

WALL Course Descriptions

Spring 2024

History of Anti-Semitism - Rabbi Elizabeth Bahar

Tuesday, January 9, 16, 23, 30 | 12:30 – 1:30

Location: Taylor Amphitheater

Rabbi Bahar is the rabbi of Temple Beth Israel in Macon. She was ordained in 2009 and earned a Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters. She also earned a BA in philosophy at Brandeis University. Rabbi Bahar was recognized by *The Forward* as one of “America’s 33 Most Inspirational Rabbis.” The objectives of this course are:

1. To discuss what anti-Semitism is and what is unique about it
2. To explain the historical and ideological roots of anti-Semitism and how it has developed
3. To discuss the characteristics of anti-Semitism today
4. To identify anti-Semitic language and actions in the past and in the present

Ghosts of the Georgia Coast – Carolyn Garvin

Tuesday, January 9, 16, 23, 30 | 2:00 – 3:00

Location: Taylor Amphitheater

Ms. Garvin, Associate Professor Emerita at Mercer University, is a life-long educator. Her interest in history and story-telling led to the development of this series first presented at Elderhostel at Jekyll Island. We live in a fast-paced world, in a society that’s rushing headlong into the future. But the preservation of the spirit of the people lies not in technology but in the legacy of folklore, legends, songs, and ballads that have been passed down from generation to generation, material passed orally, usually informally. It functions as a form of education. It always seems that the legends, yarns, and folktales are as much a part of the history of a country as proclamations, provisos, and Constitutional amendments.

Affirmative Action in College Admissions – Vince Coughlin, J.D. and LL.M.

Wednesday, January 10, 17, 24, 31 | 1:30 – 2:30

Location: Taylor Amphitheater

Past President and Founder of WALL, Mr. Coughlin has presented numerous courses for WALL. Affirmative action refers to a policy aimed at increasing educational opportunities for people who are underrepresented in various areas of our society. It focuses on demographics with historically low representation in academic and professional roles. It is often considered a means of countering discrimination against underrepresented minorities, including Blacks, Hispanics, Orientals, and Native Americans. Cases to be considered include: Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978); Gratz v. Bollinger and Grutter v. Bollinger (2003); Fisher v. University of Texas (2016); Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard and University of North Carolina (2023). The two recent cases eliminated Affirmative Action in admission decisions.

Appreciating the Middle East - Betty Taylor

Tuesday, Feb 6, 13, 20, 27 | 11:00 – noon

Location: Taylor Amphitheater

From 1995 – 2011, Ms. Taylor worked in Security Assistance for the federal government. Security Assistance is a group of programs, authorized under Title 22 of the U.S. Code, by which the U.S. government provides defense articles, military education and training, and other defense-related services to eligible foreign governments by grant, loan, credit, cash sales, or lease. Security Assistance personnel manage security assistance and other military programs in those foreign countries and are closest to these programs operation and have the closest contact with host-country militaries. The Middle East is often categorized by perpetual conflict, religious extremism, poor performance, and people torn apart by sectarian, ethnic and national differences. However, Arab civilization is one of the ancient civilizations in the world whose effects are still felt today. It has contributed greatly to various important fields such as medicine, mathematics, science, horticulture, and architecture among others. In this course, students will look at what the Arab culture contributed to the world throughout time. They will briefly discuss the history of the Middle East and how it got so convoluted. They will also discuss the vibrant cultures of the region. Then the class will “visit” many of the countries in the region to learn about distinctive characteristics of each country. **Note: Israel will not be covered in this course as it is uniquely different from the other countries in the region.**

Short Stories from Around the World - Dr. Delmas Crisp

Tuesday, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27, Mar. 5, 12 | 1:30 – 2:30

Location: Taylor 129

Dr. Delmas Crisp has a Ph.D. in British Literature and has taught this material to students at Wesleyan College and Mercer University. Dr. Crisp has 55 years of experience in higher education. Reading short stories from the Caribbean, South America, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia, participants will consider culture, geography, political issues, education, religion, etc. in each of these areas of the world as they enjoy the interactions of the characters in each story. Discussion is encouraged but not required. **Specific supplies required:** Participants will need a copy of A. W. Biddle's *Global Voices: Contemporary Literature from the Non-Western World*. Used copies are available from \$5 - \$7 on Amazon. Copies of 4-5 additional short stories. **(Class limited to 25)**

