

Winona State University Retiree Center

SPRING/SUMMER 2026



<http://www.winona.edu/retiree/senioruni.asp>

For further program information, please call 507.457.5565

WHAT IS SENIOR UNIVERSITY?

Senior University WSU is an educational program offered through the Winona State University Retiree Center. The program provides a series of peer-led, non-credit courses designed to promote intellectual engagement, cultural enrichment, and lifelong learning. Courses are taught by Professor Emeriti, current WSU faculty, and other subject matter experts who contribute their scholarly and professional expertise. Senior University fosters a collegial environment that encourages continued personal growth and the exchange of ideas among participants. Classes meet once per week over a four- to six-week term and do not include tests or grades.

Senior U is open to retirees and adult learners in the community.

If a Senior University course has to be cancelled, you will receive a full refund. Please see the full cancellation policy along with the [course registration link](#) and instructions on [page 10](#) of this booklet.

SENIOR UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE:

Jim Bromeland, Rill Reuter, Jim Reynolds, Richard Shields

Retiree Center Director, Jessica Kauphusman

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Senior University Classes

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Reading the Woods - Fall 2012

Senior U Lite: Whale of a Time!

Instructors: Heather Casper & Kamala Nair

Day: Tuesdays

Time: 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Sessions: January 20, 27

Course Fee: \$20.00

Room: Held at the Minnesota Marine Art Museum

Step into history and immerse yourself in the wonder of an 1848 whaling voyage! Discover the magic of the exhibition “Grand Panorama of a Whaling Voyage ‘Round the World” at the Minnesota Marine Art Museum with Curators Heather Casper and Kamala Nair. Casper and Nair will introduce participants to the exhibition, the history of whaling, and talk about the state of our whales today. During the first class, participants will witness the advancement of the panorama! Come as you are; this class is all about the joy of learning something new.

Heather Casper is the Curator of Learning and Community Engagement at the Minnesota Marine Art Museum, and Kamala Nair is the Associate Curator of Clean Water and Climate. Throughout the run of the exhibition “A Spectacle in Motion: The Grand Panorama of a Whaling Voyage ‘Round the World,” both have learned interesting facts and stories about the history of panoramas and of the whaling culture, as well as how whales fare in our oceans today.

MMAM MINNESOTA MARINE
ART MUSEUM



The Aging Brain

Instructor: Richard Deyo

Day: Wednesdays

Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Sessions: February 4, 11, 18, 25, March 4

Course Fee: \$40.00

Room: Phelps Hall, Room 210

This course will briefly discuss the neuroscience of the aging brain and then dive into an in-depth discussion of the current scientific understanding of strokes. These discussions will include prevention and risk factors, warning signs, treatments and outcomes. A series of in-class experiments will be done to demonstrate the remarkable capacity of the healthy aging brain. These will include tests of memory, knowledge and motor skills. The focus will be on showing how the aging brain generally has more capacity and adaptability than commonly assumed. In addition, we will complete some basic exercises using microscopes in the WSU Neurosciences Lab to recognize healthy tissue.

Dr. Richard Deyo has over thirty years of post-doctoral research experience in the area of the neuroscience of aging. This includes conducting research to obtain FDA approval for Bayer AG's stroke drug NIMOTOP (nimodipine) while a post-doctoral fellow at the McGaw Medical Center of Northwestern University, Chicago, IL. While at WSU, he has obtained patents for two additional compounds while working in collaboration with other drug companies.



Apocalypse Past: The Science of Mass Extinctions

Instructor: W. Lee Beatty

Day: Wednesdays

Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Sessions: March 18, 25, April 1, 8, 15

Course Fee: \$40.00

Room: Science Laboratory Center, Room 184

This course explores the history of life on Earth through the lens of its most dramatic turning points: mass extinctions. We'll examine the "Big Five" extinction events (including the end-Permian and end-Cretaceous crises) as well as lesser-known but significant die-offs, including the current "Sixth Extinction" event. Each week will highlight the geological evidence for these events, the biological consequences for life on land and in the oceans, and the scientific debates surrounding their causes, from volcanic activity and meteor impacts to climate change and shifting ecosystems.

Dr. Beatty has been a member of the WSU Geoscience Department faculty since 2008. His PhD work focused on predator/prey ecological interactions in the fossil record. Since 2014, he has taught an undergraduate introductory course titled "Catastrophes and Extinctions" that covers catastrophic and mass extinction events in Earth's history.



