

SPRING 2026

OSHER

AT TOWSON UNIVERSITY



ONLINE PREVIEW

FEBRUARY 2

View Preview Recording online by visiting
www.towson.edu/osher

SESSION I

MARCH 2 - MARCH 27

SESSION II

APRIL 6 - MAY 1

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TOWSON
UNIVERSITY



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hello lifelong learners,

Welcome to the spring 2026 semester! I always get excited about the upcoming semester, and this spring is no exception. With an array of exciting courses available, I hope you'll find some great choices for your schedule.

This spring, we continue our wonderful partnership with Edenwald Senior Living, where our in-person classes meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Free parking is available for Osher members directly across from the building. This is possible thanks to the gracious Edenwald staff who park elsewhere while Osher classes are in session. The culinary staff has Osher on their radar with great food in the café. Enjoy a quick snack, beverage or lunch with other Osher friends between classes. On Mondays and Fridays, join us for Zoom classes from the comfort of your own home, or anywhere you can get a good Wi-Fi signal.

Whether you are a first-time Osher member, or someone who has been with us for years, we are excited to have you join us this spring.

Thank you for including Osher at Towson University in your life!

Warm regards,



Tracy Jacobs

Spring 2026 – Important Information

- **Spring 2026 classes will be a mixture of Zoom and in-person classes**
- **In-person classes will be held at Edenwald Senior Living in Towson**
- **Zoom classes will be held on Mondays and Fridays**
- **The best way to reach Osher staff is by email: osher@towson.edu or by phone: 410-704-3688**
- **To receive all Osher announcements please make sure you are on the Osher email list. Please read the Osher News & Notes Newsletter which is emailed on a bi-weekly basis. If you are not receiving the newsletter, contact osher@towson.edu to notify Osher staff.**
- **Online course registration is strongly encouraged. If you wish to mail your registration and/or payment, you must also email osher@towson.edu to let us know that it has been sent by mail.**
- **We are unable to accept walk-in registrations**

EMAIL OSHER@TOWSON.EDU FOR MORE INFORMATION

SPRING 2026 SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

**Please note course description for course start dates*

Monday ZOOM	Tuesday EDENWALD	Wednesday EDENWALD	Thursday EDENWALD	Friday ZOOM
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SESSION I (MARCH 2 – 27)

9:30 a.m.	Two Art Fairs that Changed the World	Beethoven	Our Dogs, Ourselves	The Civil Rights Movement in Maryland	Mapping the World
11 a.m.	From Venuses to Chartres Cathedral (11:15 a.m.)	Ancient Near East	Aesthetics	Democracy, Corruption & Public Accountability	New Ideas in Astronomy
1 p.m.	Films of Sally Field	Undercover	Eight Plays Everyone Should Know	Scorsese and DeNiro (1–4 p.m.) German Baltimore	Films of Robert Redford
2:30 p.m.	No Country for Old Men	Baltimore's Amazing Industry	Unsung Heroes of Jazz History Robert Frost	Scorsese and DeNiro (1–4 p.m.) Conservation of Species	

SESSION II (APRIL 6 – MAY 1)

9:30 a.m.	The Search for an American Sound	Beethoven	Great Women Photographers	The Civil Rights Movement in Maryland	Living Well with Cognitive Changes
11 a.m.	From Venuses to Chartres Cathedral (11:15 a.m.)	Ancient Near East	Maryland's Geography	Democracy, Corruption & Public Accountability	New Ideas in Astronomy
1 p.m.	Films of Marilyn Monroe	Undercover	Eight Plays Everyone Should Know	Artificial Intelligence	Great Film Detectives
2:30 p.m.	No Country for Old Men	Baltimore's Amazing Industry	Unsung Heroes of Jazz History	Espionage in High Heels The 1930s and Today	

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE AT TOWSON UNIVERSITY

LOCATION OF CLASSES

Edenwald Senior Living: 800 Southerly Road, Towson, MD 21286

Online: Zoom

LOCATION OF OFFICES and OFFICE HOURS

Our Osher offices are located at 401 Washington Avenue, Towson, MD 21204.

9 a.m.–4 p.m. | Monday–Friday

IMPORTANT: Office hours are by appointment only.

MAILING ADDRESS

Osher at Towson University
401 Washington Ave, 3rd Floor
Towson, MD 21204-0001

CONTACT US

Email: osher@towson.edu

Website: www.towson.edu/osher

Phone: 410-704-3688 (Leave a message and you will receive a response as quickly as possible.)

Staff

Tracy Jacobs, *director*

410-704-3437, tjacobs@towson.edu

Jessica Tye, *membership coordinator*

410-704-3688, jtye@towson.edu

Osher Advisory Council

Deborah Anderson

Lynda Anozie

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Sandy Goldberg

Tracy Jacobs (staff)

Colleen Lamont

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Ruth Spivak

Jessica Tye (staff)

Jane Wolfson

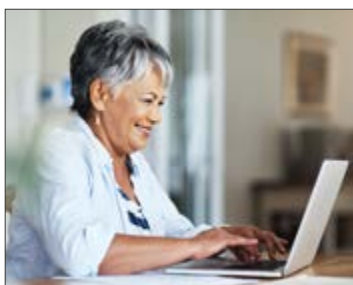
Towson University's policies, programs and activities comply with federal and state laws and University System of Maryland regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, sex, disability and sexual orientation.

Towson University is a smoke-free campus.

Your participation in Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University constitutes implied consent to be photographed, video recorded, and to have those images published in any manner, including use on web pages and social media outlets. Should you have questions, please contact the director.

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE AT TOWSON UNIVERSITY

SCHEDULE OF CLASS LOCATIONS



MONDAYS AND FRIDAYS

Classes will meet online via Zoom

- Enjoy classes from your home or wherever you can connect
- Most Zoom classes are recorded and available to registrants to view if they have missed a class or would like to review a lesson



TUESDAYS – THURSDAYS

Classes will meet at Edenwald Senior living in Towson, located at **800 Southerly Road, Towson, MD 21286.**

- Enjoy the camaraderie of in-person learning
- Convenient location near the Towson Town Center mall
- Ample free and accessible parking
- Comfortable and welcoming atmosphere with auditorium and multipurpose classroom
- Stay for lunch—purchase a lunch (or brown bag it) and dine with friends in Edenwald's café

WE ARE ALL VALUED AND RESPECTED.

When you join Osher at Towson University, you are part of a community. Our courses, lectures, interest groups and social activities all offer the opportunity for lively discussions and a chance to develop new friendships. We strive for a culture of kindness, respect, inclusiveness, patience and understanding. All members of the Osher community — students, instructors and staff — are expected to behave in a way that enables a positive and enjoyable learning experience for everyone.

Osher participants are expected to engage with each other with civility, kindness and respect. Classroom dialogue may prompt disagreement and informed debate as a valued part of the academic experience. Demeaning, offensive, disrespectful, violent, or otherwise hurtful language or behaviors will not be tolerated and could result in dismissal from the program at the sole discretion of the director.

Some ideas to optimize the learning experience:

- Strive to be on time.
- Silence or turn off your phone and other devices.
- Don't interrupt, turn to technology or engage in private conversations while others are speaking.
- Be open to learning from others.
- Everyone has the right to be heard. One speaker at a time.
- Avoid dominating the conversation. Allow others to participate.
- Listen respectfully. Listen to understand, not to respond.
- Assume good intent and be able to respectfully disagree.
- Practice grace. Remember that we are all human.

ENDOWED BY THE BERNARD OSHER FOUNDATION

ABOUT OSHER AT TOWSON UNIVERSITY

HISTORY AND MISSION

Founded in 1999 with its first home in the historic Auburn House on the Towson University campus, the Auburn Society became the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University in the summer of 2006 when it was awarded its first grant from the Bernard Osher Foundation. Osher is part of the university's Division of Business and Public Engagement.

The mission of Osher is to offer opportunities for continued learning along with programs and activities for social and cultural enrichment geared toward adults who are 50 and older. The basic concept of the organization is that learning is a life-long process and is enhanced in a congenial atmosphere with others who share a love of learning. There are no educational prerequisites for membership and no grades or credits are given.

