Winter 2010

Long-Courses

- The American Revolution
- Western Civilization III: History of the Roman Revolution
- Film Odyssey: Hollywood and The Great Depression
- Scriptures Lost and Found
- Contemporary Middle Eastern Politics
- Bone Detectives in the Lab
- Western Civilization IV: History of the Roman Empire
- The Glamour of Grammar
- A Brief History of Jazz
- Lessons from the World's Best Investors

Short-Courses

- The Body in the Woods
- Richard Henry Dana: A Yankee in Mexican California
- Fostering the Spirit Within
- Ethics of Food & Agriculture
- American Short Stories
- Behind the Scenes of "Playboy of the Western World"

---

Long-Courses

The American Revolution—taught by Bob Senkewicz
Over the past decade, there has been an outpouring of biographies on the “Founding Fathers [and Mothers.]” But, in the fast-changing revolutionary world of the 21st century, can we really learn anything from the 18th century American Revolution? The answer is a resounding “yes.” The colonial and revolutionary eras of our country witnessed the dynamic interplay of a host of issues that are still very much with us: religion and politics, economics and justice, tradition and innovation, “Euro-centrism” and localism, representation and democracy, and a host of others. In this course, we will examine the Revolution, and the Colonial Era which led up to it, with an eye towards seeing what the 18th century has to tell us about our contemporary world. Students who are interested in optional reading should obtain a copy of The American Revolution by Gordon Wood.
Western Civilization III & IV
The Western Civilization sequence continues this quarter with two classes on Rome. There are no pre-requisites for the sequence, and each class is completely independent. Sign up for one or both of them—but be forewarned—this sequence is very popular and the classes quickly sell out.

Western Civilization III:—taught by William Greenwalt
A History of the Roman Revolution: From the Gracchi to Augustus
Join Professor Greenwalt, as he examines one of the most interesting periods in Roman history. There have never been a people anywhere, at any time, more like modern Americans than the ancient Romans. This course will survey the emergence of Res Publica from its royal predecessor, the development of uniquely Roman mores (political, cultural and social), the evolution of an initially small and threatened city into an imperialistic dynamo whose rule extended over three continents, and the troubles which were brought on by an excess of success. It will also survey Rome's epic wars, including especially those with Carthage, and, the Revolution which undermined republican government.

Film Odyssey: Hollywood and The Great Depression—taught by Mark Larson
The Great Depression found its way into every kind of film genre, with or without the filmmakers’ conscious decision. We will be seeing and discussing films in which the fears and hopes and politics of the era manifest themselves in a variety of ways - Hopalong Cassidy battles the Dust Bowl in "Trail Dust" (1936), playful middle class teenagers fall through the cracks in "Wild Boys of the Road" (1933), romantic love transcends grinding poverty in the masterpiece "A Man's Castle" (1933); we ask - "Do we need horror for hard times?" with "The Black Cat" (1934), and we conclude with what has been called "the Sistine Chapel of Depression Musicals" - Busby Berkeley's "Gold Diggers of 1933" (1933). As always, lively and informative discussion will follow each film.

Scriptures Lost and Found—taught by Catherine Murphy
During the last few centuries, manuscript discoveries have revolutionized our view of early Judaism, early Christianity, and the Bible. From the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Gnostic codices from Nag Hammadi, from the Oxyrhynchus papyri to the great manuscripts from Egyptian desert monasteries, we now have a wealth of information that challenges our text of the Bible, our notions about Judaism and Christianity's relation to each other, and our picture of the diversity of early Christianity. This class will explore the major manuscript discoveries and what they tell us about religions past and present.
Contemporary Middle Eastern Politics—taught by Farid Senzai
If you haven’t taken this class previously, prepare to be dazzled by the in-depth analysis of the politics, religion and culture of the modern Middle East by Farid Senzai, Assistant Professor of Political Science. Farid has taught this popular class for OLLI@SCU to packed classrooms. He has agreed to offer it once again. This quarter he is offering the class as a two-weekend seminar that reviews the recent developments in the region by challenging the popular conceptions as presented to a vast majority of us by the media. He will look at the current U.S. involvement in the region including the war in Iraq and the war on terrorism. In addition, the class will address the topic of religious resurgence as a crucial phenomenon in the region. Particular attention will be paid to transnational Islamic movements in the milieu of the technologies of globalization and the challenges they pose to the legitimacy and sovereignty of the Middle Eastern states today.

