

**Road Scholar Institute Network  
Curriculum Ideas  
March 2015**

**FROM CALVIN ACADEMY FOR LIFELONG LEARNERS**

**All About the Puritans**

If you hear the word Puritan, do you have a mental image of a somber-looking man in black clothes with a big black hat? Come find out more about the history of the Puritans in England and in the new world, and learn about the ways in which these Christians' worldview played an important role in shaping the society and faith of so many in the early modern era. This class will be taught through lectures, videos, and discussion, and will cover the origins of Puritanism in both England and in New England, looking at the Puritans' theology, worship, family life, and the challenges faced by the Puritans in their day.

**What Happens to Children Who are Taken from Their Parents?**

Child welfare services serve large numbers of American children. Over 200,000 children enter the system annually and leave about two years later. The services provided during that time are major factors that determine their future. The course will include history of the service and describe factors that caused it to be what it is, with emphasis on what can be done to improve it.

**Revisionist Threats to the World Order from Radical Islamic Groups, Iran, Russia, and China**

How states trade with each other, preserve the environment, protect human rights, control armaments and conflicts, and settle disputes over territory and resources are just some of the many issues that are determined by sets of global rules (mainly treaties) and institutions (for example, The UN, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization). Together, they make up what is called "the world order." As the leading post-World War II power, the US, more than any other state, has shaped the world order that has emerged since the end of the War. This world order has not only served American interests well, but for the most part, the rest of the world too. It has been a boon to global economic growth, promoted democratization around the world, and helped contain and overcome the greatest threat to the world order — the Soviet Empire. Now the world order faces new threats, most notably from Radical Islamic Groups, Iran, Russia, and China. The threats from each party will be assessed in turn in the five sessions of the course, and three questions will be addressed in each case.

1. What are the nature and origins of the threats?
2. How serious are the threats to the world order, and to American interests, in particular?
3. What should the US do, and not do, to counter the threats?

**About Baseball as a Liberal Art**

This course will approach baseball, the "Great American Game," from a whimsical perspective that sees baseball as a liberal art, and will incorporate the history of the game, anecdotes, myths surrounding the game, its larger-than-life figures, past and present developments, reasons for baseball's fascination, and much more. Course participants will be invited to contribute their own insights, memories, and experiences as fans. Both women and men are warmly welcome to join in.

1st Inning: Ancient History

2nd Inning: Contemporary History

3rd Inning: Great Artists and their Works

4th Inning: Theological and Philosophical Reflections

### **Epidemics and Their Impacts**

This three-week course will consider the causes and impacts of three major epidemics on human populations from the 14<sup>th</sup> century until today: the Black Death in the 1340s and 1350s, the influenza epidemic after World War I, and the current Ebola epidemic. We will examine the various approaches and reactions of government leaders, medical personnel, and clergy, and we will seek to understand the wider impact of these diseases on society, the economy, politics, and faith. The course will feature illustrated lectures, short readings, discussions, and video clips.

### **Islam: Origins and Expansion with Case Studies**

This course will highlight the nature and mission of Islam in the post-modern world and help us understand why Islam is presented as a peaceful and tolerant religion by Muslims in the western world. Is it a religion of peace or is it a path of power to religious-political states? Did Islam expand by invasions or by preaching? What is the status of non-Muslims under the law of Islamic Sharia? All Muslims are not terrorists, but why are most terrorists Muslims? Was Muhammad really a prophet or was he a politician? What are major theological differences between Islam and Christianity? Is *Umma* (Islamic nations) really a unifying factor for Muslims in the world? Are Islam and Christianity from the same origin and heading toward same kingdom? How does this knowledge shape our interactions with Muslims we know?

