

Institute for Learning in Retirement

The Institute for Learning in Retirement is dedicated to the enjoyment and continual learning of its members. The courses described in this bulletin are the result of the work of many dedicated volunteers from both Oak Hammock and the broader community.

Spring Kickoff



**Institute for Learning
in Retirement**

Oak Hammock
at the University of Florida®

Serving the Gainesville Community and Beyond

**Introducing ILR Courses for Spring Term 2026
March 8, 2026, 2:30 in the Oak Room at Oak Hammock**

To attend in person, please RSVP at 352-548-1009 or
ILR@oakhammock.org.

This event will also be available via Zoom.

THANK YOU for your patience and encouragement as we attempt to ‘bob and weave’ through the scheduling and parking disruptions. We get your frustrations and are so grateful to you, our loyal community and Oak Hammock members, for sticking with us. As always, Winter 2026 provided engaging course content; Spring 2026 promises even more stimulating ideas and ILR hosts two annual student events you will not want to miss.

- Join us for the UF Aging Research Poster Presentations on March 25 at 3:30 pm in the Oak Room. It is a rare chance to talk to UF students about their active research on aging and encourage a whole new generation of scientists to continue unlocking the mysteries of the aging process.
- On April 24 at 2:00 pm in the Oak Room, ILR showcases Santa Fe students in Research in Education. These wonderfully diverse projects will amaze you and the enthusiasm of the students is always contagious.

Perhaps you want to try something new this term or stick with something familiar. If so, ILR is the place for you. Browse through our Bulletin and check out the topics under Cognition and Aging or Artful Conversations. You might consider joining the Great Decisions Course to deepen your understanding of the world events and critical issues shaping our global community. Maybe Opera is your thing and always will be. Whatever you choose, we want you to join us online or in-person and experience the joy and excitement of stimulating and engaging topics and people.

Optimistically yours,
Henri Logan, PhD
Chair, ILR Board of Directors

Spring 2026 Class Catalog

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Cultivate Your Mind!
Spring Term: March 16 - April 24

Kindly Note the Following Dates

Spring Kickoff

- Sunday, March 8, 2026 at 2:30 pm, in the Oak Room.
To attend in person, please RSVP at 352-548-1009 or ILR@oakhammock.org.
This event will also be available via **Zoom**.

Understanding Invasive Species

- Tuesday, March 31, 2026; Symposium, on the UF campus; sign up is required.
Contact Mohini for more information (Mstevens@oakhammock.org).

Artful Conversations Field Trip to the Harn Museum

- Wednesday, April 22, 2026; sign up is required.
Contact Mohini for more information (Mstevens@oakhammock.org).



ILR Showcase Event 1: UF Aging Research Poster Presentations and Awards

UF students are invited to submit an abstract of their current research; a subset of abstracts are selected for poster presentation at Oak Hammock on **March 25, 2026 at 3:30 pm**. UF Faculty and ILR members judge the posters, and the “top” are invited to present orally at the Retired Faculty meeting on **April 8, 2026 at 10:00 am** following the **Retired Faculty of UF Meeting** at the **Straughn Center**. This is a free event - no RSVP required.

Poster Presentations:
Date: March 25, 2026
Time 3:30 pm
Location: The Oak Room



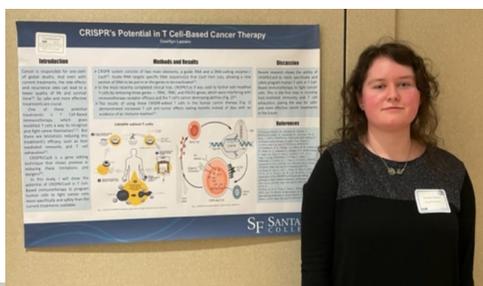
ILR presents cash prizes for the best projects.

Oral Presentations:
Date: April 8, 2026
Time: 10:00 am
Location: Straughn Center



ILR Showcase Event 2: Santa Fe College: Research in Undergraduate Education Conference

Annually, ILR invites a select number of Santa Fe students to present posters on diverse topics. The students present their poster at Oak Hammock, where ILR members and judges review their work. ILR awards cash prizes for the best posters. This is a free event - no RSVP required.



Date: April 24, 2026
Time: 2:00 pm
Location: Oak Room



ILR presents cash prizes for the best projects.



Herstory: The Amazing Evolution and History of Women

Mondays at 10:00 am in the Oak Room

Speaker: Nancy Dickson, PhD

Facilitator: Sheila Dickison



Our history was created by men and written to valorize the activities of men, but much of this history is false or misleading: for example, false where men are given credit for a woman's invention, misleading when only a subsection of human activities are included. As scientists and archaeologists look more closely at the historical record, they are finding areas in which our written history does not reflect reality.