*Optional lunch choices: *Feb. 6 Pizza with the Prof $10/Feb. 13 Bon Appetit box lunch $10. To reserve a lunch please check off the appropriate box on the class registration form. You must reserve in advance for the catered lunches. Please feel free to bring your own lunch and join the party for no additional cost.

Bone Detectives in the Lab—taught by Lorna Pierce
Do you want to be a Bone Detective? Have you ever wondered what forensic anthropologists really do? How do we tell the difference between human and non-human remains? How do we differentiate between male and female individuals when there are only a few bone fragments? What diseases are found on bones? If you have an inquiring mind, come join us and all will be revealed. This will be a hands-on lab so be prepared!

Western Civilization IV —taught by William Greenwalt
History of the Roman Empire
Rome's imperial government was slow to emerge from the weaknesses inherent in the city's republican constitution. This course will begin by reviewing the specific steps by which Rome's early Emperors constructed a generally responsible and competent system for ruling the massive empire its Republican forebear had brought into existence. Then, it will highlight many of the Empire’s great successes and a cultural revival, before cracking under new stresses (the horrific collapse of the third century of the Common Era). Contrary to common belief, the Empire did not fall at that time, and the third century crisis was followed by another age of political dominance. Finally, we’ll survey the complex causes of Rome's transformation (frequently referred to as the "fall" of the Empire).
The Glamour of Grammar—taught by Asya Pereltsvaig
School teaching of English grammar often makes this subject appear really dull and dreary. And few English speakers realize that the words “glamorous” and “grammar” come from the same root, meaning “mysterious or occult.” In this fascinating course, we will dispel many a mystery of English grammar: Why is there “stupidity” but not “smartity?” Why can we “blacken” fish or “whiten” teeth, but not “pinken” or “greenen” anything? Why is a Blackberry (phone) called that although it is not necessarily black and is not a kind of berry? Who makes up new words anyway? Why do we say “tip-top” and “zig-zag” and not “top-tip” or “zag-zig?” Why can we use “that” in “Who did you say that Julie kissed?” but must omit “that” in “Who did you say kissed Julie?” We will also consider how children learn the intricacies of English grammar without—as we shall see—much direct instruction.

A Brief History of Jazz—taught by Jack Perla
This course will trace the major Jazz styles: Ragtime, Dixieland, Swing, Bebop, Cool Jazz and Modern Jazz, culminating in an overview of the Jazz scene today. Guided listening and video resources will be augmented with analysis, reviews and biographical material. The class will provide a survey of America's own music--its most important composers, performers and recordings and an understanding of the relationship between the music and the historical context in which it was created.

Lessons from the World’s Best Investors—taught by Rich Willis
This class will examine the practices and techniques of the world’s best investors. We will probe the insights of Warren Buffett, George Soros, Bill Gross, John Templeton, David Swenson, Benjamin Graham, and Peter Lynch, among others. The focus will be on lessons which are applicable to the individual investor who is managing his or her own portfolio. We will address questions such as, “What is the relationship between the stock market and the economy? Why does the typical investor’s performance significantly lag the market averages? Is the investing strategy of buy-and-hold obsolete? How important is diversification? How does one decide how much money to allocate to a single investment?” We will develop a set of “all-weather” portfolios for different types of individual investors, which incorporate the essential concepts as practiced by the masters. Not attending this class could be hazardous to your wealth.

The Body in the Woods—taught by Lorna Pierce
Do you love Temperance Brennan, fictional heroine of author Kathy Reichs’ crime novel series? Brennan was introduced in Reichs' first novel, Déjà Dead, published in 1997. Temperance Brennan is also the name of a forensic anthropologist on the popular TV series “Bones.” Forensic anthropology is the application of the science of physical anthropology and human osteology (the study of human bones) in a legal setting, most often in criminal cases where the victim’s remains are in the advanced stages of decomposition or skeletonization. Come and hear our own local forensic anthropologist, Lorna Pierce, give an overview of the field of forensic anthropology and get the inside scoop on some of her most interesting cases as she takes us from the discovery of the remains to the identification of the person. Lorna is the Consultant in Forensic Anthropology at the Santa Clara County Medical Examiner-Coroner’s Office and regularly consults with other law enforcement organizations in the identification of skeletal material.