Osher is a self-funded, membership organization, endowed by the Bernard Osher Foundation since 2009. Its programs and activities are planned and carried out by staff and member volunteers through committees. These committees include curriculum, membership engagement, philanthropy, and classroom facilitation.

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Osher has fall and spring semesters each year. Each semester is divided into two four-week sessions. **Some classes are only four weeks in length while others are eight weeks.** This catalog describes the academic program for the **SPRING 2026 SEMESTER.**

The dates are: Session I: March 2 – 27
Session II: April 6 – May 1

Classes are held on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday at 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 2:30 p.m. unless stated otherwise. Each class meets once a week for one hour and 15 minutes unless stated otherwise in this catalog. **Spring 2026 courses will meet either in-person or online via Zoom. Zoom classes will be held on Mondays and Fridays, while in-person classes will be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.**

In addition to the fall and spring semesters, Osher offers winter and summer lecture series.

OTHER PROGRAMS

In addition to its academic programs, Osher at Towson University offers special lectures, book clubs, interest groups, and day trips.

OSHER ONLINE™

Osher at Towson University is excited to offer additional online programming through the Osher Online™ program, in collaboration with the National Resource Center for Osher Institutes. Osher Online™ classes are offered quarterly. Each 6-week course meets for 90-minutes one day per week. Each quarter, a variety of courses are offered in various topic areas. These courses are offered separately from the Osher at Towson University fall and spring semester offerings. Membership is required to enroll. Each course is priced separately. Taught by an array of well-qualified instructors, the Osher Online™ program does not replace the semester online courses. Rather, it supplements our semester courses and gives members the opportunity to take classes with Osher members and instructors from across the country.

OSHER CODE OF CONDUCT

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University adheres to a policy of mutual respect between members, instructors, volunteers, staff, and the campus community. By joining Osher at Towson University, members agree to uphold the shared values of mutual respect, personal and academic integrity, and civil discourse.

- Members will not behave in a hostile, dismissive, or derogatory way toward anyone in the Osher community or others in University community.
- Members will be tolerant and respectful of diverse opinions and thinking.
- Members will not be disruptive in class or other activities.

The success of this policy relies on each participating individual upholding these values so that everyone can enjoy this educational community.

Osher members should contact the Director if there are any concerns or if they have witnessed behavior that is in violation of this Code of Conduct. The Director, in consultation with the Council Chair and the Osher Advisor, will investigate the issue and take the appropriate action to address any violations.

MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION

OSHER MEMBERSHIP

Membership in Osher is required to take classes. Membership is geared to individuals age 50 and older and their spouses. Annual dues, effective July 1–June 30, are \$60 per person. **Membership fees support operating costs of the organization.**

TUITION

The fee for one four-week course is \$74. The fee for two four-week courses or one eight-week course is \$148. The fee for three four-week courses or one eight-week course plus one four-week course is \$222. For \$230 an unlimited number of courses may be taken during the semester.

REGISTRATION

Online registration will become available on February 3, 2026 at 9 a.m.

Online registration is strongly encouraged. If you are unable to register online, you may **download and print out the registration form.** You must be a current member to register for classes.

RENEW OR JOIN | **REGISTER FOR SPRING 2026**

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

To best ensure our members' safety, Osher will follow the guidelines below for delays and closures during inclement weather. Regardless of Osher's status, please use your best judgment regarding your safety in traveling during inclement weather.

For Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday classes, please follow these Emergency Closing/Inclement Weather guidelines.

TOWSON UNIVERSITY DELAYS/CANCELLATIONS*

Towson University CLOSED	= Osher classes CANCELLED
Towson University OPEN at 10 a.m.	= Osher's 9:30 a.m. CLASS CANCELLED; First Osher CLASS BEGINS at 11 a.m.
Towson University OPEN at 11 a.m.	= First Osher CLASS BEGINS at 1 p.m.
Towson University OPEN at Noon	= First Osher CLASS BEGINS at 1 p.m.

**NOTE: The 401 Washington Avenue building follows Towson University schedule as building closures may be in effect.*

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DELAYS/CANCELLATIONS

Baltimore County Schools CLOSED	= Osher classes CANCELLED
Baltimore County Schools OPEN LATE	= NO CHANGES to Osher Class Schedule unless Towson University is closed or opening late (refer to schedule above)

COVID-19 POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

We are committed to the health and safety of all our Osher members and instructors. In-person classes provide camaraderie and a sense of community. To ensure everyone's safety in the classroom, we will follow all the public health and safety guidelines that are in place. We will also follow the guidelines that are established at the locations where we host our in-person courses. Important policy guidelines will be provided by email before the start of classes.

ZOOM COURSES

Online courses will meet via Zoom. Zoom links will be sent to those who are registered for the specific online course. These links are not to be shared with others.

CLASS MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

Registration is required and attendance will be monitored for the courses.

OSHER'S POLICY ON JEWISH HOLIDAYS

The Osher Institute follows Towson University's general policy as related to Jewish holidays, which is to hold classes as scheduled. However, an individual teacher may reschedule his/her class if desired. If a class has been rescheduled, it will be stated in the catalog after the description of the particular course affected.

Osher Online™

Osher Online™ offers shared online learning for members of participating Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes from across the United States. Experienced instructors lead unique and high-quality courses which supplement and complement the local Osher curriculum.

We are excited to offer Osher at Towson University members more course options through the Osher Online program. Study with subject matter experts, learn with Osher members from across the country and experience this exciting new opportunity.

- Osher Online courses are offered quarterly in the fall, winter, spring and summer with a variety of 6-week courses.
- Each class is 90 minutes long.
- Sessions meet live and are not recorded.

SPRING 2026 OSHER ONLINE COURSES

- Ghosts in the White House: The People Behind Presidential Speeches
- The Scopes Monkey Trial: Then and Now
- Comic Book Literature (with Arnold Blumberg)
- A History of Street Art
- Siberia: Russia's Frozen Wasteland or Economic Heartland?
- JFK's Quest for Peace: Lessons for Turbulent Times
- Violinists: Performers as Creators
- Place, Memory, and Environmental Psychology
- From Leo XIII to Leo XIV: History of 20th and 21st Century Popes
- A Beautiful Brain
- Great Science Stories
- The Lost Generation
- Writing the Personal Essay: Finding Your Story
- Frank Lloyd Wright and Modern Architecture

Visit Towson.edu/OsherOnline to learn more and register.



WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT THEIR OSHER ONLINE™ EXPERIENCES

“I love taking online classes and the quality of the classes that are offered from Osher Online is just fantastic!”

“The wide range of people from all over the country added to the great content.”

“My expectations were exceeded. Having knowledgeable classmates made the course very enjoyable. Both the instructor and moderator were particularly good.”

“This was my first Osher Online class, but it will not be the last!”

DID YOU KNOW...?

THE OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE NETWORK

- There are over 120 Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes, often referred to as OLLIs, on college and university campuses in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- There are over 130,000 members nationwide.
- Osher Institutes are all unique, but each has the mission to design non-credit learning and social opportunities for adults age 50+, and each is part of a college or university.

**No tests, no grades, no homework.
Learning simply for the joy of learning.**

THANK YOU TO THE SUPPORTERS OF OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Osher thrives with the help of our volunteers. Whether they participate on a committee, facilitate a book club or discussion group, Osher volunteers are integral to the success of our program. Keep an eye out for Osher emails for ways to stay involved. A huge “thank you” to all the Osher volunteers. We can’t have a successful program without you!

STRENGTHEN THE FINANCIAL FOUNDATION OF OSHER AT TOWSON UNIVERSITY. GIVE A GIFT!

Tax-deductible contributions to Osher are greatly appreciated and are important to its current and future operations. There are six funds to which you may give.

Osher Excellence Fund, (formerly the Osher Sustaining Fund), established in 2015, supports special program-related expenses and insures the ongoing success of Osher for years to come.

Patty Beere Ruby Memorial Fund, established in 2008 to honor the memory of Patty Beere Ruby, provides funding to celebrate and promote the Osher program.