Session 1: Mohammed's life

Session 2: Expansion during Mohammed's life and soon after his death

Session 3: Is Islam peaceful? Dar-ul-Islam (The House of Islam) and Dar-ul-Harab (The House of War): the theological underpinnings of expansion

Session 4: Case study: Medieval Spain

Session 5: Case study: Pakistan, from Islamization to Blasphemization

Session 6: Case study: The United States

### **Is de Tocqueville's America Ours?**

After touring the young United States in the early 1830s, the French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville wrote one of the classic accounts of American life and character, *Democracy in America*. In this class we will read excerpts from that book on such topics as politics, religion, race, and the arts to see (1) what impressed de Tocqueville about America, for better or worse, and (2) the extent to which the country has – or has not – changed since his time. Think of this class as your own tour of “America, then and now.”

### **Latino Life in West Michigan: A Journey of Hope**

Explore the hopes and dreams, frustrations and barriers that Latino people in West Michigan face. Among the topics local experts will address are the following: education, housing, youth concerns, finances, banking, religion, pastors, spiritual life, and the arts and humanities in the ever-growing Latino community. Latinos comprise between 15% and 20% of the total Grand Rapids population and 76% of the people living in the Roosevelt Park area.

## **FROM EXPLORERS LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE AT SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY**

### **Alternatives to Capitalism**

New economy entities that counter corporate capitalism – moving from “Shock Doctrine” tactics (Naomi Klein) to those promoting an “ownership” society as promulgated by many economists and movements.

### **Engineering in Medicine**

Back by popular demand, this will be a repeat of the Spring 2014 course. With the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, engineers began working with physicians to create new methods and equipment for diagnosis and treatment of diseases as well as improved prostheses. Advanced computer technology brings an amazing range of innovations to enhance medical procedures and equipment.

### **The Jewish Diaspora – How Your Family Got From There to Here**

When the Romans expelled Jews from Judea, they became “leaves before the wind” forced into a diaspora with many tears and few joys. This course will follow Jews living a precarious existence as they persevered through centuries in exile until they found a safe haven in reborn Israel.

## **FROM ADULT LEARNING INSTITUTE AT COLUMBIA-GREENE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

### **Keepers of the Flame: An Introduction to Family History Research, Part 1**

Some commonly held but inaccurate ideas about family history research is that ‘it is boring’, ‘necessarily expensive’, ‘just deals with dates and places’, ‘impossible for the average person to find out things about their elitists and snobs’. All not true.

This introduction to family history research deals not only with the HOW TO of genealogical research, but also the WHY TO. It is divided into two sessions. Participants may sign up for either, or for the greatest benefit, both sessions. Participants are requested to bring with them as much information as they currently have about the birth, marriage and death of their parents and grandparents.

## **CLEMENT MANOR CENTER FOR ENRICHMENT LIFELONG LEARNING**

### **Jack Ma**

Ma is the founder of Alibaba — the Chinese equivalent of eBay and Amazon combined, with sales of \$248 billion last year. As part of the continuing transformation of the Chinese economy, he has made it possible for many Chinese to buy almost anything from home. Highly respected around the world, he is now chairman of the board of the Nature Conservancy in China — determined to protect the environment there.

### **Awaken Your Inner Sherlock**

Curious people do life better. They are healthier, happier, more satisfied with their relationships, better able to handle uncertainty and more likely to preserve their mental faculties in old age. In this interactive class, you will learn how to unleash your curiosity and lead a more fulfilling life.

## **LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE AT JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

### **Monuments Men” Revisited: Artworks as Prisoners of War**

What happens to artworks in museums and private collections during wartime? The recent film *Monuments Men* presents the Allies’ attempts to save several masterpieces during World War II, but

there were many other dramatic examples. The class begins with an introduction to European public and private collections in the early twentieth century and explores the “capture” of artworks by the Nazis. The rape of private Jewish collections and Hitler’s plans for a huge art museum will be discussed. The class concludes with the ongoing search for lost masterpieces and issues of legal ownership and restitution of artworks today.

