

**SPRING TERM 2023**  
**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

*Meet your instructor by clicking on the Instructors tab on the Home Page*

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN: A LIFE** *New Course!* Abraham Lincoln’s beliefs, motives, and philosophy are the focus of this course, with significant use of primary sources. Though Lincoln lived for 56 years, students will mostly cover the final eleven after Lincoln re-emerged in 1854 when slavery again dominated national attention. *The instructor is Bob Taylor.*

**THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION SEEN FROM THE GULF COAST AND POINTS WEST** The American Revolution is often embedded in our collective memory with images that emerged from the colonial experience in the so-called “original thirteen colonies”. We remember the Boston Tea Party, Paul Revere’s Ride, and Washington crossing the Delaware. Yet, the Gulf Coast was the scene of important events that contributed to the Americans’ success as well as providing insights into how the colonials made decisions about becoming rebels or loyalists. This course will explore the experiences of a diverse group of individuals in the Revolution and the impact it had on their lives. We will use the device of micro-biographies to explore the issues that mattered most to some of the forgotten participants in the Revolution. *The instructor is Rick Byrd.*

**BACH, BEETHOVEN, BRAHMS and BARTOK** *New Course!* Have you ever wondered what to listen for in classical music and how the music of composers differs? This music appreciation course will highlight compositions from four different composers, each representing a different era from Baroque to Contemporary. Increase your knowledge and appreciation of classical music by understanding how the culture and world conditions influenced the creators of this lasting art form. *The instructor is Vincentine Williams.*

**BIRDING 101: THE BASICS AND BEYOND** Just in time for spring migration! Learn how to identify those birds in your backyard and beyond using physical characteristics such as size, shape, and color and how they relate to behavior, diet, and habitat. Students will also learn about seasonal variations in plumage and range, become familiar with common bird calls, receive tips for tricky identification, and receive instruction about how to use binoculars. An optional field trip can be arranged at no charge since there are regularly scheduled Eastern Shore Birders/Mobile Bay Audubon trips at this time of year. *See examples of birds you might see in our Project Photo Gallery, which you can access from the ESILL website home page under the Courses tab.* If you have them, bring your binoculars and bird guide to class. *The instructor is Carol Furman.*

**LIFESTORIES: CREATING A MEMOIR** Learn how to write stories for future generations. Students will receive inspiration, motivation, and organizational tips for beginning the project and staying on track. Guidance will include what topics to choose, formatting (chronological versus random stories), and tips on how to make their writing sparkle in order to keep their readers engaged. Students will learn how to write the text, include some photos, and

have pages bound into a simple, inexpensive booklet that, when finished, will make a priceless gift. *Instructor Roseanne Gulisano will provide handouts containing helpful hints and ideas.*

**FAIRHOPE BY FOOT: WALKING TOURS** Whether you have recently moved in or have lived here for decades, these tours are entertaining and educational. The walks trace 128 years of Fairhope's people, places and events. The two tours included in this course are approximately 1.5 miles long and incorporate time for discussion and Q & A along the way. All walks begin and end at the Fairhope Welcome Center. In the first tour, ***In the Footsteps of Fairhope's Founders***, you will stroll through the center of town, following the footsteps and tracing the places of Fairhope's pioneers, local builders, and historic buildings. Later the ***Downtown Businesses to Bay Views*** tour will take you past landmark buildings, homes of town founders, early hotels, and along the bay. *Your tour guide is Alan Samry.*

**THE GOSPELS: FOUR VIEWS OF THE EVENTS** We know the four Gospels of the New Testament as loose-knit, episodic narratives of the words and deeds of Jesus, culminating in his trial and death and concluding with various reports of his post-resurrection appearances. Why are these accounts so different? The answer lies in many factors that will be explored in this study. The advantage of having four distinct perspectives will also be pursued. Scholars recognize that the differences in details among the Gospels are irreconcilable, and any attempt to harmonize them would only disrupt their unique theological messages. The instructor will lead a discussion through which students will compare and contrast these Gospels. Students are encouraged to bring a Bible. *The instructor is Toby Gurley.*