Lou Cedrone Memorial Fund, established in 2015 to honor the memory of Lou Cedrone, Osher faculty member, 2000–2015, supports film courses at Osher.

Osher Lifelong Learning Endowment, awarded to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University in 2009 by the Bernard Osher Foundation, provides ongoing support for the Osher Institute.

R. Rex Rehfeld Endowment, established in 2016, sponsors Osher courses in honor of Osher faculty member, Rex Rehfeld.

Jacqueline L. and Eric K. Gratz Endowment for Lifelong Learning, through this legacy gift, the Gratz’s have established an endowment that demonstrates their dedication to the Osher at Towson University organization and the pursuit of lifelong learning.

GIVE A GIFT!

*If you wish to donate by check, please indicate the fund to which you prefer to give. Please include notation that the gift is to Osher at Towson University. If you have no fund preference, your gift will go into the Osher Excellence Fund. Make check payable to **Towson University Foundation, Inc.** and mail to: **Towson University Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 17165, Baltimore, MD 21297-0219.***

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Osher thrives with the help of our volunteers. Whether they participate on a committee, facilitate a book club or discussion group, Osher volunteers are integral to the success of our program. Throughout the past several years, some Osher groups have remained active while we held meetings via Zoom. Keep an eye out for Osher emails for ways to stay involved. A huge “thank you” to all the Osher volunteers. We can’t have a successful program without you!

We extend a special “thank you” to our volunteer instructors this semester: Emily Kearns and Joseph Mohler

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED AS AN OSHER VOLUNTEER

If you are an Osher member wondering how to get more involved at Osher as a volunteer, here are some great options:

PARTICIPATE ON AN OSHER COMMITTEE

Advisory Council—The Osher Advisory Council is comprised of members who serve in an advisory capacity to the Osher staff. The Advisory Council members act as ambassadors to the Osher membership and community on behalf of Osher at Towson University. Advisory Council members participate in bi-monthly meetings, provide important insights and feedback, and help shape the direction of the organization. If you would like to be considered for the Advisory Council, please contact Tracy Jacobs at tjacobs@towson.edu.

Classroom Facilitation Committee—Classroom facilitators are essential to our courses. Classroom facilitators make important announcements at the beginning of each class, assist instructors with audio-visual needs, put out attendance sheets, and act as a liaison between instructors and staff during class meetings. Training on audio-visual equipment is provided to committee members and staff/technical support is available to support facilitators and instructors as needed.

Curriculum Committee—Members of the Osher Curriculum Committee review course proposals, provide feedback on instructors and courses, and assist in determining program offerings. This committee meets several times each year to discuss potential classes, instructors, and programs.

Day Trip Committee—Osher members love to participate in local and regional day trips, but they involve planning. This small group works with Osher staff to plan details of trips including locations, itineraries, and marketing.

Membership Engagement Committee—Membership engagement is vital to the sense of community that Osher provides. People serving on this committee ensure that Osher members feel welcome and informed. They help plan Osher social events, connect with new members, and identify ways to foster camaraderie among Osher members.

Shared Interest Group Facilitators—Share your interests with others at Osher. Facilitators organize book clubs, writing groups, and other groups for interested members.

Please consider volunteering at Osher by participating on a committee or leading a shared interest group. Contact **OSHER@TOWSON.EDU** to let us know if you are interested in being a volunteer and we will follow up with you.

ARTS, CULTURE & HUMANITIES



BEETHOVEN: THE MAN AND THE MUSIC

Jonathan Palevsky



UNSUNG HEROES OF JAZZ

Seth Kibel

Sessions I and II

Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. (begins March 3)

Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)

It is not an exaggeration to say that Ludwig Van Beethoven was the first rock star of music. He was brilliant, inspired, awed all manners of people and often behaved very badly! Despite his childish and somewhat truculent behavior, his patrons adored and worshipped him, showering him with praise and money. Based on the amazing symphonies, string quartets and concertos, there is no doubt that he was worthy of attention during his own time and ours. Explore the master and his music from his difficult childhood to his struggle with deafness and his eventual evolution into western music's greatest composer.

Jonathan Palevsky, B.M., M.M., is program director for WBJC. His undergraduate studies focused on musicology and his graduate work at Baltimore's Peabody Institute focused on instrumental training in classical guitar performance. Jonathan can be heard as host of Face the Music, Past Masters, WBJC Opera Fest and regular afternoon classical programming on WBJC. He also hosts Cinema Sundays at the Charles Theater. Jonathan has been a regular of the Osher faculty since the former Auburn Society's first semester in spring 1999.

Sessions I and II

Wednesdays, 2:30 p.m. (begins March 4)

No class March 18. Makeup date April 1.

Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)

Not every jazz pioneer becomes a household name. There are a surprising number of brilliant and innovative jazz musicians that history has largely forgotten, many due to their race and/or gender. In this class, the instructor will engage participants in a robust discussion about the lives and careers of jazz and swing greats who, to this day, don't receive the proper credit to which they are rightfully due. Slated for inclusion are such should-be legends as Fletcher Henderson, Charlie Christian, Willie "The Lion" Smith, Buster Bailey, Billy Strayhorn, Lillian Hardin (Armstrong), Mary Lou Williams and more. Classic recordings and vintage video clips will keep this class as lively and engaging as the music itself. Oh, and rest assured Seth will never show up to class without one of his own instruments for a little live performance, as well.

Seth Kibel is one of the Mid-Atlantic's premier woodwind specialists, working with some of the best bands in klezmer, jazz, swing, and more. Wowing audiences on clarinet, flute, and saxophone, Seth has made a name for himself in the Baltimore-Washington region, and beyond. He is the featured performer with The Kleztet, Bay Jazz Project, Music Pilgrim Trio, The Natty Beaux, and more. Winner of 28 Washington Area Music Awards (Wammies), including "Best World Music Instrumentalist" and "Best Jazz Instrumentalist."

Make sure you are getting Osher emails and newsletter. Email osher@towson.edu.

ZOOM COURSE**THE SEARCH FOR AN AMERICAN SOUND**

Emanuel Abramovits

Session II**Mondays, 9:30 a.m. (begins April 6)****No class April 13. Makeup date May 4.****Fee: \$74**

Since the 1890s, when Americans were beginning to develop their own traditions in classical music, composers have recognized the dilemma of creating the American sound. In this course, we explore how not only classical musicians but also Broadway and Hollywood composers of diverse origins and ethnicities created a sound that has been defined as evocative of these lands and its people. Join us as we listen to and discuss the works of Aaron Copland, George Gershwin, William Grant Still, Florence Price, Alex North, Elmer Bernstein and others, and discover how elements of jazz, folk music and classical techniques created a uniquely American sound identity.

Emanuel Abramovits is a mechanical engineer with an MBA and has been a concert promoter since 2000, directly involved in many events by international artists. He designed and staged many original orchestral events, including an “Event of the Year” winner and several world premieres. He served as the cultural director at Union Israelita de Caracas from 2008 to 2019, releasing books, organizing film cycles, concerts, and art exhibits. He has been consistently teaching online and in person across the U.S. since 2020.

ZOOM COURSE**TWO ART FAIRS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD**

Michael Salzman

Session I**Mondays, 9:30 a.m. (begins March 2)****Fee: \$74**

Much of the development of modern and contemporary art in the 20th Century and beyond began with the 1913 Armory Show in New York and the When Attitudes Become Form museum show at Bern in 1969. Two lectures will be devoted to each event. The Armory Show gave America its first major viewing of European art, including impressionism, post-impressionism, fauvism and Cubism, and gave many Americans the first taste of such artists as Monet, Cezanne, van Gogh, Matisse and Picasso. When Attitudes Become Form was created in 1969 by Harald Szeemann, the young director of the Art Museum in Bern, Switzerland. The show featured emerging artists who were just becoming known on either side of the Atlantic. These artists gave life to such new movements as minimalism, post-minimalism and conceptual art.

