OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE at UMass Boston

Osher Online™ in collaboration with Northwestern University School of Professional Studies

Osher Online is a national program that is offered to a select number of Osher Institutes and managed by the Osher National Resource Center (NRC) out of Northwestern University.

These unique programs allow OLLI members from across the country to take courses together. These offerings are separate from the regular courses OLLI at UMass Boston sponsors and as such, are treated as special events that are open to all current OLLI members.

There is a $45 fee assessed for each course you register to help cover the cost of providing this program for our members. This $45 event fee is applicable to all OLLI membership levels. Payment will be due a week prior to the program starting. Most of these winter programs start in January and end late February/early-March. *OLLI members must be current members at the time of registration as well as throughout the course's duration*.

Registration overview:

1. OLLI at UMass Boston will handle the registration of these classes. **Registration will open at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, November 13 through OLLI's online registration system**. Unlike our usual spring or fall courses, **these programs will fill on a first-come, first-served basis**. Please do not email or call in your request.
2. Only 13 seats are given to OLLI at UMass Boston for each program. To allow as many OLLI members as possible to enjoy these unique classes, OLLI members may only register for one Osher Online program. If space remains after December 4, members may then register for additional Osher Online programs.
3. OLLI at UMass Boston will provide the class roster to the NRC. The NRC will then email the confirmation back to each student and provide a username and password so the student can access their course information, including handouts and communications with the study leaders, on the NRC's online course portal.
4. There will be an orientation via Zoom on January 12, 2027 at 2:00 p.m. on how to access and use your Osher Online course portal. Zoom information will be sent via the NRC office. This orientation session will be recorded as well.

Osher Online™

A program of the Osher National Resource Center
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WINTER2027

50 Years of Star Wars

In 2027, we will mark the 50th anniversary of "Star Wars," George Lucas' underdog film that became a cultural phenomenon. We will explore how its sequels, prequels, comic books, video games, and action figures made a galaxy far, far away worthy of serious study and fan appreciation. We will consider Lucas' inspirations, the legacy of "Episode IV: A New Hope," political themes, questions of authorship, and the influence of fan culture.



Click here to view course promo video

YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Marc DiPaolo



Marc DiPaolo, PhD, is an assistant professor of humanities at Moraine Valley Community College. He has written the autobiographical novel *Fake Italian* (2021), and the academic books *Fire and Snow: Climate Fiction from the Inklings to Game of Thrones* (2018) and *War, Politics, and Superheroes* (2011). He co-edited the essay collection *Italian/American Fantastika*, and books on film directors Yasujiro Ozu and Mike Leigh. He has been interviewed on NPR, BBC4, and in the AMC docuseries *Robert Kirkman's Secret History of Comics*.

THURSDAYS, JANUARY 21 THROUGH FEBRUARY 25

4pmPT | 5pmMT | 6pmCT | 7pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Thursday, January 21
- Thursday, January 28
- Thursday, February 4
- Thursday, February 11
- Thursday, February 18
- Thursday, February 25

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.

Osher Online™

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WINTER2027

August Wilson's American Cycle-Building Fences and Homes: The Latter Plays

August Wilson was the first African American playwright to have a Broadway theater bear his name. In this course, we will read, watch, and examine the final five plays in Wilson's American Cycle. We will focusing on *Fences, Two Trains Running, Jitney!, King Hedley II,* and *Radio Golf*, tracing his powerful interpretation, celebration, and perseveration of African American culture. We will discuss how his characters were in search of America's promises of life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness and their true identities.



Click here to view course promo video

YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Ladrica Menson-Furr



Ladrica Menson-Furr, PhD, is assistant dean of undergraduate programs and associate professor of African American literature. Menson-Furr is the author of *August Wilson's Fences* and *August Wilson's Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, and has published on Zora Neale Hurston and Pearl Cleage. She has led academic programs in African American studies and served as a Provost's Fellow and a Tennessee Board of Regents' Maxine Smith Fellow.

WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 3 THROUGH MARCH 10

2pmPT | 3pmMT | 4pmCT | 5pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Wednesday, February 3
- Wednesday, February 10
- Wednesday, February 17
- Wednesday, February 24
- Wednesday, March 3
- Wednesday March 10

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.

