LIFELONG LEARNING. LASTING FRIENDSHIPS. ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES.

Discover. Learn. Connect.

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

FALL 2026 CLASS SCHEDULE

ENGAGING CLASSES Learn something new and exciting.

GREAT FRIENDS Build connections that last a lifetime.

NEW IDEAS Expand your mind and perspective.

LIFELONG ADVENTURE Keep exploring. Keep growing.

Curiosity Keeps Life Bright!

HOSTED BY THE FAYETTE COUNTY CULTURAL TRUST
139 WEST CRAWFORD AVENUE, CONNELLSVILLE, PA

LIFELONG LEARNING. LASTING FRIENDSHIPS. ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES.

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

FAYETTE COUNTY CULTURAL TRUST
in partnership with
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE CLASSES ARE HELD VIRTUALLY AT
THE FAYETTE ENTREPRENEURIAL AND EDUCATIONAL CENTER
139 West Crawford Avenue, Connellsville, PA 15425

VIRTUAL CLASSES Learn from the comfort of home.

ENGAGING SESSIONS Thought-provoking speakers and topics.

5 SESSIONS PER CLASS One low price for a full experience.

COST IS $15 FOR A CLASS (Includes 5 sessions)

Stay Curious. ♡ Keep Learning. ♡ Live Fully.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED BY CALLING **724-603-2093**

Session 1 - August 31 - October 5

Monday, Aug 31- October 5 (NO CLASS ON SEPT. 7th—Labor Day)

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - Introduction to Eastern European Literature - Orin James
This course provides an introduction into Eastern European literature. We will explore the area from Austria to western parts of Russia. Discussions will include a look at key historical events, genre types, common motifs, and literary movements.

1 – 3 p.m. - Unexpected Consequences: A History of Civic Apathy - Alan Perper
Far too often in our history, Americans have taken their citizenship for granted. As United States citizens, you have a choice: make the most of your rights and responsibilities or leave others to decide for you. Civic apathy now has well documented consequences, many resulting in unexpected and often dangerous outcomes to our democratic form of government. This course seeks to explore this history but with a focus on current consequential events including challenges to voting rights, immigration policies' effect on our economy, a growing distrust of government institutions, a decrease in civics education in our schools, and much more.

Tuesday, Sept 1- Sept 29

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - Plant Now for a Great Garden - Doug Oster
Garden Guru Doug Oster shares his love of fall planting. He will cover soil preparations, perennial planting, late season vegetables, share bulb planting tips, tree and shrub planting, and much more.

1 – 2:30 p.m. - 14 Flawed Democracies in the World - Paul Macek
This course explores the following 14 flawed democracies in the world: Malta, United States, Chile, Slovenia, Israel, South Korea, Belgium, Botswana, Lithuania, Italy, Poland, Cyprus, Slovakia, and India. Key characteristics of flawed democracies include weak checks and balances and corruption in functioning of government, low confidence in political parties, polarization, voter apathy, and more. We will analyze geography, climate, demographics, history, politics and government, economy, and culture of each country according to a variety of indexes.

Wednesday, Sept 2- Sept 30

9 – 10:30 a.m. - Greatest Movie Songs of All Time - Emanuel Abramovits
Songs have been a fascinating component of many of our favorite movies. We will analyze songs in terms of cultural significance, role within the movie itself, lyrics, and the historical context of when they were written. Great songs like "Moon River," "As Time Goes By," "Mrs. Robinson," and "My Heart Will Go On" each set a tone or mood, define characters, advance the plot, and express the film's themes in a manner that elevates the art of moviemaking.

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - The Austro-Hungarian Empire, 1848–1914 - Jared Day
This course explores the long, tempestuous reign of the Habsburg Emperor Franz Josef and the fractious Austro-Hungarian empire he tried to govern. Committed to holding together one of the most multicultural, multi-religious, and multi-ethnic empires in modern history, the last of the Habsburgs tried to build a unified, modern, western state out of widely diverse communities fueled by nationalist drives. This socio-political "tinder box" would ultimately explode in Sarajevo in 1914.

Wednesday, Sept 2- Sept 30

1 – 2:30 p.m. - Armageddon Dawns, 1938–1941 - Barbara Burstin
This course will be a continuation of the course taught in the Spring 2026 term, although it is not a prerequisite. We will look at Hitler's actions against the Jews in Germany and Austria, Germany's aggression against its neighbors, and the challenge facing Roosevelt in how to respond to the situation. We will also highlight the beginning of WWII and the Holocaust.

