

OLLI at LSU Spring 2024

Instructor Bios

Emanuel Abramovits is a mechanical engineer with an MBA and has been a concert promoter since 2000, directly involved in many events by international artists, like Itzhak Perlman, Gustavo Dudamel, Sarah Brightman, Roger Hodgson, ASIA, Journey, Kenny G and many more. He designed and staged many original orchestral events, including an Event of the Year winner and several world premieres. He served as the Cultural Director at UNION ISRAELITA DE CARACAS from 2008 to 2019, releasing books, organizing film cycles, concerts, and art exhibits. He has been consistently teaching online and in presence across the US since 2020.

Katie Bailey is a student in the master's program in Library and Information Science student at LSU. She is also getting her master's certificate in Archival Studies. She received her M.A. in History from LSU in August of 2022. Katie graduated from Ashland in December of 2019 with a B.A. in History.

Donald Beale is currently Director of Online Distance Learning at LSU. He has a Master of Arts in Liberal Arts, with a specialization in film studies, from LSU.

Thomas Beard has a PhD from Duke University and is an alumni professor emeritus of economics at LSU. He has taught 41 opera courses for the Lagniappe Chapter of OLLI at LSU and eight opera courses for the OLLI chapter at Auburn University.

Buck Beasom teaches courses for OLLI chapters across the country. He has a two-track career that includes four decades in data management and applications development while he also taught courses in Business, Accounting and Economics. He also spent 5 years teaching History at the Middle and High School levels. He holds a BS in Management Science, with additional majors in History and Economics and an MBA in Accounting.

Agnes Bickham is a Yoga Alliance ERYT with experience of 1,000+ teaching hours. She received her Yoga Teacher Certification from Shambhava School of Yoga in Kona, Hawaii and has practiced and taught Hatha Yoga (primarily) at various studios and venues in the Baton Rouge area. Agnes teaches yoga as a stabilizing practice that grounds students, promoting a sense of well-being, strength, confidence, balance and joy.

Dr. Matthew Calamia is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at LSU. He has a PhD in Clinical Psychology from the University of Iowa. He conducts research on healthy cognitive aging and neurocognitive disorders and received the 2021 Early Career Award from the National Academy of Neuropsychology. He is the Director of the LSU Psychology Services Center and provides direct services to those with neurocognitive disorders in private practice at Jefferson Neurobehavioral Group.

Gary Casteel has degrees in Computer Science from the University of Florida (BS) and Texas A&M (MS). Following a 23-year stint in the US Air Force, he worked for 17 years supporting the NATO intelligence mission in postings in The Netherlands and Belgium. He strenuously rejects the assertion that his primary qualification for moderating the Great Decisions course dealing with global issues is that he knows a lot of foreigners.

Dr. Jared Day taught American history at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh for 16 years. His areas of expertise are U.S. political, urban, and cultural history as well as world history from the 15th century to the present.

Dr. Erica Daigle is a native of Louisiana and received her BS in Biological Sciences and MA in English from LSU. Her PhD work at the University of Iowa focused on English Renaissance literature (especially Shakespeare) and the history of Western medicine. Erica has taught OLLI courses on Shakespeare, world mythology, literature and mythology on film, and various topics from Renaissance literature.

Ronlyn Domingue is an internationally published author of *The Mercy of Thin Air* and the *Keeper of Tales Trilogy*. A graduate of LSU's MFA program, she works with fiction and nonfiction writers as a developmental editor.

Gaines Foster received his PhD in History from the University of North Carolina and, for longer than he cares to admit, taught US and southern history at LSU. He has now retired.

Lance Foster practiced law for over 30 years, mainly in the intellectual property area. Lance received two engineering degrees and a JD degree from LSU, together with a LLM in international law from McGeorge Law School in Sacramento. Lance has a particular interest in history and economics and how those fields affect legislative trends.