Osher Online™

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WINTER2027

Broadway Musicals: A Fascinating History

Musicals have shaped American theater, from Tin Pan Alley-driven comedies of the early twentieth century to the integrated classics of midcentury. In this course, we will explore book musicals, concept musicals, and the rise of European mega-productions. We will spotlight influential composers, lyricists, writers, choreographers, directors, and performers. With the help of audiovisuals, we will study landmark shows including *Oklahoma!, My Fair Lady, Show Boat, Guys and Dolls, Hair, Cabaret, Rent, Wicked, Hamilton,* and more.



Click here for course promo video

YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Emanual Abramovits



Emanuel Abramovits is a mechanical engineer and has been a concert promoter for over two decades. He is involved in events by international artists like Itzhak Perlman, Gustavo Dudamel, Sarah Brightman, Roger Hodgson, ASIA, Journey, and Kenny G. Abramovits has designed and staged 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, releasing books and organizing film cycles, concerts, and art exhibits.

MONDAYS, JANUARY 25 THROUGH MARCH 1

2pmPT | 3pmMT | 4pmCT | 5pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Monday, January 25
- Monday, February 1
- Monday, February 8
- Monday, February 15
- Monday, February 22
- Monday, March 1

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.

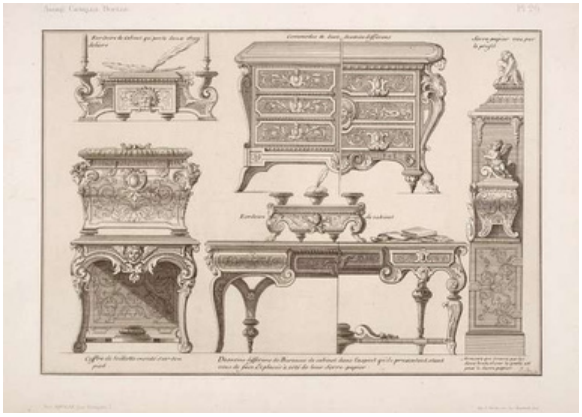
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WINTER2027

Famous Furniture Makers and Their Fabulous Creations

Throughout history, furniture makers and decorative artists often have been viewed as secondary to painters and sculptors, yet furniture and decorative objects are important works of art in their own right. This course will trace furniture styles in Europe and America from ancient times to the end of the 18th century, focusing on marquetry, gilding, lacquering, upholstery, mechanization, and other techniques, while considering the artists, patrons, materials, and methods behind these creations.



Click here to view course promo video

YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Eleanor Schrader



Eleanor Schrader is an award-winning educator, lecturer, and author. She lectures and leads tours worldwide on art and architectural history. She has been named a distinguished instructor at UCLA Extension, where she teaches history of architecture, interior design, furniture, and decorative arts. She has completed graduate work in fine and decorative arts at Sotheby's Institute in London and New York. She has served as a design review commissioner for the City of Beverly Hills and currently serves on the board of directors of the John Lautner Foundation.

TUESDAYS, JANUARY 19 THROUGH FEBRUARY 23

12pmPT | 1pmMT | 2pmCT | 3pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Tuesday, January 19
- Tuesday, January 26
- Tuesday, February 2
- Tuesday, February 9
- Tuesday, February 16
- Tuesday, February 23

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.

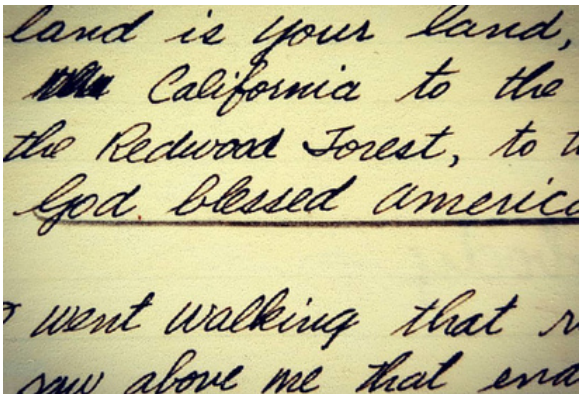
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WINTER2027

Folk Singers, the FBI, and the Second Red Scare

Some of the most prominent folk singers of the 20th century, including Woody Guthrie, Sis Cunningham, Pete Seeger, and Burl Ives, were also political activists with ties to the American Communist Party. As a result, the FBI, along with other government and right-wing organizations, kept meticulous files on them and worked to push them out of the cultural realm. Through music, video, news clippings, and records from Freedom of Information Act filings, we will explore these artists' lives and the systematic ways they were subjected to government surveillance and suppression.