This course offers an alternative reading of our past that gives women equal prominence, attention, and value; one in which women as well as men drive the narrative.

March 16 The Evolution of our Species

Diagrams always show male figures evolving from an ape to a bipedal man usually carrying a weapon. Although women followed much the same trajectory, women's evolutionary path began with a small, protomammal, an egg layer, who fed her babies with milk that leaked out onto her furry belly. After an eon of change, she became the bipedal, breast-feeding, viviparous critter women are today. This evolutionary divergence led to all sorts of differences in the way men's and women's bodies function.

March 23 The Stronger Sex?

What if human strength were defined by what the female body does best: fighting off bacteria and viruses, endurance in sports, length of life, flexibility, toughness faced with pain? Men's and women's bodies evolved to have different advantages and disadvantages, but what has disadvantaged women the most is seeing the male body as the norm and women's as deviant.



March 30 The Mothers of Invention

For centuries, husbands, bosses, and other men took credit for women's inventions. We all know the names of a few women like Marie Curie, but so many female inventors' names and faces have been lost. Everything from the air plane muffler to the computer algorithm, from CRISPR gene editing to the chocolate chip cookie, are a woman's brainchild.

April 6 Women's Health

What if drugs were tested on women instead of just on men? How might medicine have evolved if women's bodies had been studied comprehensively, despite the complexities of hormonal cycles? What if safety testing for things like seat belts were also done for normally smaller women's bodies? What if doctors were taught the difference between men's and women's symptoms for heart attacks?

April 13 History of Patriarchy

Patriarchy is embedded in every aspect of our society shaping the way we live today. How did we get here? Why does patriarchy seem normal?

April 20 A Path Forward

What would change if women were valued as complete and equal human beings? What if laws about equal pay were enforced?



Spring “One”ders 1

Mondays at 1:30 pm in the Oak Room

March 9 **How to Become a US Citizen**
Speaker: **Lynn Leverty, Assistant Director Emerita, Bob Graham Center, UF; Senior Lecturer Emerita, Political Science Department, UF**

Facilitator: **Sheila Dickison**

This talk outlines the basic steps to becoming a citizen, including requirements and the application process. We will also discuss changes the current administration has made or would like to make to citizenship requirements.

March 16 **Florida Fungi: The Diversity Hidden Beneath Your Feet**
Speaker: **Matt Smith, Professor, UF Department of Plant Pathology**

Facilitator: **Phyllis Saarinen**



The wonderful world of fungal biology has a staggering diversity. Dr. Smith will discuss the ecological role of fungi, and the diversity and special species in Florida.

March 23 **Journey Back Into The Vault**

Speaker: **Mario Cartaya, author of the multi-award-winning book entitled, “Journey Back Into The Vault: In Search of My Faded Childhood Cuban Footsteps”**

Facilitator: **Rick Gold**

To be able to go back in time is truly impossible, yet for Mario, revisiting his long-forgotten childhood was the only path toward mending the frayed tapestry of his life - gifting him with the enlightenment, reconciliation, and inner peace he desperately needed.

March 30 **Jesus in Muslim, Jewish & Christian Perspectives**

Speaker: **Paul C. Lim, Professor of Humanities, UF Hamilton School**

Facilitator: **Rick Gold**

Islam regards Jesus as a significant prophet and messenger of God, born of a virgin and endowed with miraculous powers. Judaism views Jesus as a historical figure and a false messiah who did not fulfill the prophecies of the Hebrew Bible. In Christianity, Jesus is revered as the son of God, the messiah, and the savior of humanity, whose teachings and sacrificial death form the cornerstone of the faith.

April 6 **Held Together by Vines**

Speaker: **F.E. “Jack” Putz, Distinguished Professor, UF Department of Biology**

Facilitator: **Jane Brockmann**

The natural history of climbing plants, their increasing abundance globally, and the win-win-wins of vine management based on a half-century of research on five continents.

April 13 **Bread!**

Speaker: **Joe Berkow**

Facilitator: **Pushpa Kalra**



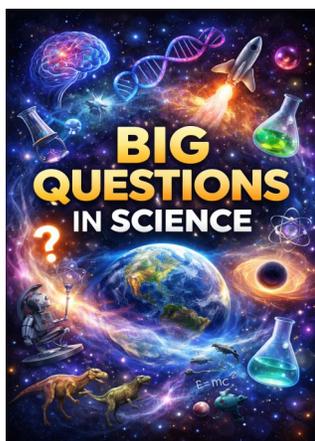
A history of the bread we enjoy: its development through history; how it is made, its nutritional value, different types of wheat and different types of bread, such as croissants, stollen, panettone, and “Wonder Bread.”