Fizz, Funk, & Fuel: Adventures in Fermentation

Instructor: Jen Zemke

Day: Thursdays

Time: 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Sessions: March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 23

Course Fee: \$40.00

Room: Maxwell 287

This course will explore scientific, historical, and cultural aspects of various fermented products. From breads to biodiesel, we will discuss how products come to be by focusing on the microscale organisms responsible for these transformations. We will take a trip around the world discussing traditional fermentation processes, and we will end by discussing some out of the box industrial fermentations that can yield some strange commodities.

Dr. Zemke is a trained chemist who is naturally drawn to experimenting in the kitchen. She has been a home brewer and cheesemaker, has worked in the wine cellar at Elmaro Vineyard, and continuously dabbles in fermenting produce grown in her back yard.



Frank Capra, "Capricorn," and Social Conscience: Five Representative Comedies from the 1930s and 1940s

Instructor: David Robinson

Day: Tuesdays

Time: 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Sessions: April 28, May 5, 12, 19, 26

Course Fee: \$40.00

Room: 1st class: Pasteur 237, remaining classes will be held in the Science Laboratory Center Auditorium 120

This course will look at five comic films of the 1930s and 40s to see how director Frank Capra used them to make social commentary about his times. It will consider the current relevance of these films, now nearly a century old, to our own lives and times. Discussion will focus on Capra's use of classic comedic forms to speak to the audiences of the Depression and World War II, as well as those of today.

David Robinson is a Professor Emeritus at Winona State. He taught in the English department from 1971-2008, teaching composition, literature, and film at all levels from Freshman to graduate. He gave and published papers in both English and film studies. In addition, he was for many years the film reviewer for the Winona Post, writing for a popular audience in the Winona area. This is David's third Senior University course, and he noted that the first two were among the most enjoyable courses he has ever taught.

The films that will be watched in class are *It Happened One Night* (1934), *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1936), *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939), *You Can't Take it With You* (1938), and *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946).



Shakespeare in Performance

Instructor: Jane Carducci

Day: Sunday

Time: Class will meet for 2 hours prior to performance and 1 hour afterwards:

-Class will meet from 12:30-2:30 p.m.

-Performance at 3:00 p.m.

-Class will meet for a 1-hour discussion after the performance

Sessions: To be Determined

Course Fee: To Be Determined (depends on GRSF ticket pricing)

Room: Masonic Theater - Room to be determined

GRSF Plays: *A Midsummer's Night Dream & Pericles*

This class is offered in conjunction with the Great River Shakespeare Festival (GRSF) during July, and will take a performance approach. To that end, GRSF actors and directors will meet with the class to discuss the plays; the instructor will list relevant films that are available to watch (optional) on reserve at the WSU Library or via streaming. The plays should be read before class meetings, and students' full preparation beforehand will assure an active and productive classroom experience.

Jane Carducci earned her B.A. in English from Colorado College. She earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in English, specializing in the English Renaissance (specifically Shakespeare) with minors in linguistics and poetry at the University of Nevada, Reno. She has taught various Shakespeare classes at Winona State University for 29 years and published articles about Shakespeare in *Shakespeare and Higher Education*, *Cahiers Elisabethains*, *Language and Literature*, and *Literature and Psychology*.

*This class will open for registration once dates and pricing are set.



SENIOR UNIVERSITY SPRING 2026

Registration for courses is primarily done online with a credit card. If you don't have access to a computer or would prefer to pay by check, please stop in at the Retiree Center, and we can assist you.

Start your online registration here:

https://mnscu.rschooltoday.com/public/getclass/category_id/219/program_id/37

Watch your email for a message confirming your registration and providing additional details about the class or classes for which you have registered. If you do not receive a confirmation email, or if you have any questions or need assistance, contact us at:

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507.457.5565

[All checks are made payable to "WSU Retiree Center"](#)

SENIOR UNIVERSITY CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

If a class must be canceled due to insufficient enrollment, inclement weather, or emergency circumstances, you will be notified as soon as possible and receive a full refund.

You may withdraw from a class and receive a full refund if we receive your withdrawal and refund request in writing, via email, mail or in person, at least five full business days before the first class date. Please note: if you pay by check, you will need to complete a W9 form to receive a refund by check from Winona State University. Credit Card payments will be refunded within 3-5 business days.

HOPE TO SEE YOU IN CLASS!



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