

## Instructor Biographies

**Emanuel Abramovits** has been a concert promoter since 2000, directly involved in many concerts by international artists, like Itzhak Perlman, Gustavo Dudamel, Sarah Brightman, Roger Hodgson, ASIA, Journey, Kenny G and many more. 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-person across the US since 2020.

**Katie Bailey** has a master's in Library and Information Science from LSU and her BA in History from Ashland University. Her MA thesis was on the political rhetoric of American Civil War politicians. She specializes in 19th century US history and cultural heritage institutions.

**Donald Beale** is a Director, Online Distance Learning, for LSU Online & Continuing Education. He also teaches courses in English and film.

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

**Buck Beason** has a two-track career that includes 40 years of professional experience as a VP of Finance and applications developer with a parallel 30-year career as a teacher of Business Courses and History. A long-time student of World War II, he has developed multi-media courses on the Air War in Europe and the Air War in the Asia/Pacific theater.

**Ben Bell** earned his Master's in Library and Information Science from LSU. He has worked in both public and university libraries for a total of 10 years. His interest in libraries continues through both an historical and pragmatic lens. He hopes this course will open eyes to where libraries came from and how they continue to evolve into the 21st Century. Ben is also an adjunct instructor for the School of Library and Information Science at LSU.

**Jordan Berry** is a young professional currently working in the senior living industry. Because of this, I have become quite in tune with the need to stay healthy and active at all ages. I have been working at a local retirement home as the Director of Life Enrichment and this will be my 4th year teaching Water Aerobics!

**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. She has practiced and taught Hatha Yoga 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.

**Henry Bradsher** has specialized in Chinese affairs for more than six decades, winning a major U.S. journalism prize for his analysis of China, during his career as a world-ranging foreign correspondent and later as an American intelligence analyst.

**Dr. Katie Cherry** is a professor of psychology at LSU. She earned her doctoral degree from the University of Georgia. Her grant funded research program has resulted in over 192 publications, including three edited volumes and one solo authored book (Oxford University Press). In 2002, she

was awarded the Emogene Pliner Distinguished Professor of Aging Studies professorship for her contributions to the field of adult development and aging.

**Sheila Cork** is a librarian, recently retired from the New Orleans Museum of Art. She created and led the NOMA Book Club for many years. She has a master's degree in Library and Information Science and a strong background in creating programs for many different audiences.

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

**Mark Dauer** is a member of the Louisiana Bar and a retired Deputy Chief Litigation Counsel of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority. He has B.A. and J.D. degrees from Loyola University, New Orleans.

**Ross Divers** has a M.S. in psychological research from Temple University and is currently a doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology program at LSU. Ross has been active in research related to cognitive aging and the development of dementia for the past eight years. He is interested in modifiable factors that can affect cognition as we age and is excited to disseminate scientific research on healthy aging to the OLLI community.

**Marianne Fisher-Giorlando**, Ph. D., Professor Emerita, Criminal Justice Department, Grambling State University, received her doctorate from The Ohio State Univ. in Sociology with an emphasis in Criminology. She has conducted research, published papers, and given presentations about the history of women in the Louisiana State Penitentiary from 1835 to 1961 when the women prisoners left Angola to move to St. Gabriel.

**Bethany Garfield (Ph.D., Louisiana State University)** is a disaster preparedness, mitigation, and relief specialist — just taking life one disaster at a time since completing her doctorate in December 2020 [Geography & Anthropology — disaster science and management]. Prior to pursuing her Ph.D., Bethany received a master's degree in journalism & communications from the University of Oregon. She aspires to make people a little bit safer, while respectfully learning from each person's unique disaster experiences.

**Paul Graham** received his PhD in English from LSU, with specializations in American film and medieval literature. Since then, he has taught multiple rhetoric and composition courses, surveys in American literature, surveys in American film, poetry and drama classes, short story and novel classes, Beowulf, and Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales. He has worked for LSU's OLLI program since 2019.