April 20 **Why did the British Lose the American War for Independence?**

Speaker: **Michael V. Leggiere, Professor of War, Strategy, and Statecraft, UF Hamilton School**

Facilitator: **Rick Gold**

The British faced immense logistical challenges fighting a war across the Atlantic and underestimated the colonists' resolve. Crucially, French intervention provided the Americans with vital funding, troops, and naval support. Ultimately, Britain lost the political will to sustain a costly, prolonged global conflict against a decentralized enemy.



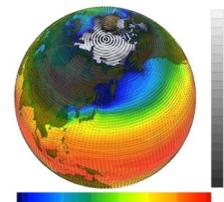
Big Questions in Science

Tuesdays at 10:00 am in the Oak Room
Facilitators: Bob Palmer, Bob Virnstein

This series of questions has two themes: (1) Resolution of each question will have major consequences, certainly for science and often for society. (2) The data collected to evaluate hypotheses are often in conflict.

March 17 Are Weather Forecasters Obsolete?
Speaker: Dr. David John Gagne, Machine Learning Scientist and Post-Doctoral Fellow, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Boulder, Colorado

Recently artificial intelligence has shown remarkable success, characterized as “transformational improvements”, in predicting long-term weather. Has A.I. made traditional weather forecasters and weather forecasting methods obsolete?



March 24 Threats to a Major Ocean Current
Speaker: Dr. Denis Volkov, Oceanographer, University of Miami

The Atlantic meridional overturning circulation (AMOC) is the main current in the Atlantic. What is the evidence and likelihood that global warming will lead to the collapse of AMOC? What would happen to weather, climate, and habitability of the U.S. and Europe if it did?

March 31 Did the First Floridians Arrive Here Much Earlier Than Has Been Thought?
Speaker: Dr. Bob Knight, Founder, Florida Springs Institute

How long ago did Homo sapiens come to the Americas? To Florida? The evidence ranges from 12,000 to 25,000 years ago. Recent evidence keeps pushing the arrival date back in time.

April 7 What Would Happen if We Ran Evolution Over?
Speaker: Dr. Joe Travis, Distinguished Professor of Biological Science, FSU

If we went back 600 million years and re-ran evolution, would we get a similar biological result? Would there be humans? Would there be mammals? Would there even be vertebrates? What aspects of evolution are predictable? Repeatable?

April 14 Origins of Life on Earth
Speaker: Dr. Zhanar Abil, Assistant Professor of Biology, UF

This lecture will survey several influential theories addressing one of the central puzzles in modern science – namely, how life first emerged on Earth. We will examine major unresolved challenges in origin-of-life research, including the emergence of replication, metabolism, and compartmentalization, and discuss how these problems shape current thinking about the transition from chemistry to biology.



April 21 How Do We Explain the Hubble Tension?
Speaker: Dr. Zachary Slepian, Associate Professor of Astronomy, UF

The universe is expanding at an accelerating rate, but the two principal methods measuring this expansion are in conflict. Why can't scientists agree on the universe's rate of expansion? Why does the expansion rate matter?

Understanding Invasive Species

Tuesdays at 1:30 pm in the Oak Room

Facilitator: Jane Brockmann



Over 500 non-native vertebrates, 1,300 non-native plants, and thousands of non-native insects and other taxa live in Florida's ecosystems. New invasive species arrive every day disrupting natural ecosystems

and agriculture as well as urban landscapes. Can we predict which new species will be harmful? In what ways do they affect habitats? How can these harmful effects be managed?

March 17 Aquatic Invasive Species: From Apple Snails to Swamp Eels

Speaker: Lindsey Reisinger, Assistant Professor, Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, UF

This lecture will focus on how invasive species are introduced to aquatic ecosystems and some of their common ecological impacts. Examples of aquatic invasive species that have already invaded Florida include swamp eels, apple snails, and invasive crayfish.

March 24 Invasive Species in an Immense Ocean: the Spread and Impacts of Marine Invasive Species

Speaker: Robert Lamb, Research Assistant Professor, Nature Coast Biological Station, IFAS, UF

Dr. Robert Lamb will discuss some of the more high-profile examples of marine invasive species, pathways for dispersal, features of species that make them more likely to become invasive, management issues and some of the economic and ecological impacts of invasive species in the marine environment.