Michael Salzman, M.D., is the former chairman of neurosurgery at the University of Maryland, a child of the Holocaust and survivor of polio. Writings include Poems in Barrow Street, Blue Unicorn, Hopkins Review, Hudson Review and Smartish Pace. Books include The Clock Made of Confetti, Poetry in Medicine, classic and contemporary poems about medicine, A Prague Spring (Sinclair Poetry Prize), Shades & Graces, Daniel Hoffman Book Prize winner, Necessary Speech: New & Selected Poems and Crossing the Tape (2024).

ZOOM COURSE



FROM VENUSES TO CHARTRES CATHEDRAL AND BEYOND

Joseph Cassar

Sessions I and II

Mondays, 11:15 a.m. (begins March 2)

Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)

NOTE: This course will not be recorded.

This course covers a wide and deep cross-section of art history, focusing on fundamental issues like art as an expression of an idea and why artists create, invent and improvise. This course will address common themes in art such as the Venus. Students will discover how humanism, nature and religion informed art. From the symbolism and beauty of stained-glass windows of Chartres Cathedral to the present times when chance and accident became themes in artistic expression, we will explore developments in western art throughout the ages.

Joseph Paul Cassar is professor of art and graphic communications at the University of Maryland Global Campus. He has been engaged in designing online art courses for the university as well as for the New York Knowledge Network. He has lectured at the University of Malta for the Faculty of Education, Mediterranean Institute, Faculty of Theology and formed part of the art department with the Faculty of Arts, where he lectured on the modern and contemporary period. He is the author of several award-winning art books with a special focus on Maltese modern artists. In addition to presenting at area institutions, Cassar has lectured at the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Walters Art Museum and at the Smithsonian Institution. Cassar is also a practicing artist who exhibits his works regularly in the Baltimore-Washington D.C. area. Cassar keeps Malta at heart, visits regularly and maintains a studio in Xemxija.



GREAT WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHERS (PART 2)

Steve Dembo

Session II

Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. (begins April 8)

Fee: \$74

Women have been involved with photography since its inception. Their male contemporaries are far better known with well-documented images and lives. In this course, we will learn about the great women photographers who are equal to their male peers, if not better. We will explore the life and work of Dorothea Lange, Berenice Abbott, Lee Miller, Diane Arbus, Vivian Maier, Cindy Sherman, Sally Mann, Annie Leibovitz and others. As war photographers, celebrity makers or creators of socially and politically conscious work, these women made amazing contributions to photography. Participation in this course doesn't require attendance in previous "Great Women Photographers" courses.

Steve Dembo received his M.F.A. from MICA. He is an adjunct professor at CCBC, where he teaches digital photography, digital imaging, and 2-D design. His photographic work has been critically acclaimed, has garnered numerous competitive awards and accolades, and has appeared in national publications and juried exhibitions. He has taught several courses at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University. He spent 30 years as a college administrator in Connecticut, New York, and Maryland. He has been an instructor in history at York College-CUNY, Norwalk Community College, Community College of Baltimore, and Howard Community College.



EIGHT PLAYS EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW, SPRING 2026 EDITION

Greg Jones

Sessions I and II

Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m. (begins March 4)

Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)

In this edition of the popular series, students will look at plays by or about strong female characters. In addition to comments about each plays' context and place in the literary and theatrical canon, the course will be illustrated by performance clips and, where possible, live performances by celebrated local actors. Lively discussion is encouraged. Links to the scripts and online performances will be given in advance, but no prior preparation or attendance in previous classes is required. The eight plays to be considered are: "Medea" by Euripides, "Trifles" by Susan Glaspell, "Major Barbara" by George Bernard Shaw, "Hedda Gabler" by Henrik Ibsen, "Auntie Mame" by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, "Night, Mother" by Marsha Norman, "Intimate Apparel" by Lynn Nottage and "The Children" by Lucy Kirkwood.

Greg Jones has appeared in more than 60 stage productions and has written 10 full-length plays. He most recently received the 2024 WATCH Award for Best Featured Performance in a Play for "The Winslow Boy" in Annapolis. He has a B.A. in drama from Catholic University and an M.A. in English literature from Salisbury University. He has taught English, literature, and film in colleges in Delaware, Maryland and Virginia and serves on the board of the Anne Arundel County Scholarships for Scholars program.



SCORSESE AND DENIRO: THE EARLY COLLABORATIONS

William Florman

Session I

Thursdays, 1:00–4:00 p.m. (begins March 5)

Fee: \$74

In 1973, Martin Scorsese and Robert DeNiro collaborated for the first time in Mean Streets. Over the next several decades, they collaborated on nine more films. This class will focus on their first four masterpieces: Mean Streets (1973), Taxi Driver (1976), Raging Bull (1980) and Goodfellas (1990). These four films provide an illuminating, exhaustive and harrowing portrayal of the dark, violent aspects of the American psyche.

William Florman, M.A., J.D., has taught courses in literature and writing at Boston College, Salem State College, and American University. Later, upon graduation from Georgetown Law School, he practiced labor law in Washington, D.C. and then engaged in various entrepreneurial ventures. For the last eight years, Mr. Florman has enjoyed his return to his first love, which is teaching.

ZOOM COURSE
**RUGGED CHARISMA:
THE FILMS OF ROBERT REDFORD**

Arnold Blumberg

Session I
Fridays, 1:00 p.m. (begins March 6)
Fee: \$74

Robert Redford began his career on stage and in television, memorably appearing as a kindly incarnation of Death on *The Twilight Zone*, before eventually becoming one of the most respected and desired leading men in Hollywood. Whether teaming with fellow matinee idol Paul Newman in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969) and *The Sting* (1973); sharing the screen with Jane Fonda in multiple films, including *Barefoot in the Park* (1967); leading politically-charged '70s conspiracy thrillers like *Three Days of the Condor* (1975) and *All the President's Men* (1976); or directing films like *Ordinary People* (1980) and *Quiz Show* (1994), Redford established himself as one of the most accomplished and celebrated filmmakers of his generation. As a founder of the Sundance Film Festival, and through his support of environmental and human rights causes, Redford left a legacy that went far beyond his work in movies.

Arnold T. Blumberg is a pop culture historian and professor of multiple courses in media literacy and other cultural topics. He has taught at UMBC, the University of Baltimore, CCBC, and Osher at Towson University. He spent 15 years in the comic book industry as writer and editor of "The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide," curated a pop culture museum for five years, and currently runs his own publishing company, ATB Publishing.

ZOOM COURSE
**IRRESISTIBLE ICON:
THE FILMS OF MARILYN MONROE**

Arnold Blumberg

Session II
Mondays, 1:00 p.m. (begins April 6)
Fee: \$74

On the 100th anniversary of her birth, we look back at the films of one of the most unforgettable pop culture icons of all time — born Norma Jeane Mortenson, but known to the world as Marilyn Monroe. Marilyn's sex symbol status and blonde bombshell image rocketed her to a level of fame that has rarely been equaled, but her success came at a tragic cost. This course will examine her appearances in movies like *All About Eve* (1950), *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953), *The Seven Year Itch* (1955) and *Some Like It Hot* (1959), following her ill-fated but influential career from post-war pin-up to — as *American Masters*' Gail Levin put it — "arguably...the most photographed person of the 20th century." We'll also look at the many other media figures that have portrayed or otherwise appropriated Marilyn's distinctive persona.

ZOOM COURSE**THE GREAT FILM DETECTIVES**

Arnold Blumberg

Session II**Fridays, 1:00 p.m. (begins April 10)****Fee: \$74**

One o'clock. We're in a virtual theater, shrouded in shadows drawn from German expressionist cinema. We're watching clips from film noir, neo-noir and mystery movies populated by hard-bitten private eyes with rumpled suits and battered fedoras; weary but determined gumshoes with stale coffee breath and one last case to close; and beleaguered amateur sleuths running for their lives while frantically unraveling criminal conspiracies. From Sam Spade and Clarice Starling to Virgil Tibbs and Benoit Blanc, this course will look at the great film detectives from the 1930s to the present who painstakingly searched for truth and justice on the silver screen as we all watched from those familiar shadows. Films will include *The Lady Vanishes* (1938), *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), *In the Heat of the Night* (1967), *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991), *Se7en* (1995), *Knives Out* (2019) and many more.