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

**Lawrence "Sal" Guidry, PhD**, is a retired psychologist. He was a psychologist at VAMC New Orleans for 27 years. He completed the Bredesen protocol training in 2018 and in 2022 the advanced protocol training program.

**Mary Hataway** graduated with a BA in Liberal Arts from LSU, and an MA in History from ULM. She specializes in Ancient History.

**Pat Heurtin** received her BA from SLU and a Masters + 30 hours with emphasis in health education from LSU. She retired from teaching Health, Physical Education, and English as well as from the National YMCA. She was the Physical Director of the Lake Charles YMCA. She has received post graduate training in many areas of health and fitness as well as being a Certified Pickleball Instructor.

**Meghan Hodges** earned her MA in Hispanic Studies from LSU in 2022. She is currently completing the coursework for her PhD in Comparative Literature and has an interest in film studies.

**David Howson** has a BS in secondary education from LSU (1977) and an MBA from UNO (1992). After 40 years in the marine industry, he began to pursue his passion for South Louisiana culture and cuisines by creating and publishing *First... You Have a Beer* in 2018. In 2021, he founded Le Bon Papa Seasonings, a company that offers his own branded seasonings.

**Trent James** is a board-certified family physician, retired from active practice.

**Julie Hunt-Juneau** is a Yoga Alliance Certified Yoga Instructor through Balance Yoga and Wellness 2016; Yoga Instructor since 2013 with prior training through Yoga School of Covington; Additional certifications in Breath Coach Training, Aerial Yoga, and Gravity Yoga with Yoga Teachers College. Yoga for PTSD certification through the Veterans Yoga Project.

**Relius Johnson** is the Director of New Maverick Orientation and previously served as the Asst. Director of Multicultural Affairs at the Univ. of Texas at Arlington. He is an alumnus of Texas A&M, Univ. of Central Arkansas, and LSU. Relius strives to engage as an agent of positive social change by activating, activating, and self-interrogating the complexities of one's identities, experiences, privileges, and ideologies. His motto is to use your past to influence a better future. Relius plans to challenge and support the people he interacts with to be the best them that they can be including himself.

**Sandra Johnson** is a retired teacher from St. Tammany Parish who taught 7-12 grades in Biology and Environmental science. Her highest degree is a master's in education with certification in biological sciences and is also certified to teach gifted science.

**Special Agent Felton Joseph** is a member of the U. S. Secret Service and has served as a Criminal Investigator for 19 years. Special Agent Joseph is also a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Reserves and has served for nine years. He is a graduate of Texas A&M University (BA in Ag Development and the Metropolitan College of New York (MA in Public Administration).

**Trish Kaplan** has a master's degree in Education from George Washington University and has been a member and instructor at OLLI for close to 20 years. An avid advocate for cats she delights in teaching people about cats so both species can live in harmony with one another. She's been a volunteer at Cat Haven for over 13 years and is currently owned by four cats. When she's not enjoying her cats, volunteering, or teaching, you may find her reading the latest bulletin from Cornell or Tufts University feline centers or browsing the internet on some cat related topic. Yep, she's "The Cat Lady."

**Robert Kelly** successfully completed courses required for professional pickleball registry. He has been playing pickleball for over 14 years and has won more than 200 medals in states like Louisiana, Alabama,

Mississippi, Dallas, Minnesota, and Texas. Robert loves the game and looks forward to sharing its growth.

**Owen Kemp** has been a yoga instructor for many years. She received her yoga training through the Living Yoga program at Barsana Dham Ashram in Austin, TX. She attended training sessions at the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, NY & various venues around the country & internationally. Owen's style is best described as flow.

**Ann LaBauve** has a bachelor's degree in special education from LSU, a Master of Social Work degree from Tulane University and a graduate certificate in Pastoral Studies from Loyola. She was a special education teacher and later transitioned to Pupil Appraisal Services in St. Tammany Parish School System as a social worker.