Thursday, Sept 3- Oct 1

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire - John Burt
During a time of strife between management and labor, a fire erupted in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City on March 25, 1911. The fire killed 146 workers, most of them immigrant young women. Neither the management nor the fire department were prepared to handle the disaster. It led to changes in state law and gave new direction to the life work of Frances Perkins, a witness, who would serve as Secretary of Labor for FDR.

1 – 2:30 p.m. - Label Me: Record Labels and Their Artists, Part 1 - Larry Gondelman
In this course we will learn about the history of the great record labels of the Rock 'n Roll era. Each of these labels brought something distinctive to the development of rock music. Each week, we will focus on a particular label and listen to songs by its key artists, including Howlin' Wolf, Jerry Lee Lewis, Aretha Franklin, B.B. King, The Temptations, Elvis Presley, Bob Dylan, The Beatles, the Beach Boys, James Taylor, as well as many others.

Friday, Sept 4 – Oct 2

10 – 11:30 a.m. - Elements of a Great Broadway Musical - Sam and Candy Caponegro
Love Broadway musicals? Sit back and learn while you enjoy those wonderful numbers that make musicals great! They can be songs that make you laugh yourself silly, big numbers at the end of act one that make you come back for more, ballads that make you cry, and production numbers that make you stand up and cheer.

1 – 2:30 p.m. - Odd Geology! - Stephenie Slahor
Geology is mostly focused on tectonic plates, oil deposits, gems, and earthquakes. But there are some interesting, amazing, and even mysterious aspects of geology that we will explore. Among our topics will be speleothems, gastroliths, minerals that fluoresce, shungite and EMFs, borax, meteorites, and many more.

Session 2 - October 19 - November 20

Monday, Oct 19 – Nov 16

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - A Very Brief British History - Peter Gilmore
What would the millennia-long history of Britain be like if condensed into a five-week course? Exactly like this: it begins with the peopling of the island after the Ice Age and concludes post-Brexit. Stories of risings and fallings, invasions, immigration, revolutions (Glorious and otherwise), and wars (Great and otherwise) move us through the millennia to an understanding of the bigger picture.

1 – 2:30 p.m. - Hitler Unleashed: The War in Europe from 1939 to 1941 - Barry Fulks
This course will begin with a synopsis of German expansion from 1933 through 1939, and will then focus on the German invasion of Poland and the resulting outbreak of war in September of 1939. This will be followed by discussions of the occupation of Denmark and Norway, the period of the so-called "phony war," and Germany's stunning victory in the West in 1940, which seemed to guarantee Germany's continental hegemony. The course will conclude with analyses of the German plan to invade Great Britain and of the ensuing aerial Battle of Britain, whose outcome thwarted the German invasion plan.

Tuesday, Oct 20 – Nov 17

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - Biblical Prophets - Sandra Collins
This course provides a general survey of prophetic literature in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. Prophets, while necessary, are the religious conscience of the people and, as such, are often social pariahs. Thematically we will consider the role of oracles; prophetic literature and women; the theology of prophecies; social justice in the prophets; and how different faith communities read and interpret the prophetic literature.

1 – 2:30 p.m. - Social Engineering in Aldous Huxley's Brave New World - Anupama Jain
This course delves into the novel Brave New World by Aldous Huxley (1932), which is considered a masterpiece of dystopian literature because it seemed to predict major historical turns of the 20th century. Members will learn about an imaginary worldstate in which people are engineered to love their society and their own places in it. We will read the novel against a backdrop of questions about happiness, ideal communities, the impact of new technologies on humanity, and whether human freedom is always merely an illusion.

Wednesday, Oct 21 – Nov 18

9 – 10:30 a.m. - Heroism and Friendship in the World of Schulz's Peanuts - David Fetterman
Beneath the simple panels of Charles Schulz's Peanuts lies a profound meditation on failure, hope, loneliness, and connection. Rather than traditional heroic figures, Schulz portrays ordinary individuals who wrestle with courage, loyalty, disappointment, and hope. This course uses the comic strip as a lens to explore two of humanity's most enduring themes: heroism and friendship. We will ask: What does it mean to be brave when you always lose? How do we sustain friendships marked by misunderstanding? And why does a beagle dreaming atop a doghouse move us so deeply?