Arnold T. Blumberg is a pop culture historian and professor of multiple courses in media literacy and other cultural topics. He has taught at UMBC, the University of Baltimore, CCBC, and Osher at Towson University. He spent 15 years in the comic book industry as writer and editor of "The Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide," curated a pop culture museum for five years, and currently runs his own publishing company, ATB Publishing.

ZOOM COURSE**FROM FLYING NUN TO SUPER AUNT: THE FILMS OF SALLY FIELD**

Arnold Blumberg

Sessions I**Mondays, 1:00 p.m. (begins March 2)****Fee: \$74**

In her early television work on *Gidget* and *The Flying Nun*, actress Sally Field proved herself adept at humor, segueing into cinema with comedies like *Stay Hungry* (1976), *Smokey and the Bandit* (1977) and *The End* (1978). She distinguished herself as equally capable of drama, winning the Best Actress Oscar twice for *Norma Rae* (1980) and *Places in the Heart* (1985). She also won an Emmy for the TV-movie *Sybil* (1977). Roles in films like *Absence of Malice* (1981), *Steel Magnolias* (1989), *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1993), *Forrest Gump* (1994) and two appearances as the wall-crawler's Aunt May in *The Amazing Spider-Man* (2012) and *The Amazing Spider-Man 2* (2014) endeared her to multiple generations of moviegoers. In addition to acting, Field has been a vocal activist and advocate, having overcome adversity in her own life and utilized her work to connect with people through decades of memorable performances.

ZOOM COURSE**CORMAC MCCARTHY'S "NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN"**

Robert Jacobs

Sessions I and II**Mondays, 2:30 p.m. (begins March 2)****Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)**

Widely regarded as one of America's greatest writers, Cormac McCarthy wrote a total of 12 novels spanning the Southern Gothic, Western, and post-apocalyptic genres. In this course we will read and discuss McCarthy's 2005 novel, *No Country for Old Men*, which explores existential themes such as fate vs. free will, the nature of evil and violence, the rule of law and the role of morality in what appears to be an incomprehensible universe. We will also learn about McCarthy's life and work. We will watch scenes from the acclaimed 2007 Coen brothers' film version of the novel.

Robert Jacobs is a Towson University graduate with a B.A. in English. He traveled to the United Kingdom where he attained an M.A. in comparative literature from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He spent several years in London working as a freelance writer and has contributed to a variety of publications such as "Time Out London," The Baltimore Sun's *Metromix*, and "The Examiner." He is an adjunct instructor at Community College of Baltimore County, Johns Hopkins University and Montgomery College.

**OUR DOGS, OURSELVES: DOGS IN LITERATURE, MYTH, HISTORY AND LIFE**

Mikita Brottman

Sessions I**Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. (begins March 4)****Fee: \$74**

"One can love an animal with such an extraordinary intensity," Freud wrote, "feeling affection without ambivalence." Taking a cue from Freud, himself a late-life dog-lover, this course puts the human-canine relationship on the couch for a full, snout-to-tail session of analysis. How have dogs enriched the lives of poets, philosophers, kings, psychologists, writers and others, both notable and ordinary people? Why are themes and motifs about dogs in folklore so consistent across cultures? Do we choose and train dogs in our own image? Why are we warned against loving our dogs too much? Why have stereotypes developed about certain types of dogs and their owners? How are our feelings about dogs deeply rooted in cultural folklore and myth? This course will address how much dogs have to teach us about empathy, anxiety, joy, happiness and what it means to be human.

Mikita Brottman is a certified psychoanalyst and a professor of literature at the Maryland Institute College of Art, where she has taught for 25 years. She is the author of 16 books, including *The Great Grisby: An A-Z of Exceptional Dogs*. Her more recent books deal with the subject of true crime, such as *Couple Found Slain* (2021) and her latest book, *Guilty Creatures* (2025). Her book *An Unexplained Death* (2019) was nominated for the Silver Dagger nonfiction award by the UK Crime Writers' Association. She lives in Baltimore with Brutus, her French bulldog / Shih Tzu mix.



ROBERT FROST AND HIS POETRY

Joseph Mohler

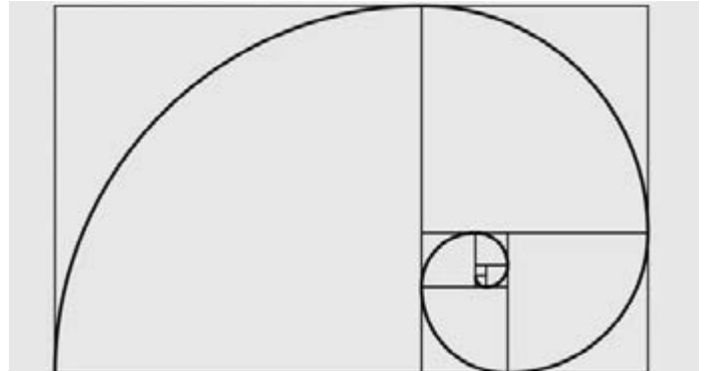
Session I

Wednesdays, 2:30 p.m. (begins March 4)

Fee: \$74

We will begin this course with a biographical introduction. Then we will dive into what is considered his last great poem entitled, Directive. In this poem, Frost reflects on the mining and deforestation of the Green Mountains of Vermont in the mid-19th century. By the 1880s only 20% of Vermont's forested land remained. In the poem, Frost is critical of this kind of radical consumption. His fundamental theme in the poem, his Directive, is that human beings are made for something more sacred than a world of pure practicality (endless consumption). We will explore the poem line by line and leave no stone unturned. I hope it will be an exciting adventure. A real adventure.

Joseph Mohler earned his B.A. in philosophy from Salisbury State University and then went on to get a master's in theology from Boston College. For thirty years, Joseph taught philosophy and theology at Loyola Blakefield in Towson. His interest in the work of Robert Frost stems from the poet's philosophical nature.



AESTHETICS

Ed Fotheringill

Session I

Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m. (begins March 4)

Fee: \$74

Aesthetics is the philosophical study of beauty, taste and art. Aesthetics is a perplexing philosophical topic in that each of us knows what beauty is. You know what beauty is. You know a beautiful painting when you see it. You know a beautiful symphony when you hear it. You know a beautiful poem when you read it. And yet, what you know as beautiful may be vociferously denied by others. This obvious truth begs the following questions: Is beauty an absolute reality? Is there a universal beauty that we can all agree on? Or is beauty simply a subjective state of mind that gives us pleasure? In this course, we will ponder these questions under the guidance of several distinguished philosophers and artists, including Plato, Augustine, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Wassily Kandinsky and Igor Stravinsky.

Edward Fotheringill has been teaching philosophy at the college level for 45 years. For many years, he held the position of senior lecturer of philosophy at Towson University and Goucher College. For the last ten years of his career, he was an adjunct professor of philosophy and intellectual history at the Maryland Institute College of Art.

BIG THANKS

to all Osher Volunteers who
help to make Osher a success.



GREAT CIVILIZATIONS OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

Bob Baer



UNPACKING MARYLAND'S GEOGRAPHY, FROM MOUNTAINS TO MARSHES

Michael Allen

Sessions I and II

Tuesdays, 11:00 a.m. (begins March 3)

Fee: \$74

The Roman province of Britannia is one of the most fascinating and important periods in British history. Rome first entered Britain in 55 BCE, when Julius Caesar landed his troops. The Romans would rule there until 409 CE when the legions evacuated the island. Over four centuries of control, this unique society would combine classical Roman civilization with that of the native Celtic Britons. During Britain's first era of recorded history, the Romans left a great archaeological record of the cities, towns, forts, villas and roads they built, including their capital London and Hadrian's Wall. The history includes the great Celtic rebel queen Boudicca. Through this course, learn the impact of Roman rule on all aspects of civilization including art, culture, religion and the development of government and administration.