Click here to view course promo video

YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Aaron Leonard



Aaron Leonard is an author and American historian whose writing focuses on the interplay of radicalism and governmental repression in the 20th century. Among his books are *Heavy Radicals, The Folk Singers and the Bureau, and Menace of Our Time: The Long War on American Communism*. Leonard has a BA in Social Sciences and History, magna cum laude, from New York University.

THURSDAYS, JANUARY 21 THROUGH FEBRUARY 25

8amPT | 9amMT | 10amCT | 11amET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Thursday, January 21
- Thursday, January 28
- Thursday, February 4
- Thursday, February 11
- Thursday, February 18
- Thursday, February 25

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.

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WINTER2027

From Gregorian Chant to Bohemian Rhapsody: The Evolution of Vocal Groups

This multimedia course will celebrate the expressive power of voices coming together. With greater depth and a wider lens than this previous Osher Online course, we will trace how vocal groups have shaped music for nearly a thousand years. We will explore duos, trios, quartets, and larger ensembles across genres, from sacred chant to jazz, pop, rock, R&B, and beyond. We will celebrate iconic performers, unexpected connections, and how their legacies live on through contemporary groups.



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YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Mike Agron



Music Aficionado Mike Agron, raised in LA's entertainment scene, is a former high-tech executive and entrepreneur turned storyteller. He creates dynamic, multimedia seminars exploring music and film for the Sacramento Renaissance Society, numerous OLLIs nationwide, Osher Online, Encore Learning, and other lifelong-learning programs. This winter, he returns for his third seminar series with Osher Online —bringing curiosity, context, and great music to audiences who love to learn by listening.

WEDNESDAYS, JANUARY 27 THROUGH MARCH 3

12pmPT | 1pmMT | 2pmCT | 3pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Wednesday, January 27
- Wednesday, February 3
- Wednesday February 10
- Wednesday, February 17
- Wednesday, February 24
- Wednesday, March 3

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.

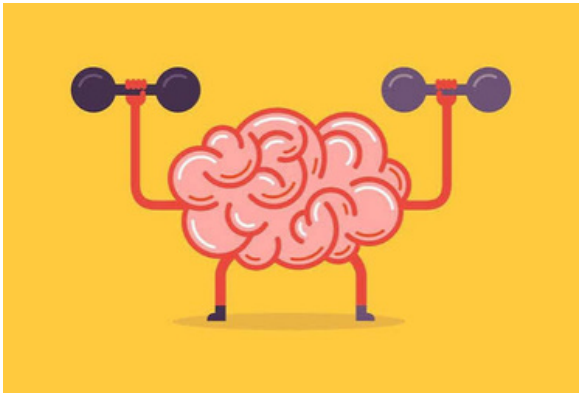
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WINTER2027

Functional Healthspan: Measuring What Matters

This hands-on course explores healthspan, the length of time a person lives in good health, through the lens of functional ability. We will examine how strength, endurance, mobility, flexibility, and cognition support independence and quality of life. Each session will blend evidence-based instruction with active self-assessments to help identify personal blind spots. By the end of the course, we will develop a personalized 12-week plan for building and maintaining function in daily life.



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YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Scott Fulton



Scott Fulton is recognized internationally as a “Redefiner” in the positive aging space. Fulton’s research focuses on improving adult aging outcomes. He teaches lifestyle Medicine and Aging, is an American College of Lifestyle Medicine member, and sits on the True Health Initiative Council. His book, *WHEALTHSPAN, More Years, More Moments, More Money,* hit #1 on Amazon. Fulton is a multiple Ironman triathlete and lives in a demonstration home he designed and built for the future of optimal aging across a lifespan.

MONDAYS, JANUARY 25 THROUGH MARCH 1

8amPT | 9amMT | 10amCT | 11amET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Monday, January 25
- Monday, February 1
- Monday, February 8
- Monday, February 15
- Monday, February 22
- Monday, March 1

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WINTER2027

Funny You Should Mention It: TV Sitcoms in the 21st Century

In this course, we will explore the evolution of the half-hour comedy, from "I Love Lucy," "All in the Family," "Soap," "The Cosby Show," and "Seinfeld" to today's meta humor, mockumentaries, cringe comedy, and sad comedies. We will examine how sitcoms changed as American culture changed and broadcast television evolved, considering shifts in writing, structure, pacing, characters, and expectations. Together, we will ask why today's funniest half-hour comedies do not always have to be funny.