### **Swing Music: Where Art Meets Entertainment**

The Swing Era in American music is the only time in which fine art and entertainment have existed on equal footing. This course will survey the influences that shaped this music, the figures who achieved prominence, and the legacy that remained after it ended. The Swing Era is not defined by music alone; dance, fashion and language all were woven together during this period to create its identity, and these elements will be addressed as well. Major figures that will be discussed include Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, the Dorsey Brothers, and Glenn Miller as well as the soloists and vocalists who became prominent during this era.

### **Chiclets with Bananas: A Study on Brazilian Music**

Brazilian music is often associated with carnival, samba and choro, suggesting vibrant rhythms that are played at lively, energetic tempi. What are the characteristics of a samba, and what does choro really mean? This class will study these and other main Brazilian musical genres, how they emerged, and how they evolved in both popular and classical music.

### **Down Rural Roads**

Local rural roads lead to vestiges of old American farms that hint of our agrarian past. Tyre and Jane Yancey have traveled the back roads of the Shenandoah Valley photographing and documenting farm buildings and folk art. This course addresses the evolution of silos, the architecture and function of old barns (many of which reflect the German and Swiss heritage of their builders), the changing landscape of the farming community, and folk art. Here we can glimpse our historical past. The last class will feature a related field trip that provides additional glimpses into local history.

### **Mountain Sounds, Cultures and Stories**

Join this multi-faceted class that will reverberate with the music, voices and cultures from the Blue Ridge Mountains, across the Shenandoah Valley, and from the Appalachians.

## **FROM DAVIDSON LEARNS**

### **Baseball and Society:**

1930s to the present

Baseball weaves a thread through generations of our society. Apart from its obvious entertainment impact, baseball overlaps with our history of presidents, wars, economy, media, politics, and geography. The sport also reflects our attitudes about race, ethnicity and morals. Dr. Barto aims to shed new light on old perceptions, debunk myths, and encourage participants to debate past and present themes. In short, this course will explore baseball both between and outside the lines.

Topics will cover the period from Jackie Robinson's appearance to the current time.

### **Science and Society:**

The Journey to Cognizance from Chaos

Science and technology stimulate the very fabric of society and daily life. Therefore, appropriate public policy necessitates a scientifically literate populace. Likewise, culture, religion, and psychology

have played major roles in the scientific advancement of humans from the Bronze Age to modern day. Hence, this course will take a holistic approach to science's role in society via several key questions. What is the nature of science; what distinguishes science from pseudoscience? What are the strengths, limitations, and weaknesses of science? Are there moral and ethical limitations on scientific advancement? Where do religion and culture fit into scientific advancement? The course will also explore in some detail the "origins" of the Universe, Earth, and ultimately mankind.

Required book: Robert Park, [Voodoo Science: The Road from Foolishness to Fraud](#), Oxford University Press 2001.

### **Southern Women:**

Understanding Scarlett and Mammy

This course will examine the history of black and white women in the American South, exploring what in their past has made them unique and why they continue to intrigue us today. We will move from early colonial times up to the present to understand if and why southern women are unique. Lectures and discussion, with some examination of primary sources provided by professor.

## **FROM OLLI AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

### **Explorations in Women's History and Biography**

This course explores women's history through the lives of ten remarkable women between the American Revolution and the present. From first lady Abigail Adams to anti-ERA campaigner Phyllis Schlafly, and from Margaret Sanger to Betty Friedan, we will trace the dynamics of women's public activism, whether the cause was antislavery or suffrage, better designed kitchens or access to contraception. Text: Nancy F Cott, et al eds., *Root of Bitterness: Documents of the Social History of American Women, Second Edition*, Northeastern University Press, Boston, 1996. (ISBN: I-55553-256-X Paperback).

### **The Rise and Decline of Faculty Governance**

Tracing the history of faculty involvement in college and university governance, we will consider how the professionalization of college faculty led to their greater role in institutional decision making and to higher standards for American higher education, while recent trends threaten to undermine the faculty's role in governance and the quality of American colleges and universities. Text: *The Rise and Decline of Faculty Governance* by Larry Gerber, Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2014.