Creativity – Dr. Chenny Gan and Dr. Brooke Bennett-Day

Wednesday, February 7, 14, 21, 28 | 11:00 – noon

Location: L. P. Corn Room, downstairs in Pierce Chapel

Dr. Gan and Dr. Bennett-Day, both professors at Wesleyan College, will lead an interdisciplinary discussion on Creativity and Originality as they relate to intelligence, artistic performance, convergent vs. divergent thinking, and human development. The class will explore questions such as: What is creativity? Can it be learned or is it inborn? What is originality and its relationship to risk-taking? To success? What is the role of timing in creativity? Are there specific techniques that could help us generate more “Outside the box” ideas in our everyday lives? **(Class limited to 40)**

Chaplin & Keaton: Filmmaker Clowns – Robert Fieldsteel

Wednesday, February 7, 14, 21, 28 | 1:30 – 4:00

Location: Taylor Amphitheater

Robert Fieldsteel worked in Los Angeles for 28 years as an actor, writer, producer, and teacher in film, theatre and television. He currently teaches playwriting, acting, and film at Wesleyan College and is president of the

Macon Film Guild. Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton are generally considered the two greatest comedians of the silent film era, and their films are still very much in circulation today. Coming from, respectively, the Music Hall and Vaudeville, Chaplin and Keaton were more than talented performers. Each was a groundbreaking storyteller and director, discovering new avenues in the nascent medium of film. The class will view early-career shorts and the features *The Kid* (Chaplin) and *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* (Keaton)

Poetry Classics and Poetry Writing Workshop - Hinda Ramsey (pen name Hinda Jonathan)

Thursday, February 8, 15, 22, 29 | 11:00 – noon

Location: Taylor 129

A poet and author of seven books, Hinda Jonathan has participated in numerous poetry readings throughout the US in various settings, colleges, and special programs. She also has organized poetry programs locally in colleges and other locations. Her poetry and books have been published from 2008 – 2023. In Week 1, participants will review the elements and structure of poetry. In Weeks 2 and 3 they will discuss some favorite poets and consider prompts for creating their own poems, followed by gentle critique and suggestions. Writing will take place both in class and be brought in during weeks 2 and 3. In Week 4 the course will finish with a poetry reading by participants and the instructor. **(Class is limited to 20)**

Storytelling for Personal Empowerment – Julia Morrison

Wednesday, March 6, 13, 20, 27 | 11:00 – noon

Location: Taylor Amphitheater

Students will learn the art of storytelling for personal enrichment with Storytellers Macon. Storytellers Macon is an organization that believes everyone has something to say. It is a non-profit group that was formed to open up platforms for more people to share their stories in performances, big and small. In this course, the instructor will go over both crafting a story and how to best stage it for individual confidence. The final session will be a mini-storytelling performance.

Great Decisions 2024 – Vince Coughlin

Section 1, Wesleyan College

Wednesday, March 6, 13, 20, 27, Apr. 3, 10, 17, 24 | 1:30 – 2:45

Location: Taylor 221 (Class limited to 20)

Section 2, Carlyle Place

Thursday, March 7, 14, 21, 28, April 4, 11, 18, 25 | 3:00 – 4:30 pm.

Location: Training Room “A” (Class limited to 15)

NOTE: members are to purchase the Great Decisions 2024 Briefing Book from the Foreign Policy Association. They are available at fpa.org and then click “Bookstore.” The eBook edition is available from Amazon.

Great Decisions 2024 Topics:

1. **Mideast Realignment:** The United States and Middle East are at a crossroads. In spite of a reduced presence in the Middle East, the U.S. still has significant national interests there and the area is a key arena for global power politics. Can the U.S. continue to defend its interests in the Middle East and

globally with a lower level of military and political involvement, or should it recommit to a leading role in the region?