March 31 Symposium: Reshaping Nature: Invasive Species and Biodiversity on a Changing Planet

Speakers: Multiple

This all-day, free symposium, sponsored by the Invasion Science Institute at UF, will be held at the Reitz Union on the UF Campus. Researchers, practitioners, and students will explore new research on predicting, understanding, and managing invasive species. ILR participants are invited. Sign up required.

April 7 Cascading Consequences of Mutualism Breakdown in an African Savanna

Speaker: Todd Palmer, Associate Professor, Department of Biology, UF

The invasive big-headed ant disrupted the mutualism between native ants and the dominant thorn tree of the African savanna, rendering trees vulnerable to elephant browsing. The resulting increased visibility in the landscape makes lions less effective at killing their primary prey, zebra. Dr. Palmer's research shows that by changing the structure of landscapes, a tiny insect invader has reconfigured predator-prey dynamics.



April 14 Invasion of the Nature Snatchers

Speaker: Patti Anderson, Botanist, Division of Plant Industry, Florida Dept. of Agriculture (retired)

Exotic vines, trees, and ornamental plants all have the potential to escape from cultivation or arrive through storms and take advantage of Florida's climate and long growing season. Learn more about well-known and potential invaders and what Florida does to limit the sale of noxious weeds and invasive plants.



April 21 When Pets Become Pests: the Role of the Exotic Pet Trade in Producing Invasive Species

Speaker: Christina M. Romagosa, Associate Professor, Dept. Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, UF

Dr. Romagosa will discuss the wildlife trade and how it relates to invasions. Can we predict which species are most likely to be invasive and what are their likely effects? Dr. Romagosa will focus on pythons in Florida and how their harmful effects are being managed.



Artful Conversations

Wednesdays at 10:00 am in the Oak Room

Facilitators: Laura Berns, Paige Willis



(In Person Only)



Docents from the Harn Museum of Art will present works of art from the Harn collection. They will have the participants look at slides and engage in a dialogue in which they are encouraged to contribute their own thoughts and questions about the art throughout the discussion.

March 18 Claude Monet: the Artist and the Man

Speaker: Faith Randall

Explore Monet's highly temperamental personality and his professional life. Then look at how American artists truly made French Impressionism their own.

March 25 Art from the Earth

Speaker: JoLaines Jones-Pokorney

Explore the metamorphosis of clay, mud, sand, and just plain dirt into works of art.

April 1 The Message is the Medium

Speaker: Kim Friend

Analyze artworks that use various mediums and discuss how the medium impacts the viewer. Explore how artists use the medium to create experiences both visually and emotionally.

April 8 No Class

April 15 Beyond First Impressions: Art That Changes the Way We See

Speaker: Linda Nickel

Look closely at selected works of art that challenge our assumptions and that reward a deeper observation when we see beyond our initial reactions and reconsider what art can communicate.

April 22 Take a Docent-Led Tour at the Harn Museum

Oak Hammock will provide a bus to the museum. Sign up is required for this tour. Seating on the bus is limited.



Whose History?

Wednesdays 1:30 pm in the Acorn Room

Facilitator: Dr. Jacob U. Gordon



Whose history is being taught in American schools, colleges and universities? This is a six-week course in four parts: Understanding History and Historical Methods, (2) Tradition and Change in Western Historiography, (3) Teaching US History in our Secondary Schools, and (4) Teaching US History in our Colleges and Universities. The course engages guest speakers in exploring solutions to contemporary challenges and threats to the integrity of history education in the United States.

March 18 **What is History? (Problems of History)**

Speaker: **Dr. Jacob U. Gordon, Professor Emeritus, University of Kansas, ALP Mentor, UF**

The session probes various definitions of history, methods of history and periodization. The impact of tradition and changes in western historiography in the teaching of US history will be examined.

March 25 **Teacher Preparation and Curriculum Development**

Speaker: **Dr. Jon Rehm, ACPS Social Studies Director**

This session presents a critical aspect of teaching US History: K-12 teacher preparation, curriculum development and pedagogical issues.

April 1 **African & African American Studies in Schools and Higher Ed**

Speaker: **Dr. Robert “Rik” Stevenson, Asst Instructional Professor, UF African American Studies Program**

An overview of the emergence of “Black Studies” in the American educational system and key issues in teaching African and African American history will be discussed. The current debate on what and how to teach African American history to meet state standards will be of interest. Black history is American history, an integral part of the American story.

