohio Bell Telephone, and Bell Communications Research. He later joined Ericsson following its acquisition of Bell Communications Research, where he remained until his retirement.

Hugo Walter (pg. 23) Hugo Walter has a B.A. from Princeton University, an M.A. from Old Dominion University, and a Ph.D. from Drew University. He has taught at Drew University and Fairleigh Dickinson University. Hugo has been a member of the Rutgers OLLI-RU faculty since 2019. He has published several books on European and American literature including *Devoted to the Truth: Four Brilliant Investigators* (2022) and *Emissaries of Justice: Courageous Searchers for Missing Persons* (2025).

Steve Yacik (pg. 21) Steve Yacik has a passion for learning about and teaching US history. Now fully retired, he creates and leads tours through the Historical Society of Princeton and through the University. Yet Steve remains a proud Rutgers graduate with a BA in English (In other words, he loves a good story).

Carla Zimowsk (pg. 14) Carla Zimowsk recently retired from 25 years as technology manager for the History Department at Princeton University. She has decades of experience incorporating the ever-changing technological landscape in her own genealogical pursuits. Carla holds a Master's in Information Studies, a certificate in Digital Asset Management from the Rutgers School of Communication and Information Studies, and she is working towards a genealogy certification. She has been published in the *Chicago Genealogist*. Carla is the owner of AncestorTech© LLC, exploring today's technology for today's genealogy!