Charlie Fryling earned his BS in Landscape Architecture from Syracuse University and his MS from the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University. His special expertise as a landscape architect is the field of design esthetics. He joined the faculty at the LSU School of Landscape Architecture in 1967 and has taught courses in plant materials, regional planning, and ecology. He created the Views of the American Landscape, a Core humanities course, using his photographs from his travels extensively to illustrate his lectures, showing the impact of the land on artists, writers, photographers, poets, and others.

Billy Gibson holds a BA in Journalism from the University of Alabama and a master's in journalism from the LSU Manship School. He recently retired after a 36-year career in communications, including serving as editor of the highest circulating statewide magazines in Louisiana and South Dakota. He is accomplished in the fields of writing, editing, designing, and managing print publications, as well as terrestrial and aerial photography/videography, developing social media content, video production, website design, feature writing and public speaking.

Jerisse Grantham, owner of the Jeffie Jean Dance Studio, is a dance instructor certified by Dance Masters of America. She earned her BS from LSU and has enjoyed teaching dance for many years in her studio, in the BR area, and in Zachary Schools. She is an adjunct faculty member at Tulane University and has taught for OLLI at LSU for many years.

James Heath is a highly trained certified dance instructor with a distinguished background in dance. He has dedicated his life to mastering various dance styles and nurturing the talents of aspiring dancers. Trained in the International styles of ballroom and Latin, American-style smooth and rhythm, country and swing, James continues to coach, judge, and perform at the highest level.

Pat Heurtin received her BA from SLU and a Masters + 30 hours with emphasis in health education from LSU. Once retired from Teaching and from the National YMCA as the Physical Director of the Lake Charles YMCA, she and her husband retired to Lake Rosemound near St. Francisville. Through OLLI, Pat brought Pickleball to the area in 2015. She is certified in Pickleball through Third Shot Sports.

Rich Hirsch received a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from LSU-Baton Rouge and is a certified Project Management Professional. He is retired from the engineering, construction, and defense industries. Rich is a long time cinephile, with particular interest in films intentionally shot in black and white.

Dave Howson has a BS in secondary education from LSU and an MBA from UNO. After 40 years in the marine industry, he began to pursue his passion for South Louisiana culture and cuisines by creating and publishing a website "First...You Have a Beer.com" in 2018. In 2021, he founded Le Bon Papa Seasonings, a company that offers his own branded seasonings.

Dr. Trent James is a board-certified family physician retired from active practice. He is an Associate Medical Director for Acentra Health, a population healthcare company serving in quality care and clinical practice.

Jordan Jennings is a young professional currently working in the senior living industry with a master's in psychology and mental health counseling. She currently serves as the Life Enrichment Director for a local retirement community where she spends most of her time engaging residents and helping them find a new adventure every day! She believes that you're never too old to have fun, learn something new, try something new, and go somewhere new!

Sally Charlet Jones is a retired East Baton Rouge Parish teacher who taught both French and some English at middle school and high school levels. She earned a degree major in French education and a minor in English education from LSU in Baton Rouge in May of 1990. Sally taught at Central Middle, Central High, and Zachary High. She then retired from Northeast High in 2010.

Trish Kaplan has a master's degree in education from George Washington University. She is an avid advocate for cats and has worked as a volunteer for over 14 years at Cat Haven a local no kill rescue shelter. She has taught for many years for OLLI and loves improving the relationship between humans and felines. Trish is often immersed in reading something about these interesting creatures and often referred to as the "Cat Lady."

Linda Lightfoot is retired from The Advocate where she worked for 42 years, the last 15 as executive editor. She has put together 28 guest speaker classes for OLLI on issues important to Louisiana. She has a BA degree from Ole Miss with a double major in journalism and political science. ut together 28 guest speaker classes for OLLI on issues important to Louisiana.

Sue Lockwood is a retired schoolteacher with a BS in elementary education from LSU. A student of Yoga for many years, received training through The Living Yoga Program at Barsana Dham Ashram in Austin, Texas. She continued training at four Texas Yoga retreats and online. Expanding the availability of Yoga practices to all has become a focus in Sue's life.