**GROWING AND PROPAGATING AFRICAN VIOLETS** African violets have become the favorite houseplant across the world. This course will cover the seven key factors for successfully growing violets – light, watering, feeding, grooming, environment, soil, and potting. The instructor will discuss procedures for propagating violets from leaves and suckers. Hybridizing your violets will result in the development of new and differently colored flowers, some of which can be truly spectacular. You will learn techniques for cross-pollinating flowers, Planting the resulting seeds, and caring for the seedlings to adult blooming plants. There will be demonstrations of grooming, repotting, propagation from leaves and suckers, and cross-pollination of two flowers to produce hybrid seed. *To see the immense size which these violets can attain, click on the Project Photo Gallery link on the homepage of the Courses tab.* For further information on the subject of African violet propagation and on the instructor, see the article in Mobile Bay Magazine at <https://mobilebaymag.com/meet-jere-trigg-the-violet-guru>. Plants will be available for purchase. *Jere Trigg is your instructor.*

**MAHJONG FOR BEGINNERS** *New Course!* Mahjong was invented by the Chinese in the 1800s. Now this game using tiles (similar in appearance to dominoes) and a card of strategies has become popular in America. Students can join in the fun of learning a new game! *The instructor is Pat Owen.*

**THE LIFE YOU SAVE MAY BE YOUR OWN: SHORT STORIES OF FLANNERY O'CONNOR**      *New Course!*

Alfred Kazan once wrote in The New York Times "Flannery O'Connor expressed something secret about America, called the South". Students will explore O'Connor's short fiction and consider whether her "South" is our "South" or even a universal "place" where everyone lives. Students should purchase and bring to class The Complete Stories of Flannery O'Connor. *The instructor is Margaret Davis.*

**THERAVADA MEDITATION**      *New Course!* The Theravada method is used in a variety of spiritual environments and practices vary considerably. In this class, students will learn the meditation practice with focus on the breath. Classes will be based on the practices and teachings used in the main American Theravada Buddhist centers: Insight Meditation Society and Spirit Rock. These teachings are strictly practical. There is no religious component, and the practices can be adopted with little chance for conflict by people from any religious background. *The instructor is Nick Coulson.*

**PAINT FLORALS AND STILL LIFE TO DEVELOP DAILY PRACTICE**

*New Course!* Students will learn how to find inspiration in everyday objects such as spring flowers, fruits and other items that they might find around their homes. Using acrylics, each study will be small so that it can be completed in about 25 minutes. Studies are designed to help students improve drawing and color mixing skills in addition to learning about value, highlights, shadows, composition and painting loosely.

*The instructor is Tina Powers.*

**POINT OF VIEW IN FICTION: SELECTED SHORT STORIES**      *New Course!*

Students in this course will read and discuss a varying selection of short stories illustrating the importance of point of view--that is, through whose eyes the events are narrated. With each story, we will try to decide how point of view has shaped both the story and our response to it. Students will receive an online file of the stories in advance and make their own copies. *The instructor is Brenda Huchingson.*

**REVIVE! TECHNIQUES TO FIND YOUR PRESENCE, PASSION, AND PURPOSE**

*New Course!* For those who may be stuck, tired or lacking in direction! Students will utilize a variety of techniques to find presence, passion, and purpose. They will discover the benefits of meditation, creative writing, music and movement and how incorporating one or more of these experiences into their routines can boost creativity and energy. Students will be encouraged to create a plan, set intentions and achieve goals. Change is part of the process! "If not now, when?" (Eckhart Tolle) *The instructor is Greta Bates.*

**SINGERS/CHORUS WORKSHOP**

*New Course!* No auditions necessary! Students will have a chance to sing a little bit of everything: pop standards, jazz, blues, country, folk, etc. Everyone can learn to sing and become a better singer by understanding their vocal instrument and how to improve it. Singers will receive instruction in vocal techniques including proper posture, breathing, diction, voice placement, expressive singing and how to properly take care of their voices. *The instructor is Lynda Elmore-Groenendal.*