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

**Josette Lester** graduated from LSU with a masters in horticulture. She immediately began working as a Horticultural Manager at the Louisiana State Capitol grounds. Josette moved to West Feliciana Parish prior to retirement in 2007 where she lives on 15 acres of predominately wooded land.

**Linda Lightfoot** is retired from The Advocate where she worked for 42 years, the last 15 as executive editor. She has put together 26 guest speaker courses for OLLI on issues important to Louisiana. She has a BA degree in journalism and political science from the University of Mississippi.

**Sue Lincoln** refers to herself as a "recovering journalist," a retired news broadcaster who covered Louisiana state politics for NPR, LPB, and Louisiana (Radio) Network, in addition to writing for the Bayou Brief. A General Studies graduate of LSU, she was minored in English, History, Sociology, and Women's & Gender Studies.

**Edwin Lyon** retired from a career as an archaeologist and historian with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in New Orleans. He received his PhD in history from LSU. He taught Mississippi River courses at night at Tulane Univ. along with other courses on Public History and Travel and History. He has visited archaeological and historical sites around the world. His most memorable visit to an archaeological site was going inside Menkaure's Pyramid, the third pyramid on the Giza Plateau in Egypt.

**Marchita Mauck, Ph.D.**, is a retired Art History professor at LSU. She has additionally taught at Notre Dame University, and Yale University. She has served for many years as a liturgical design consultant on new and renovation projects throughout the country. She has published widely in art and liturgical history.

**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.

**Becky Parker** has a BA in English. For 18 years she taught K - 12 literature and writing in an academic homeschool co-op. She has also taught online literature and writing classes to middle and high school students from all over the world through Brave Writer.

**Kevin Portz** holds a MA degree in history from the University of Texas at Dallas. A federal retiree who worked for the Social Security Administration, he is a former manager of the Baton Rouge Social Security District Office. Kevin served four years as an adjunct professor of history at Dallas College/Richland Campus. He currently volunteers as a docent at the LSU Rural Life Museum.

**Cynthia Prevost** has fifteen years of dance experience.

**Lee Randall** is an artist, illustrator, and arts educator residing in Baton Rouge, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from LSU. She taught Art and Art History in the classroom for over 30 years, the last 24 years as the Art Department Head of Runnels School.

**Darlene Reaves** has a master's degree in Science Teaching from the University of New Orleans and is certified in teaching Earth and Space Sciences and Biology. She taught geology, environmental science, and wildlife biology for ten years at the New Orleans Center for Science and Math.

**Martha Robson** loves to play bridge! A retired pastor, she time playing at the bridge club in Metairie and online. She also believes that playing bridge is one of the best things you can do for your brain, and she loves helping people learn how to approach this complex and fascinating game.

**Karl Roider** earned a PhD in History from Stanford University in 1970. He taught history, including Eastern European history, at LSU for 45 years. In that time, he participated in many overseas programs to various European countries, the last one in 2015 after he had retired.

**Sarah Rosenson** has an undergraduate degree from Georgetown Univ., a law degree from the Univ. of Pennsylvania, and a master's degree in Jewish Studies from the Spertus Institute. She practiced law for a decade. Sarah also taught classes on ethics, philosophy, and world religions at a private high school for over a decade, as well as taught adults in various settings, including various OLLIs and retirement communities.

**Ralph Schomburg** has a BS in math and an MBA in finance. He worked for NASA in Houston, TX and retired as Assistant CFO, Johnson Space Center. He was a part-time math instructor at San Jacinto College. He is an avid bridge student and enthusiast.

**Jane Simmons** has been actively teaching yoga for the last fifteen years after obtaining certification at The Living Yoga Program in Austin Texas. Since then, she has taught yoga at all levels---from kindergarteners to chair yoga for age 80. Her yoga philosophy is to focus on the breath and the rest will take care of itself.