2. Climate technology and competition: Will the United States and China, with other powerful countries following suit, approach current and future climate initiatives with an increased commitment to trade protectionism and nationalism, by various measures including trade restrictions? Or could a growing spirit of international accord develop to confront the “common enemy” of climate change?
3. Science across borders: Scientific advances benefit from collaboration between researchers, but what happens when material, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), is controversial and important to a nation’s national security? Is there a middle ground between sharing information and denying access? How can we regulate cooperation?
4. U.S. - China trade rivalry: China’s economic rise and its current policies of increasing the role of the state in the economy have led some U.S. policymakers to seek to deny China access to U.S. technology and investment. This is seen as a necessary corrective to decades of predatory Chinese economic policies. Is this a wise strategy, and how effective can it be?
5. NATO’s future: Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has come under increased scrutiny, not because NATO troops are involved in the conflict, but because of its role in relations between Russia and its neighbors. Will expanding membership in NATO protect countries, or will it further provoke Russia?
6. Understanding Indonesia: Despite its large size, Indonesia remains virtually invisible to most Americans. But as one of the world’s largest democracies, the world’s largest Muslim-majority nation, and as an economic driver of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), why does it fly below the radar? What are current issues in U.S.-Indonesian relations, and what role can the country play in Asia?
7. High Seas Treaty: Areas of the seas beyond national jurisdiction comprise the high seas, which are facing a degradation of ecosystems due to climate change and the increase in human activities, such as shipping, overfishing, pollution, and deep-sea mining. The recently negotiated High Seas Treaty, also known as the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Treaty, will attempt to address these issues. How difficult will it be to convince nations to participate?
8. Pandemic preparedness: Looking back at the COVID-19 pandemic, there are many lessons to take away in terms of domestic and international policies. Although this pandemic seems to have waned, how can we apply these lessons to future pandemics? Will countries cooperate, and will a consensus emerge on how to manage global health challenges?

Good Grei*f – Good Gramme*r - Jane Winston

Thursday, March 7, 14, 21, 28 | 1:30 – 2:30

Location: Taylor 129

Jane Winston has a BS in Education from Indiana University, an MS in Education from Fort Valley State University, and Specialists credentials in learning disabilities from California State University- Sacramento and reading from Mercer University. She is an Air Force wife with little teaching longevity until moving to Georgia in 1991. Ms. Winston taught 10.5+ years at FVSU in the English and Learning Support Departments and wrapped up her teaching career at Mercer in the School of Business teaching a course known as Business Communication, a required course for sophomores. That’s where she began her love affair with grammar (umbrella term) as under that comes spelling, punctuation, word usage, and much more. Her two children and other family members refer to her as the “grammar police!” This is not a course where one will learn grammar, punctuation, word usage, spelling, etc., but one where enrollees will in “group fashion” discuss, visit, grumble

over and, hopefully, have fun with language issues of today and yesterday. Come have fun while learning!
(Class limited to 15)

Upper Ocmulgee River: Mills, Old Communities, Power Generation and Dam Construction, and River Crossing Ferries - Ken Heller

Thursday, March 7, 14, 21, 28 | 11:00 am – noon

Location: Taylor Amphitheater

While the lower Ocmulgee River (south of Macon) was primarily used for transportation to and from the Atlantic Ocean, the upper Ocmulgee River (north of Macon) was primarily used for waterpower. The Ocmulgee south of Macon is serpentine and slow moving. The upper Ocmulgee is straight and fast flowing. This fast flowing and forceful water originally turned the large wheels of numerous mills. Communities were built around these mills. As the early mills closed and deteriorated into ruins, some of the communities also disappeared into the woods. Later, the descending elevation of the upper Ocmulgee into middle Georgia facilitated the construction of dams for electric power generation.