Bob Baer is a college administrator with over forty years of experience in higher education. He has bachelor's and master's degrees in history and a doctorate in higher education. Bob is a history instructor at Community College of Baltimore County, Johns Hopkins University and Towson University Osher programs, York College-CUNY and Norwalk Community College.

Session II

Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m. (begins April 8)

Fee: \$74

This course explores the rich and varied geography of Maryland, offering a comprehensive look at how the physical and social features help shape its identity. From the rugged peaks of the Appalachian Mountains to the tidal marshes of the Eastern Shore, Maryland's landscape tells a complex story. We'll examine key physiographic characteristics and explore how these features influence climate, agriculture and urban development. We will delve into the human geography of the Old Line State, highlighting patterns of population and culture across different regions. Special attention will be given to the Chesapeake Bay region, past, present and into the future.

Michael Allen, Ph.D., is an associate professor of geography at Towson University. A Pittsburgh native born in coal country, Michael adopted a fond appreciation and respect for America's estuary since moving to the Chesapeake Bay region in 2014. As a climatologist, Dr. Allen has taught the geography of Virginia, the geography of Maryland, and draws on his personal experience exploring the region to help broaden the understanding of this place we call home.

ZOOM COURSE**MAPPING THE WORLD**

James O'Leary

Session I**Fridays, 9:30 a.m. (begins March 6)****No class on March 20. Makeup date April 3.****Fee: \$74**

Since ancient times, humans have chronicled the world from inscribed bones of our earliest ancestors to today's Google maps. See how geography shapes our view of the planet and how maps have fashioned the world we know today. Visit some of Earth's most isolated locales and places where conflicts still arise due to disputed borders and contested national boundary claims. Finally, explore our maps of other worlds and even the entire cosmos.

Jim O'Leary is a long-time science educator at East Coast museums, including the Franklin Institute and Maryland Science Center. Instructed thousands of students, families and teachers on space and Earth science topics.

**THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN MARYLAND**

Peter Levy

Sessions I and II**Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. (begins March 5)****Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)**

Traditionally, the civil rights movement has been associated with places and protests that took place in the Deep South, such as Montgomery and Selma, Alabama, and the Mississippi Delta. Yet a vibrant civil rights movement also arose in Maryland in the 20th century, one that sought to overcome Jim Crow in all its forms. As we trace this movement, from the 1930s through the mid-1970s, we will learn how Marylanders, from Lillie May Carroll Jackson, Carl Murphy, Thurgood Marshall and Clarence Mitchell, to Gloria Richardson, Pauli Murray, Walter Lively and Eddie Conway, as well thousands of lesser known students and community activists, fought for full equality through the courts, in the streets and with their voices and pens. Exploring their stories will enrich our understanding of the struggle for racial equality, not just in some distant locale but in our own backyards.

Peter B. Levy, Professor Emeritus, taught U.S. history for over thirty years at York College of Pennsylvania, where he offered courses on recent America and the civil rights movement. He is the author of over two dozen books and articles, and a member of the editorial board of Maryland Historical Magazine. Since retiring from teaching, he has written several historical dramas, including "Mrs. Richardson," which examines the civil rights movement in Cambridge, Maryland.



A HISTORY OF BALTIMORE'S AMAZING INDUSTRY

Jack Burkert

Session I and II

Tuesdays, 2:30 p.m. (begins March 3)

No class on March 24. Makeup class on May 5

Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)

From modest beginnings, Baltimore's unique blend of resources, location and a growing labor force made a sleepy riverside village into an industrial powerhouse. In this course, we will discuss the details of how this transformation occurred, the industries that led the way and the impact each of them had on the city and its people. We will discuss shipbuilding, the port of Baltimore, the railroad, and the canning, steel and garment industries. This is a story of a diverse group of industries, each producing a product that made a difference. It is also the story of the people that made positive changes in the lives of Baltimoreans.

Jack Burkert is a Baltimore native and a 1969 graduate of the University of Maryland, graduating with honors with a degree in history and education. His working life, some 40+ years, was spent in various educator roles, beginning in the Baltimore City Public School System, then as a staff member at the Pennsylvania State University, through private employers and then until his retirement in his own consulting firm. Jack worked as an educator at the Baltimore Museum of Industry. In recent years, he has presented several hundred Baltimore history programs to various adult audiences and written a book entitled, "Twentieth Century Baltimore."



GERMAN BALTIMORE AND THE WORLD WARS: Anarchists, Nazis and Those Who Fought Them

Jennifer Liles

Session I

Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. (begins March 5)

Fee: \$74

In this course, students will learn the history of German immigrants in Baltimore along with the organizations that existed in the city for the German population. What roles did German immigrants in Baltimore have in the political movements of the time, and how did they influence the outcomes of the World Wars?

Jennifer Liles is a public historian with a degree in public history from Stevenson University. She researches and works on projects related to the history of Baltimore and its people as well as industry, places and events that make Baltimore unique.



THE 1930S AND TODAY

Bill Barry

Sessions II

Thursdays, 2:30 p.m. (begins April 9)

Fee: \$74

With the political turbulence today, it is worth looking at another historical period that changed our country. This course will examine the New Deal, Social Security, the National Labor Relations Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act and federal support for the arts — then and now. Students will learn about the different social movements of the 1930s and will learn about specific legislation, passed in the 1930s that is still effective today.

Bill Barry is the retired director of labor studies at CCBC-Dundalk and a longtime instructor for the Osher at Towson University program.



MAJOR GENERAL MAURICE ROSE: UNSUNG HERO AND CULTURAL ICON OF WWII

Jonathan Cordish

Session II

Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. (begins April 9)

Fee: \$74

This course examines the career and legacy of Major General Maurice Rose, the highest-ranking American officer killed in action in Europe during World War II. One of the war's most consequential armored commanders, Rose led pivotal operations from Normandy and Saint-Lô to the Battle of the Bulge and the Ruhr, earning praise as “the best armored commander in the business.” His public memory, however, was contested. Raised in an observant Jewish household, Rose identified as Protestant during nearly three decades in uniform, as he navigated a deeply exclusionary officer corps. After his death in combat in March 1945, mainstream outlets cast him as the ideal, implicitly Protestant American soldier. By contrast, American Jewish newspapers proclaimed Rose the “Jewish General,” casting him as a proud communal standard-bearer for his birth faith and people. Through four illustrated lectures, this course reconstructs Rose's life and “afterlife,” from his battlefield leadership to the wartime contest over his identity. Participants will gain a clearer understanding of the wartime Army and American society — its ideals, its limits and the cultural debates that shaped how a wartime hero was remembered.

Jonathan Cordish holds a M.A. in military history with distinction from The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina. He has taught multiple courses at Osher on World War II, most recently on the U.S. decision to use atomic weapons against Japan. His current course grows out of archival research he conducted for his master's thesis on Maurice Rose.



ESPIONAGE IN HIGH HEELS: WOMEN SPIES FROM THE CIVIL WAR TO THE PRESENT

Barbara Ressin



UNDERCOVER

Daniel Sutton

Sessions II

Thursdays, 2:30 p.m. (begins April 9)

Fee: \$74

This course will explore the fascinating history of women in espionage, tracing their roles from the Civil War through modern-day intelligence operations. Students will learn about the untold stories of female spies who shaped wars, influenced diplomacy, and challenged gender expectations in covert work. Learn the hidden stories and unknown exploits of female spies such as Virginia Hall, who was born and raised in Baltimore, MD. As one of the most highly regarded spies in our government, she was feared by the Nazis and called The Limping Lady, because she had only one leg and used a prosthetic. Learn more about Virginia and other amazing women who navigated secrecy and danger in their native country and across the globe.

Barbara Ressin is a graduate of Towson University with a B.S. in education. She taught for three years in the Baltimore City Public School System, 25 years at the Beth Tfiloh Day School in the secular division, and as adjunct faculty member of Community College of Baltimore County at both the Owings Mills and Hunt Valley campuses, adjunct faculty member of Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University, adjunct faculty member of the Renaissance Academy for the Florida Gulf State University, member of Oasis faculty in Montgomery County under auspices of Johns Hopkins University, taught at Food For Thought Lectures, Kaleidoscope at Roland Park School, lectured for The Lecture Group, Western Howard County Senior Center, Friends of the Pikesville Library, North Oaks Retirement Community and various religious and philanthropic groups around the state.