**Stephenie Slahor** holds a PhD in Administration from the University of Utah, and a J.D. degree in Law from Western State University. She is a lecturer and writer and is retired from university teaching.

**Versa Stickle** has BA in English from the University of South Dakota, MLIS from LSU, loves writing and takes workshops in life writing.

**William Stickle** received his PhD from the University of Saskatchewan, Regina in Biology with a minor in Oceanography. He taught in the Zoology and Physiology and then Biological Sciences 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.

**Rae Lynne Thomas** is a lifelong resident of West Feliciana Parish. She received her BS from LSU and taught for 17 years at West Feliciana Middle School as a teacher of science and art.

**Emily Toth** UNVEILING KATE CHOPIN is the definitive biography of the author. Toth holds a PhD from Johns Hopkins University, where she wrote her dissertation Chopin's forgotten writings. Toth has since published eleven books, including a biography of Grace Metalious, a Civil War novel, and humorous advice to academics. She writes columns about women's lives, food, books, humor, and cats.

**Christine Barnhill Tramel** has an associate degree from Clemson University through NAWIC Education Foundation and multiple certifications through NAWIC Education Foundation. She has 35 years of work experience and 15 years doing presentations on team building and construction topics, locally and regionally.

**David Treppendahl** majored in history and traveled the world extensively when he was a naval officer in the 1970's. In the past 15 years, he has visited a dozen or so countries in Europe, several countries in Central America, plus Russia, India, and the UAE. He has a keen interest in foreign affairs. Rather than teaching, David's role will be to ask probing questions and keep the discussions lively and interesting.

**Francis W Vanderwall**, a theologian and author of six books in spirituality and psychology, was awarded his PhD by the Graduate Theological Union and his Master of Divinity from the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley. He is a professor emeritus from the Franciscan Univ. and has taught courses for OLLI over the last 10 years. He was a Jesuit for almost 30 years.

**Bob Warwick** practiced law for 40+ years, including 17 years as in-house Tax Counsel for Reynolds Metals Company and 20 years as counsel to a Richmond law firm. He has led many OLLI courses at the University of Richmond over the past few years. In the 1960s, Bob spent three years on active duty as an officer in the U.S. Navy. Education: BEE, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; MBA & JD, Cornell University.

**Rabbi Barry L. Weinstein** was ordained a Reform Rabbi in 1971 by Hebrew Union College -Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati where he also earned a bachelor's and masters of Hebrew. He then created the first Holocaust course for LSU and BRCC. In 2004, Barry visited many of Poland's killing sites. Barry is currently a Rabbi of Temple Sinai of Lake Charles and Rabbi Emeritus of the Unified Jewish Congregation of Baton Rouge.

**Felton Worrell** is a US Secret Service Agent, Technical Staff Assistant in the New Orleans field office.

**Vernon Lee Wright** received degrees from Iowa State Univ.(BS Wildlife Management), Purdue (MA Wildlife Biology), and Washington State Univ. (PhD Zoology). He has a Post-Doctoral from Cornell Univ. (Biometrics). At LSU, he was an experimental statistician in design and analysis. He also worked on contract regarding geese, ducks, and alligators. At the LSU Dept. of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries, he worked on alligators, waterfowl, egrets, eagles, and other birds and reptiles.

**Zhenman Ye** is a PhD candidate in the study of 19th Century US and China and a native Chinese. She got her master's degree in US history and lectured on American Government and Politics in a Chinese university for 10 years. As a Fulbright FLTA, Ye taught Chinese and Chinese culture at Saint Mary's College, Indiana, from 2013 to 2014. Her PhD program at LSU focuses on the comparative study of US Civil War and Chinese Taiping Rebellion. She has taught two classes at OLLI: Chinese Holidays, Food, & Dining Culture and China in the 19th Century.

**Carol Young** is a retired English teacher who taught in Baton Rouge and St. Tammany Parish.