Religious Art & Architecture – Susan Welsh

Tuesday, Apr. 2, 9, 16, 23 | 11:00-12:00

Location: Museum of Arts and Sciences, 4182 Forsyth Road

Susan Welsh is a graduate of the University of Georgia and also studied studio art and art history at Wesleyan College. She is the Executive Director of the Museum of Arts and Sciences in Macon. From Byzantine to Renaissance, Christian themes influencing major periods of art history will be explored in this course. Macon is home to a number of significant religious works of art including a 13th century Madonna and Child icon painting at Wesleyan College, plus exquisite examples of stained glass at St. Joseph Catholic Church and Christ Episcopal Church. Lectures of Sessions 1 and 2 will prepare participants with an overview needed for the field trip outings of Sessions 3 and 4. Participants will learn about major Christian themes of the Virgin Mary and Christ's Passion (Session 1), plus religious symbolism in Gothic architecture and art (Session 2). Session 3 will be held at St. Joseph Catholic Church on Poplar Street where participants will view 60 stained glass windows, plus mosaics and marble sculptures. Session 4 will be held at Christ Episcopal Church (the oldest church in Macon) on Walnut Street where participants will view a number of unique and significant 19th century-stained glass works of art -- including a rare monumental narrative window made by Louis Comfort Tiffany in 1882.

History Wars: The Use, Abuse, and Misunderstanding of History – Dr. Nick Steneck

Wednesday, Apr. 3, 10, 17, 24 | 3:00 – 4:00

Location: Benson Room, Candler Alumnae Building

Dr. Steneck is a member of the Wesleyan College faculty which he joined in 2014. He teaches courses on U.S., European, Middle Eastern, and East Asian history as well as topical courses on terror and terrorism, genocide, disasters, war and civil conflict, and the history of history. In recent years, history has featured prominently in public debate on topics as diverse as the origins and foundational ideas of the United States to how to resolve the slow pace of baseball games. That history is referenced repeatedly is hardly surprisingly, for it is our understanding of our past which provides the critical context for the present and future. Nor is it surprising that debates about history and its meaning are often contested. The past has powerful authority. In this course

students will examine the use, abuse, and misunderstanding of history through a series of case studies drawn from the U.S., European, and East Asian past. We will explore how and why historians' understanding of the past has changed over time. And we will consider what it means to engage in the past ethically and empathetically, and the grave consequences for individuals and societies when we fail to do so. **(Class limited to 35)**

War Brides: The Great WWII Immigration - Rose Thornburg
Thursday, April 4, 11, 18, 25 | 1:30 – 2:30
Location: Taylor Amphitheater

Ms. Thornburg holds a BS degree in Social Sciences Education and an MS degree in Mental Health Counseling from Marshall University. She has experience in teaching History in high school. Between 1939 and 1946, 16 million Americans were mobilized to take part in WWII. While exact figures are hard to come by, it is believed that just over 1 million brides of foreign birth married to American servicemen (and, in some cases, women) entered the United States. This was the largest wave of immigration to the U.S. since 1924. The great demand by military personnel for spouses and fiancées to be allowed entry led to passage by Congress of The War Brides Act of 1945 and The Alien Fiancées and Fiances Act of 1946 and changes to Immigration quotas. This course will look at the challenges faced by these brides assimilating to their new home country.

Cherry Blossoms: An Examination of Puccini's Opera "Madama Butterfly" - Dr. Mary Keating
Friday, April 19, 26, May 3, 10 | 1:30 – 3:00
Location: Taylor 129

Dr. Keating holds degrees in music from Indiana University and the University of Florida. She sang opera professionally for 15 years before becoming a teacher. Now retired, she teaches Music Appreciation at Georgia Military College in Dublin and frequently gives talks before the Met Opera Live in HD series at the Douglass Theatre. This course is designed for opera lovers as well as those who may be new to opera. In week 1 the class will explore Puccini's life, style, and works, including their historical context. Weeks 2-4 will be devoted to each of the three acts of one of his best-loved operas: "Madama Butterfly." **The class will culminate with attendance at the Metropolitan Opera Live in HD broadcast at the Douglass Theatre on Saturday, May 11. Admission is \$20 for seniors.** Class members are encouraged to buy a libretto (Burton Fisher series, available on Amazon) and, if possible, to read the short story "Madame Butterfly" by John Luther Long. It is guaranteed that you will never look at Macon's beautiful cherry blossoms quite the same after experiencing Puccini's magnificent opera, "Madama Butterfly." **(Class limited to 25)**