Sessions I and II

Tuesdays, 1:00 p.m. (begins March 3)

Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)

This unique course provides a first-person account of one man's odyssey, taking you behind the scenes of his work as a federal undercover special agent working for the U.S. Government. You may know the Hollywood version, but in this course, you will learn about the real thing through the eyes of the instructor who worked as a special agent criminal investigator for 25 years, much of it working undercover. What does undercover work really entail? How do men and women in law enforcement and government carry out missions to protect and defend?

Daniel Sutton spent 25 years employed as a criminal investigator for the United States government for three different agencies. He conducted extremely sensitive criminal investigations with worldwide impact including cases investigating the Mafia and international arms dealers. Nearly half his career was spent working undercover.



DEMOCRACY, CORRUPTION AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY: WHERE WE'VE BEEN AND WHERE WE'RE HEADED

Douglas Pasternak

Sessions I and II

Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. (begins March 5)

Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)

Today, public accountability issues are front and center in our daily lives, on the news, in social media posts and in political debates. Ultimately, public accountability has a tremendous impact on all of us. This class will examine the unique roles of Congress, federal Inspector Generals (IGs) and the investigative media to hold public officials and private corporations accountable to the public. We will examine historic cases of public oversight, and the instructor's own personal experience as a former investigative reporter and senior congressional investigator will be utilized to provide first-hand accounts of how public accountability works — and sometimes does not. This course will take students inside the public accountability community to learn why the public should care deeply about public accountability, the unique challenges public accountability faces today in a heated political environment and the potential consequences for American democracy.

Douglas Pasternak is a two-time Emmy Award winning investigative reporter and managed investigative teams on three oversight committees in Congress. At U.S. News & World Report magazine, he authored hundreds of investigative articles. At NBC Nightly News, he produced hidden camera newscasts, and in Congress, he led scores of investigations, including Congress's investigation of the Boeing 737 MAX crashes. Over the past 20 years, he has provided dozens of talks to university students, congressional staff and government officials about the role of public accountability in our society.



CONSERVATION OF SPECIES: STORIES OF SCIENTISTS

Jody Johnson

ZOOM COURSE



NEW IDEAS IN COSMOLOGY, ASTRONOMY AND SPACE EXPLORATION

Shelley Bonus

Session I

Thursdays, 2:30 p.m. (begins March 5)

Fee: \$74

This course will explore the research and advocacy that scientists in the field of conservation take on. Students will learn about the conservation of mussels in freshwater streams of the Charlottesville, Virginia area; the conservation of honeybees in America through diagnosis and disease prevention; and the conservation of Asian and African elephants in Nepal and African nations. The renowned work of primatologists Jane Goodall and Dian Fossey in primate studies of chimpanzees and mountain gorillas, respectively, will also be discussed. What are the challenges and dangers that scientists face when studying different species? What are the techniques used to collect data? Guest speakers will share their expertise relating to their role in species conservation.

Jody Johnson, Ph.D., is a honeybee research scientist at the USDA lab in Beltsville, MD. A former educator in environmental science, physical science and chemistry, she has given 88 presentations in 12 U.S. states. She immerses herself in community outreach by promoting pollinators in farming communities, conservation projects, mentoring beekeepers, and welcoming bee-interested people to visit her hives. Recent work has involved conserving elephants in Tanzania using honeybees to deter deadly human-elephant conflict.

Sessions I and II

Fridays, 11:00 a.m. (begins March 6)

Fee: \$148 (\$74 for each session)

NOTE: This course will not be recorded.

The goal of this course is to intellectually excite students and provide them with a conversational understanding of the latest concepts and research regarding the origin of the universe, galaxies, neutron stars, black holes, gravitational waves and the latest insights regarding the ongoing search for biosignatures in our very own solar system. Thanks to advances in space-based technologies like the James Webb Space Telescope and land-based observatories like the Vera C. Rubin Observatory (which employs AI and houses the largest digital camera ever built), what we thought we knew about the fundamentals of cosmology, astronomy and space exploration is evolving at an extraordinary rate. A special lecture will address the progress being made in the officially undeclared space race to the Moon and/or to Mars by government agencies and commercial sectors from the United States, China, Europe and Russia. If available, an updated timeline will be provided regarding SpaceX's plans to launch uncrewed starships to Mars, and Blue Origin's plans to have a sustained human presence on the Moon and an eventual settlement on Mars, by developing a system to convert lunar soil (regolith) into essential resources like oxygen, metals and solar cells.

Shelley Bonus, an eclipse chaser and Osher Instructor for more than 20 years, is an astronomer, writer, lecturer, science translator and ZERO-GRAVITY FLYER. She was a Session Director and "the" Telescope Coordinator for the Mt. Wilson Observatory, home of the historic 100" Hooker telescope, for over 25 years. She wrote the content for Caltech's Infrared Astronomy website: COOLCOSMOS, a Solar System Guide for the Planetary Society, and created and presented the "Janet Planet and Space E! Tracy" planetarium shows and served as an on-call editor for NASA educational materials. A lifelong learner herself, when she's not chasing eclipses or lecturing on cruise ships around the world, Shelley specializes in teaching cosmology, astronomy and space exploration "update classes" to lifelong learners at various universities. Shelley has received a NASA Group Achievement Award for her work with Telescopes in Education, and the International Astronomical Union honored Shelley by naming Asteroid 10028 Bonus after her, for "her unique method of translating difficult scientific discoveries to the general public".



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND OTHER MODERN TECHNOLOGIES: Spring 2026 Edition

Guillermo Warley

ZOOM COURSE



LIVING WELL WITH COGNITIVE CHANGES

Emily Kearns

Session II

Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. (begins April 9)

Fee: \$74

This class covers a variety of technologies that are part of our everyday life and that are rapidly changing and increasingly affecting our interactions online, with businesses, and even socially. This course will present specific topics within this constantly changing and evolving field. Typical discussions include artificial intelligence (AI), as well as wireless communications, alternative sources of energy and more. These technologies are explained in non-technical terms and do not require any type of technical background to understand. When appropriate, ethical or social implications of these technologies will be discussed and examples and interesting cases highlighting the uses of these technologies will be presented.

Guillermo Warley is an electrical engineer with graduate degrees in electronics and signal processing. He has 40 years of experience designing technology products for several industries. Guillermo is a senior life member of the IEEE (Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers) and the SSIT (Society for the Social Implications of Technology). He has taught technology subjects at various Osher programs, including Towson University and American University. He has also taught in continuing education programs through Frederick Community College and the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain. He also has teaching experience at both graduate and undergraduate levels in electrical engineering topics.

Session II

Fridays, 9:30 a.m. (begins April 10)

Fee: \$74

NOTE: This course will not be recorded.

This course explores cognitive changes and dementia — signs and symptoms, key communication tips and resources, including self-care for caregivers/care partners and individuals living with memory changes, including dementia. Students in this course will gain a better understanding of dementia as an umbrella term. What are the signs and symptoms of dementia and when is there cause for concern? Learn key communication tips to support someone who is living with memory changes and get key resources for caregivers, care partners and individuals living with memory changes. We will discuss the pillars of brain health according to recent research and practices to support our own brain health.

Emily Kearns, Ph.D., is the coordinator for the community-based, multi-sector initiative, Dementia Friendly Baltimore County (DFBC). Emily's personal experience as a caregiver/care partner to her parents, who both lived with dementia, was life-changing, catapulting her into supporting those living with dementia. Emily earned a doctorate in sociology from Boston College and an Executive MBA from Northeastern University. She is also a Somatic Experiencing Practitioner (SEP), end of life doula, care, and consultant.

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

OSHER FAQs:

HOW CAN I GET IN TOUCH WITH OSHER STAFF?

The best way to reach the staff is to email osher@towson.edu. If you are not receiving emails from Osher, please let us know and we can include you on our email distribution list.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO BE AN OSHER MEMBER?