Click here to view course promo video

YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Jim McKairnes



Jim McKairnes is a former CBS Television executive who writes and teaches about the history of television. He has served on the faculties of DePaul University, Temple University, and Middle Tennessee State University. He published *All in the Decade: 70 Things About 70s TV That Turned Ten Years Into a Revolution*. Drawing on decades of experience in the industry and the classroom, McKairnes offers perspectives on how television has shaped and reflected American culture.

MONDAYS, JANUARY 25 THROUGH MARCH 1

12pmPT | 1pmMT | 2pmCT | 3pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Monday, January 25
- Monday, February 1
- Monday, February 8
- Monday, February 15
- Monday, February 22
- Monday, March 1

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WINTER2027

Living off The Laughter: The History of Comedy in America, Part II

This is a history course with a laugh track. We will explore American history, using humor as a lens for understanding the 20th and 21st centuries. We will discuss how comedy was shaped by and responsive to American society, and how comedians influenced and shaped American life. We will focus on comedy auteurs and incubators, standup, sitcoms, and political satire. We will consider how Americans laughed across generations, what and whom they laughed at, and what that reveals about American life.



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YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Eddy Friedfeld



Eddy Friedfeld is a film and entertainment journalist and historian. Friedfeld co-authored *Caesar's Hours* with Sid Caesar, *Directed by James Burrows* with James Burrows, and worked with Mel Brooks on *All About Me*. He was senior consultant for the Emmy-nominated *Make 'Em Laugh* and a consulting producer on *Funny You Never Knew*. He has produced tributes to major entertainers including George Carlin, Paul Newman, Dick Van Dyke, among others. He teaches at Yale, NYU, and the Tisch School of the Arts.

WEDNESDAYS, JANUARY 27 THROUGH MARCH 3

2pmPT | 3pmMT | 4pmCT | 5pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Wednesday, January 27
- Wednesday, February 3
- Wednesday, February 10
- Wednesday, February 17
- Wednesday, February 24
- Wednesday, March 3

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WINTER2027

Paper Trails: The History of US Mass Media Ownership

In this course, we will trace the history of American journalism and examine how control of the press has shifted, from political patrons and penny-press advertisers to broadcast regulators, cable moguls, and today's social media platforms. We will consider how these changes shaped journalism's relationship to democracy and public trust, while developing a more critical eye for the structural forces that influence news coverage and the institutions working to sustain journalism as a public good.



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YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Caroline Nappo



Caroline Nappo, PhD, is an independent scholar with interests in the history of libraries and information institutions, information as a public good, and the political economy of information. She has an MS and PhD in Library and Information Science from the University of Illinois.

WEDNESDAYS, JANUARY 20 THROUGH FEBRUARY 24

4pmPT | 5pmMT | 6pmCT | 7pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Wednesday, January 20
- Wednesday, January 27
- Wednesday, February 3
- Wednesday, February 10
- Wednesday, February 17
- Wednesday, February 24

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.

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WINTER2027

Popular Cultures of the Middle East

We will survey popular cultures in the Arabic-speaking Middle East, exploring the Southwest Asia and North Africa region through audio, visual, and literary production. Through cinema, literature, oral traditions, and music, we will consider how communities express cultural, political, and social identities in relation to colonialism, nation-building, and globalization. We will examine anti-colonial movements, the global sixties, the digital age, the Arab Spring, and how youth, women, and minorities challenge dominant social and political forces.



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YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Nour Hodeib



Nour Hodeib's scholarship focuses on sonic countercultures of the Global South, exploring popular culture and musical dissent during the "global sixties." A doctoral candidate in history at the Graduate Center, CUNY, Hodeib is writing a dissertation on leftist sonic cultures during the Lebanese Civil War. He holds an M.Phil. and M.A. in history, and an M.A. in Middle East studies from the Graduate Center, CUNY, and a B.A. in political science and international affairs from the Lebanese American University.

MONDAYS, JANUARY 25 THROUGH MARCH 1

2pmPT | 3pmMT | 4pmCT | 5pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Monday, January 25
- Monday, February 1
- Monday, February 8
- Monday, February 15
- Monday, February 22
- Monday, March 1

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.