Wednesday, Oct 21 – Nov 18

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - Unifications of Germany and Italy - Jared Day
This course examines the reinvention of central Europe that occurs between 1848 and 1880 when splintered collections of small city states, bishoprics, and kingdoms unified into the two modern states of Germany and Italy. Nationalists instigated a series of wars, insurrections, and land grabs, often done with extraordinary flair, boldness, and ruthless cunning. At times referred to as "unification from the top down," these processes of unification will inspire many other Europeans and, indeed, shake the foundations of established monarchies such as in Austria-Hungary, Russia, France, and Great Britain.

1 – 2:30 p.m - Ireland and Northern Ireland: Conflict and Peace - Paul Adams
This course explores the development, process, and issues of conflict and peace in Northern Ireland and Ireland focusing on the periods of Irish Rebellion (1870s–1920s), the Troubles (1960s–1990s), the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, and continuing problems from 1998 to the present. The course will first begin with an exploration of Ireland under British rule through the 19th century leading to the early conflicts of the 20th century. Significant emphasis is on the status of Northern Ireland after 1921 and into the 21st century.

Thursday, Oct 22 – Nov 19

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. - The Bible in Art - David Brumble
This course addresses Bible stories and how they have been depicted in art, mostly Medieval and Renaissance art. We will be looking at a wonderfully wide range of art, from murals in a 3rd-century synagogue to Caravaggio, Artemisia Gentileschi, and Rembrandt, and from van Eyck's Ghent Altarpiece to Buoninsegna's early 14th century Maestà.

Friday, Oct 23 – Nov 20

10 – 11:30 a.m - Stars and History of the Movie Musical, Part 3 - Sam and Candy Caponegro
Focusing on film musicals from 1990 to the present, we will show clips as we explore trends in modern film musicals. Always popular are turning Broadway musicals into films (e.g. Wicked), but a newer trend transforms non-musical films into musicals (e.g. Hairspray and Mean Girls). Other trends include incorporation of contemporary music and biography musicals. Join us as we appreciate this great American art form.

1 – 2:30 p.m. - Exploding Stars and Their Aftermath - Don Ellison
The death of stars is one of the most important phenomena in the universe. Stars end their lives in various ways, some peacefully and some spectacularly. Besides producing an incredible show, exploding stars are the sources of cosmic rays and many of the heavy elements which make up our world. This course will describe how some stars end their lives by exploding, explore why there are different types of explosions, analyze how these explosions have influenced our history, and see how supernovae are essential for understanding the past and future of the universe.

Enriching Connellsville Through Lifelong Learning

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Pittsburgh provides adults aged 50 and better with exceptional opportunities for intellectual growth, personal enrichment, and meaningful social engagement. Through a diverse selection of non-credit courses, lectures, and educational programs, OLLI fosters a vibrant community of lifelong learners who are committed to expanding their knowledge in an engaging, welcoming environment—without the pressure of grades or academic prerequisites.

Recognizing the transformative power of lifelong learning, the Fayette County Cultural Trust has partnered with the University of Pittsburgh's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute to bring these outstanding educational opportunities directly to Connellsville. This collaboration reflects the Cultural Trust's commitment to making high-quality educational experiences more accessible while strengthening the intellectual and cultural vitality of our community.

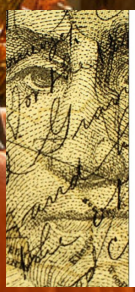
OLLI courses introduce participants to a wide range of subjects, including history, literature, science, current events, the arts, and many other engaging topics. Beyond the classroom, these programs encourage curiosity, stimulate lifelong learning, and promote cognitive wellness. Equally important, they create opportunities for participants to develop lasting friendships, share ideas, and build meaningful social connections that help reduce isolation and strengthen the fabric of the community.

The impact of OLLI extends beyond individual participants. By bringing university-level educational programming to Connellsville, these classes contribute to a more informed, engaged, and connected community. They enhance the city's cultural landscape, support downtown activity, and reinforce Connellsville's growing reputation as a destination for education, lifelong learning, and community engagement.

Through this partnership, the Fayette County Cultural Trust and the University of Pittsburgh are investing not only in education but also in the continued growth, vitality, and quality of life of the communities they serve. OLLI demonstrates that learning has no age limit—and that curiosity, discovery, and personal growth can continue throughout every stage of life.

The Connellsville Canteen is open for take-out meals and drinks from 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

724-603-2093



Fayette County Cultural Trust
www.fayettetrust.org

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