Merrie Lee Logan, originally from Iowa, attended The University of Iowa and La Universidad Iberoamericana before graduating from LSU with degrees in Spanish, French, and English. She taught in public and private high schools for twenty years before joining OLLI.

Kathy Lovett is a Board-Certified Patient Advocate with over 30 years of experience in the healthcare industry. She has a master's in healthcare administration from Tulane University. Kathy is also a speaker for The Care Partner Project, an organization dedicated to patient safety education.

Justin Martin is a graduate student in the department of history at LSU and earned his bachelor's degrees in political science and African and African American Studies from LSU. He is originally from Shreveport, but lives in Baton Rouge now. Justin's research focuses on grassroots organizing and institution building in the civil rights movement in Mississippi.

Marchita Mauck - Retired Professor of Art History at LSU. Ph.D. degree in Medieval Studies from Tulane University. Visiting Professor at Yale University, Notre Dame University, and Chicago Theological Graduate Union. Has served as a Liturgical Design Consultant for new church and church renovation projects throughout the US. Interest in modern art and architecture and art quilting.

Antonio Molesini is an Italian wine specialist for Republic National Distributing Company. He is a native of Cortona, Tuscany, Italy and has conducted wine tastings and wine classes at various locations in Baton Rouge for more than 20 years.

Cheremie Moore holds degrees in Advertising/Marketing from USM and in Education from St. Thomas University, Houston.

While attending LSU, **Jann Peck** worked afternoons and evenings at a health spa owned by U of FLA Steve Spurrier, which perked her interest in exercise. Her LSU minor was dance, and she performed for the LSU Dance Theater, summer musicals, and the Baton Rouge Little Theater. Jann also taught Aerobic Dancercise and Water Aerobics in the Baton Rouge area. She has remained active in yoga, strength, and dance and is presently teaching Faith and Fitness as her way to serve others.

Sue Potts received a BS, Masters, and Educational Specialist in education from LSU. She retired after teaching history for 40 years. Since retirement Sue has worked as a city guide for Visit Baton Rouge and the riverboats, Old Governor's Mansion, Old State Capitol, and the current Governor's Mansion.

Rick Pitcher is a retired Presbyterian minister and Licensed Professional Counselor with an interest in Louisiana history, music, and culture. He briefly moonlighted as a radio DJ featuring Big Band and New Orleans music and has previously taught OLLI classes on New Orleans and Louisiana music.

Perry H. Prestholdt is a retired LSU faculty member and administrator. He received a bachelor's degree in architecture and history and a doctorate in psychology from the University of Minnesota. His only qualifications to teach a course on the Vikings: almost forty years as an educator, a passionate reader of all things Viking, and a Norwegian lineage.

Lee Brandt Randall is an artist, illustrator, and arts educator residing in Baton Rouge. She taught studio art and art history to high school students for 30 years. Lee has also worked as an illustrator and has

been the costume designer for the legendary Krewe of Yazoo Precision Lawn Mower Drill Team for 42 years. The krewe members refer to her as the “MacGyver of rubber foam.”

Darlene Reaves has a master’s degree in science teaching from the University of New Orleans and has taught geology, environmental science, and wildlife biology at the New Orleans Center for Science and Math. She has taken yoga classes for over 40 years and has recently taken the online EdX courses The Science and Practice of Yoga from the University of Texas, Arlington and The Science of Happiness from the University of California, Berkeley.

Katherine Robinson majored in psychology and anthropology at the University of Vermont. She did graduate training in mental health counseling and is certified by the McLean Meditation Institute (AZ) and the Yoga Body Institute. She has recently been certified as a Brain Longevity Specialist by the Alzheimer's Research & Prevention Foundation. Her passions are teaching meditation, breathwork and energy techniques to calm the body, exploring the healing vibrations of sound, and motivating and inspiring others to be the best that they can be.