Membership runs from July 1 through June 30 and is \$60 per person. Courses are open to current members. [Join or renew your membership today](#). Your membership not only allows access to courses, it helps to sustain our lifelong learning community.

WHAT ELSE DOES OSHER OFFER?

Osher offers a wide variety of book clubs, discussion groups, and special interest groups. Announcements for these happenings are sent via our Osher email list.

HOW LONG ARE OSHER CLASSES?

Classes typically last for an hour and 15 minutes, unless otherwise stated.

CAN I SIGN UP FOR JUST ONE SESSION OF AN 8-WEEK COURSE?

Yes—but keep in mind that if you are signing up for the second session of an 8-week course, you will be missing the material covered in the first four weeks.

HOW DO I REGISTER ONLINE FOR CLASSES?

Online registration will open on February 3. Please review [these instructions \(PDF\)](#) before registering.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

Online Registration is strongly encouraged. If you wish to register by mail and pay with a check, you must also email osher@towson.edu to inform the Osher staff of the classes you wish to take.

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE SPRING 2026 REGISTRATION FORM

New Member ☐ Renewing Member ☐

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

To REGISTER ONLINE visit www.towson.edu/OsherRegistration

Session I (September 8 - October 3) • Session II (October 13 - November 7)

✓	TITLE	DAY	TIME	SESSION I	SESSION II	BOTH SESSIONS
ARTS, CULTURE & HUMANITIES						
	Beethoven: The Man and the Music	Tuesday	9:30 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$148)
	Unsung Heroes of Jazz	Wednesday	2:30 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$148)
	ZOOM: The Search for an American Sound	Monday	9:30 a.m.		<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	
	ZOOM: Two Art Fairs that Changed the World	Monday	9:30 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
	ZOOM: From Venuses to Chartres Cathedral	Monday	11:15 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$148)
	Great Women Photographers (Part 2)	Wednesday	9:30 a.m.		<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	
	Eight Plays Everyone Should Know, 2026 Ed.	Wednesday	1 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$148)
	Scorsese and DeNiro: The Early Collaborations	Thursday	1 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
	ZOOM: Flying Nun to Super Aunt--Sally Field	Monday	1 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
	ZOOM: Rugged Charisma--Robert Redford	Friday	1 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
	ZOOM: Irresistible Icon--Marilyn Monroe	Monday	1 p.m.		<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	
	ZOOM: The Great Film Detectives	Friday	1 p.m.		<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	
	ZOOM: Cormac McCarthy	Monday	2:30 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$148)
	Dogs in Literature, Myth, History, and Life	Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
	Robert Frost and His Poetry	Wednesday	2:30 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
	Aesthetics	Wednesday	11 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
HISTORY & SOCIAL SCIENCES						
	Great Civilizations of the Ancient Near East	Tuesday	11 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$148)
	Unpacking Maryland's Geography	Wednesday	11 a.m.		<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	
	ZOOM: Mapping the World	Friday	9:30 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
	The Civil Rights Movement in Maryland	Thursday	9:30 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$140)
	A History of Baltimore's Amazing Industry	Tuesday	2:30 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$140)
	German Baltimore and the World Wars	Thursday	1 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
	The 1930s and Today	Thursday	2:30 p.m.		<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	
	Major General Maurice Rose	Thursday	1 p.m.		<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	
	Espionage in High Heels: Women Spies	Thursday	2:30 p.m.		<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	
	Undercover	Tuesday	1 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$148)
	Democracy, Corruption & Public Accountability	Thursday	11 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$148)
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & WELLNESS						
	Conservation of Species	Thursday	2:30 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		
	ZOOM: New Ideas in Cosmology & Astronomy	Friday	1 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	<input type="checkbox"/> Both (\$148)
	Artificial Intelligence, Other Modern Tech.	Thursday	11 a.m.		<input type="checkbox"/> Session II (\$74)	
	ZOOM: Living Well with Cognitive Changes	Friday	9:30 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> Session I (\$74)		

IMPORTANT: Members mailing forms and payment MUST email osher@towson.edu to ensure receipt & processing.

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Two 4-week or One 8-week course	\$148
Three 4-week or One 4-week and One 8-week	\$222
Unlimited number of courses	\$230

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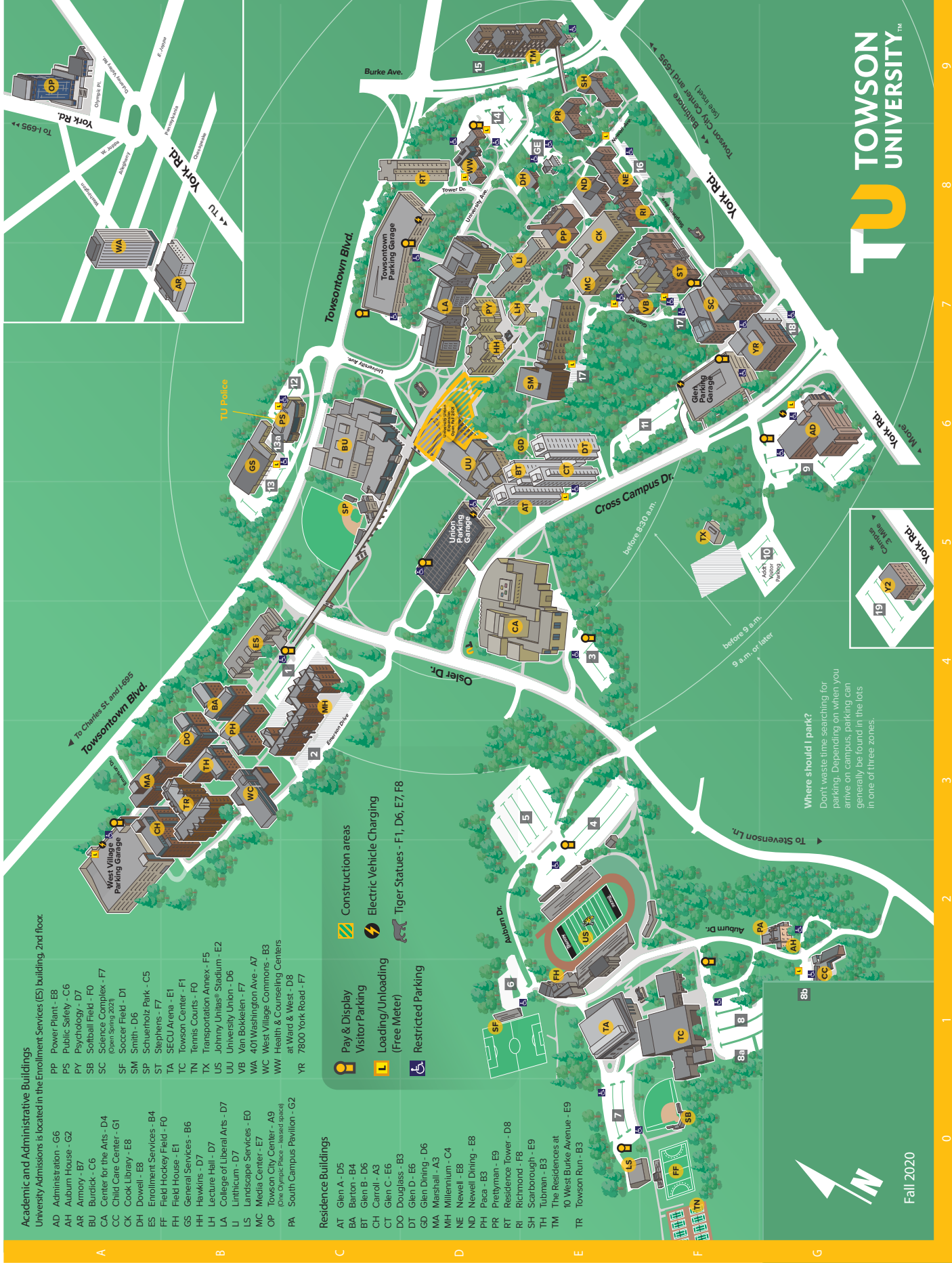
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