**TEMARI: MAKING JAPANESE EMBROIDERED THREAD BALLS** Temari began as a Japanese kick toy constructed from the remnants of old kimonos bundled into a ball and stitched. Later stitching became more decorative and detailed with intricate embroidery, and temari evolved into an art. Students will learn how to prepare temari for sewing and to use the Spindle, Interlocking Diamonds, Chrysanthemum, and Rose Garden patterns. Past students are encouraged to learn new techniques. *To see examples of this unique craft, click on the Project Photo Gallery link on the homepage of the Courses tab.* Materials fee is \$35, or past participants may bring their own supplies. Bring scissors! **Class size is limited.** *The instructor is Blair Heald.*

**THREE FILMS ON AGING: *THE STRAIGHT STORY; AWAY FROM HER; A RATHER ENGLISH MARRIAGE*** *New Course!* Students in this course will view and discuss three films dealing with issues and concerns of aging. *The Straight Story*, based on true events, is about one man's dangerous and emotional journey to make amends to a family member. *Away From Her* focuses on a couple's coping with the wife's increasingly evident memory loss and how they have to redefine their relationship. *A Rather English Marriage* is a funny and bittersweet story of class and friendship between two seemingly mismatched men who are recently widowed. *Instructor Brenda Huchingson* will give an introduction to each film, and a discussion will follow the viewing.

**TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF ESTATE PLANNING** Comprehensive estate planning often requires using several estate planning documents interactively, i.e. Will, Trust, Durable Power of Attorney, Alabama Health Care Directive, and the (often misunderstood) Beneficiary form. This course will acquaint you with the ins and outs of each these documents and will include suggestions on how to use them collectively to achieve your estate planning goals. It will examine several real-life situations where estate planning went terribly wrong...and why. The course will be interactive, and you will receive several estate planning checklists that you and/or your family might find useful in various situations. *The instructor is John Brown.*

**WALKING THE JEWISH BIBLE SERIES: PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS IN THE BIBLE** *New Course!* In this course, Students will continue their exploration of the Jewish Bible with a focus on various relationships between parents and children that are presented in it. The instructor will be evaluating Hebrew Scripture on his topic only from Jewish perspectives, but students of Christian and other backgrounds are invited to share alternate views on the topic. All who attend are requested to bring a Bible. *The instructor is Rabbi Steven Silberman.*

**THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN: THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY** This course provides a non-faith based and non-denominational investigation into Christianity. The heritage which believers share today has developed over three millennia, from its roots with the descendants of Abraham to the earthly ministry of Jesus and his disciples, down through 20 centuries of development and strife, to the place it occupies in our times. The course will cover, among other topics, the first century church, the Roman and Orthodox churches, Reformation, European religious conflicts, and the coming of Christianity to America. Woven throughout this study will be the developing history of the Bible. *The instructor is Toby Gurley.*

## **TAIJI (TAI CHI): DEVELOPING BALANCE AND BODY AWARENESS**

**New Course** Students will receive instruction in “Eight Pieces of Brocade”, a Taiji (Tai Chi) Qigong, an exercise that dates back to the Song Dynasty (circa 1150). The method focuses on coordinated breathing, movement, and meditation. Through this practice, students will be able to develop balance and body awareness. *The instructor is Elliott Lauderdale.*

**TIPS AND TRICKS OF FLORAL ARRANGING** **New Course** In this course, students will learn how to create their own floral designs using fresh or silk flowers. They will receive tips on how to develop a basic design and on how to transform it into a seasonal arrangement by adding Christmas décor, hearts, eggs, shamrocks, pumpkins, flags and other seasonally specific items. Students will need to bring their own flowers (silk or fresh), greenery, floral foam and ribbon as well as their own container or vase. In addition, students should supply their own wire clippers, scissors, needle-nose pliers, glue gun and paper clips. **Class size is limited.** *The instructor is Mary Streu.*

**WRITE RIGHT NOW!** This is your opportunity to scratch that writing itch you have always had with in-class prompts and visual imagery. Bring your notebook, laptop or tablet because this is a *workshop*. It is time to answer that creative call and stretch outside of your comfort zone. We will write in class and get ideas for a longer piece to complete at home. Sharing and positive critique will help to improve and nurture that spark you have been hiding. **Class size is limited.** *The instructor is Roseanne Gulisano.*