Martha Robson loves to play bridge! A certified ACBL Best Practices Teacher, she loves helping people learn how to approach this complex and fascinating game, and she believes that playing bridge is one of the best things you can do for your brain. She lives in New Orleans, plays at the bridge club in Metairie, and spends too much time playing online.

Karl Roider earned his BA with a major in history from Yale University in 1965 and an MA and PhD in history from Stanford University in 1966 and 1970. He taught history for 45 years at LSU, including a course on World War I that he also taught in the Military History program for officers at Fort Polk, LA.

Ralph Schomburg obtained a BS in Mathematics and an MBA in Finance from the University of Houston in 1968 and 1978. He started working at NASA Manned Spacecraft Center in 1967 as a Cooperative Education Student Trainee and retired from civil service in 2003 as the Assistant CFO of NASA JSC. He has been the recipient of many NASA awards, was a training instructor in the National Management Association, and a part-time staff instructor at San Jacinto College where he conducted management seminars.

Jane Simmons is a graduate of Tulane University and has a master’s from LSU. Jane has studied and practiced yoga for 17 years. She completed her certification and training in Austin ,TX, and has attended other training and workshops in NYC, CA, and Portugal. Jane has been an OLLI instructor for years and completely endorses yoga as the key to well-being.

Dr. Stephenie Slahor holds a PhD degree and J.D. degree and is retired from her law practice and university teaching. She now creates informative and enjoyable OLLI courses!

Dr. Robert St. Amant is a retired Family Physician trained at LSU Medical Center in New Orleans and practiced at Baton Rouge Family Medical Center. He specialized as a Clinical Lipidologist, a Diplomate of the American Board of Clinical Lipidology. Robert was a Medical Director of two Lipid Clinics and continue to teach Clinicians and the Public. He co-moderates the OLLI Medical Lecture Series with Dr. Trent James.

William Stickle received his PhD from the University of Saskatchewan, Regina in Biology with a minor in Oceanography. He taught Marine Communities, Environmental Physiology and Human Physiology from 1971-2015. He also developed the LSU Marine Biology in Southeast Alaska Program which has included 273 LSU students in the last 11 years. Dr. Stickle has published 97 research papers and graduated 15 MS students and 11 PhD students.

Sallie Tetzlaff received a BS in Business from LSU in 2007 (Geaux Tigers!) and completed her 200-hour yoga teacher training through Louisiana Yoga School in 2017. Working with aging students has inspired her to continually learn about the ways yoga can improve quality of life and includes a recent certification of Brain Longevity Specialist through the Alzheimer's Research and Prevention Foundation.

Rev. Tip Tipton is a retired Presbyterian (USA) minister. Dr. Tipton is a musician and active composer. He has taught OLLI classes on musical and theological topics.

Dr. Bob Toburen is a retired political science professor and social sciences department head at Louisiana Tech. He received his PhD from the University of Kansas with concentrations in political theory, American government, and international relations.

Dr. Emily Toth, PhD from Johns Hopkins, wrote her dissertation on Kate Chopin and found a lifelong interest. She has published the definitive biography of Chopin, two books of academic advice, a novel, and seven other books.

Dr. Francis W Vanderwall is a Theologian, Retreat Director, Spiritual Counselor, Psychologist of Religion, Francis is an author of seven books on prayer, spirituality, Psychology and Scripture. He received his Doctorate from the Graduate Theological Union and was a Jesuit for 27 years.

Kirk Vidrine has been working as a fitness professional for over 20 years, including five years developing and implementing corporate wellness programs for Shell Oil and is the owner of V-Well Solutions. He has an undergraduate degree in dietetics and a master's degree in human nutrition from LSU. Kirk has performed research in nutrition and body composition, bone health, and bio compounds, and has presented his nutrition research at national scientific conferences. Kirk's combination of knowledge and experience with food and exercise allows him to give people a complete picture of what a healthy lifestyle can be.

Versa Stickle has her undergraduate degree in English from the University of South Dakota, her master's degree is in library science from LSU.