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WINTER2027

The Last 100 Years of Russian Rulers: From Stalin to Putin

In this course, we will examine 100 years of Russian history through the personalities of its rulers: Joseph Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev, Leonid Brezhnev, Mikhail Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, and Vladimir Putin. Each week, we will explore one leader's background, rise to power, and legacy. We will consider how each leader's personality and peculiarities shaped Russian history, how each leader's rule ended, and why all of these leaders were men.



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YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Asya Pereltsvaig



Asya Pereltsvaig received degrees in English and History from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a PhD in Linguistics from McGill University. She taught at Yale and Stanford. Her expertise is in language and history, and the relationship between them. Her most recent book is *Languages of the World: An Introduction*.

WEDNESDAYS, JANUARY 27 THROUGH MARCH 3

10amPT | 11amMT | 12pmCT | 1pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Wednesday, January 27
- Wednesday, February 3
- Wednesday, February 10
- Wednesday, February 17
- Wednesday, February 24
- Wednesday, March 3

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WINTER2027

Today's Technology: How Does It Work?

Technology's pace continues to accelerate. In this introductory course, we will build a general understanding of several important advances, including the internet and cloud computing, cellphones and social media, robotics and 3D printing, self-driving vehicles, blockchain and cryptocurrency, and AI. No prior technical knowledge is required. We will take a broad, overview of these complex subjects, with an emphasis on building understanding rather than exploring each subject in depth or debating ethical questions.



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YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Elizabeth Burnette



Elizabeth Burnette earned a BS in engineering physics from Cornell University, then worked on Space Shuttle experiments at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. She later earned a master's degree in astrophysics from the University of Pittsburgh. Burnette has taught courses in astrophysics, physics and science.

WEDNESDAYS, JANUARY 20 THROUGH FEBRUARY 24

8amPT | 9amMT | 10amCT | 11amET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Wednesday, January 20
- Wednesday, January 27
- Wednesday, February 3
- Wednesday, February 10
- Wednesday, February 17
- Wednesday, February 24

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WINTER2027

Uncertain by Nature: Quantum Mechanics and Nuclear Chemistry

What does it mean for a particle to be in two places at once and why should a chemist care? We will explore quantum mechanics and nuclear chemistry. We will examine wave-particle duality, wavefunctions, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, and Schrödinger's famous cat. We will explore fission, fusion, radioactive decay, carbon dating, and the long shadow of the Manhattan Project. From Hiroshima to Chernobyl to today's energy debates, nuclear science has never been just science.



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YOUR INSTRUCTOR: John Hendrickson



John Hendrickson, PhD is a teaching professor in the School of Molecular Sciences at Arizona State University. He holds a PhD in chemistry and is the author of the textbook *Chemistry in the World*. His academic work focuses on science communication, the reciprocal relationship between science and society.

THURSDAYS, JANUARY 28 THROUGH MARCH 4

12pmPT | 1pmMT | 2pmCT | 3pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Thursday, January 28
- Thursday, February 4
- Thursday, February 11
- Thursday, February 18
- Thursday, February 25
- Thursday, March 4

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.

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WINTER2027

Women, Sainthood, and Power

This course explores the lives of female saints through history, religion, psychology, women's and gender studies, and cultural studies. Through figures such as Joan of Arc, Teresa of Avila, Rose of Lima, Frances Cabrini, and others, participants will examine women whose strength, complexity, and influence challenge narrow stereotypes of sainthood. Their stories reveal strategies of resistance, adaptation, and leadership within the limits of their times and invite reflection on their relevance today.



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YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Olivia Espin



Oliva Espín is professor emerita in the department of women's studies at San Diego State University and the California School of Professional Psychology of Alliant International University. A native of Cuba, she received her BA in Psychology from the University of Costa Rica and her PhD from the University of Florida, specializing in counseling and therapy with women from different cultures and in Latin American Studies. She did post-doctoral work at Harvard University with a fellowship from the National Institute of Mental Health.

TUESDAYS, FEBRUARY 2 THROUGH MARCH 9

2pmPT | 3pmMT | 4pmCT | 5pmET

Each live session is 90 minutes

- Tuesday, February 2
- Tuesday, February 9
- Tuesday, February 16
- Tuesday, February 23
- Tuesday, March 2
- Tuesday, March 9

To register, please contact your local Osher Institute.