Richard Henry Dana: A Yankee in Mexican California – taught by John Farnsworth
In Two Years Before the Mast, Richard Henry Dana wrote some of the earliest descriptions we have of pre-Gold Rush California communities and environments. A new edition of Dana's reflections, just released by California Legacy Books, provides an overview of the California landscape while it was still part of Mexico. This class, taught by the writer of the introduction to the new edition, will examine Dana's work from the perspective of historical ecology, back in the days when our region's major export was animal skins, and San Francisco was considered a great place for sailing ships to gather firewood. Students are encouraged to purchase the book, A Yankee in Mexican California, and read the foreword before the first class. It can be ordered on the SCU bookstore’s website bookstore@scu.edu. Because the book is being released in January, it might not yet be available through other online vendors. Check out the book’s web page: http://www.heydaybooks.com/history/a-yankee-in-mexican-california.html.

Fostering the Spirit Within: What Science and Faith Have to Say – taught by Carl Thoresen
Most Americans have become intrigued with spirituality and health, especially when viewed as distinct from organized religion. Major news magazines (e.g., Time, Newsweek, U.S. News & World Report) have repeatedly featured spirituality and religiousness as cover stories. This two-part workshop will examine the connection of spirituality with health, disease, positive emotions and well-being. Why the growing interest? How do spirituality and religion differ? What are spiritual practices? Do positive emotions fit with spiritual practices? With better health?

Eight specific spiritual practices will be presented, such as meditation and becoming
more one-pointed in attention. Each spiritual practice will be briefly practiced in the workshop. Handouts will provide information on spiritual practices and a list of selected books and articles.

Ethics of Food & Agriculture – taught by Keith Warner
Increasingly, food choices have become ethical, spiritual, and moral choices. Words and phrases like sustainability, locavore, organic, fair trade, genetic modification, and agroecology are fairly new; issues such as social justice and working conditions are as much a part of today’s agriculture as they were in Steinbeck’s era. This short course will deal with the ethical, spiritual, and religious issues we all face as we decide how to feed our families and the resultant costs – monetary and otherwise - and subsequent impacts of those choices.

American Short Stories– taught by Marilyn Edelstein
Love, Money, and Dreams in the Short Fiction of John Steinbeck and His Contemporaries
In this course, students will read and discuss a select group of well crafted and engaging American short stories of the 1930s that explore the fraught relationships among love, money, and dreams—both the American dream and individuals' dreams, hopes, and desires. For session 1, we'll read and discuss John Steinbeck's story "The Chrysanthemums" and Zora Neale Hurston's "The Gilded Six-Bits." For session 2, we'll read and discuss Steinbeck's "The White Quail" and F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams." These texts will give us the opportunity to explore the short story as a genre and questions of style, theme, and social/historical context in the work of some major American modernist writers. The Osher office will send out copies of the stories to those who pre-register for it.

Behind the Scenes: “Playboy of the Western World” – taught by Fred Tollini
J. M. Synge's comic play, The Playboy of the Western World, caused riots during its opening week in Dublin in 1907. Based on a historical incident, the play focuses on the reception given to Christy Mahon as he wanders into a small Irish village, declaring that he has just murdered his father. The villagers initially embrace Christy, determining that his courageous act has made him "the playboy of the western world." Their vision of him, however, soon changes as the plot develops. In his depiction of the interaction between Christy and the villagers, and especially of the relationship between Christy and Pegeen Flaherty, an attractive, strong-willed, young local woman, Synge explores the effects of social conventions and celebrates the power of the imagination. Synge’s realistic yet poetic depiction of the historical incident, and the manners and mores of Irish life, angered many who thought the play indecent and guilty of promoting negative
stereotypes. Playboy of the Western World is now considered a masterpiece of poetic drama.