April 8 **Teaching Women’s History**

Speaker: **Anna Calluori Holcombe, MFA. Professor Emeritus, College of the Arts, UF**

The session examines women’s lives, gender roles, power dynamics and the intersectionality between gender and race from historical and contemporary perspectives. It involves the suffrage movement, feminist theories, social justice, and diverse perspectives with roots in the 1960s and 70s. The course focuses on the Guerrilla Girls, an anonymous group of feminists, female artists devoted to fighting sexism and racism within the art world.

April 15 **Teaching Jewish History in our Schools**

Speaker: **Barbara Rothstein, PhD, Educational Consultant**

The presentation is an overview of Jewish history from ancient times to the present, focusing on selected key issues: Who are Jews?, Antisemitism, the Current Crisis in the Region: Israel, Hamas and Gaza.

April 22 **Research and Teaching African Studies in a Global Context**

Speaker: **Dr. Agnes Lesley, Master Lecturer and Outreach Director, Center for African Studies, UF**

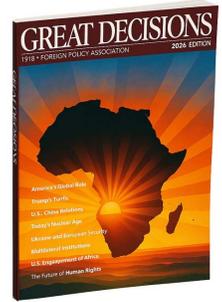
Founded in 1964, the Center for African Studies at the University of Florida has more than 100 affiliated research and teaching faculty in all the core disciplines. This presentation builds on UF’s reputation and experience. It provides an overview of Africa’s contributions to human civilization, its diverse cultures and natural resources inextricably tied to world history. This presentation features discussions and Q&A on recent events in post-independent Africa.

Great Decisions

Wednesdays at 1:30 pm in the Multipurpose Room

Facilitator: Rick Gold

Enrollment limited to 20



Great Decisions strengthens your grasp of world events and issues. Group discussions highlight foreign policy challenges. All participants should read the relevant article prior to each session. The facilitator will share electronic versions of the articles. Physical copies and links to electronic copies of the Great Decisions briefing book can be ordered at fpa.org/bookstore/.

March 18 America and the World: Trump 2.0 Foreign Policy

Trump's return has marked a break from 80 years of US foreign policy leadership, embracing an "America First" approach. This session explores the risks of isolation and diminished influence in relation to Trump 2.0 foreign policy.

March 25 Trump Tariffs and the Future of the World Economy

Trump's aggressive trade and tariff policies have shaken global economic norms. What's the rationale behind this radical shift in economic policy, and what are the implications for multilateral trade and geopolitics?

April 1 US - China Relations

Relations with China remain tense, with tariffs, military modernization, and pressure on Taiwan. Does Trump have a coherent China policy, and will his tariffs on rare earth minerals be effective? What are America's strategic options?

April 8 Ruptured Alliances and the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation

US alliance skepticism may drive countries to reconsider nuclear options. How might the Trump administration's rethinking of the US alliance system affect regional and global security? Will this rethinking affect decision-making on security and nuclear weapons?

April 15 Ukraine and the Future of European Security

With reduced US support for NATO and Ukraine, Europe faces strategic uncertainty. The Trump administration is reducing its security role in Europe. What are America's stakes in NATO and Europe's strategic dilemmas, and how might Europe respond?

April 22 Multilateral Institutions in a Changing World Order

Can multilateralism survive amid shifting global power and rising nationalism? This session examines the future of global cooperation across trade, health, and finance.

April 29 US Engagement of Africa

Africa's geopolitical role is growing. What lessons can the US learn from China's presence there, and how might it strengthen ties, especially with leading nations like Nigeria? What tools of statecraft might the US bring to its engagement with Africa?

May 6 The Future of Human Rights and International Law

As democracy and human rights retreat globally - and the US pulls back - how can civil society and legal norms remain effective in a divided world? What is the role and force of international law in this era of impunity?





Spring “One”ders 2

Thursdays at 10:00 am in the Oak Room



March 19 **Living with the Wind**
Speaker: **Siyao Xu, Assistant Professor, Department of Physics, UF**
Facilitator: **Phyllis Saarinen**

Life on Earth has evolved and adapted to the ionized solar wind that envelopes our beautiful yet vulnerable blue planet, mostly but not always shielded by the planet’s magnetic field and ozone layer.

March 26 **Alachua County Christmas Count**
Speaker: **Andy Kratter, Ornithology Collection Manager, Florida Museum of Natural History, UF**
Facilitator: **Tom Pearson**

For over a hundred years the National Audubon Society has been sponsoring the annual Christmas Bird Count, a volunteer effort to survey the birds throughout the country. Dr. Kratter will describe the effort here in Alachua County and how you can get involved.



April 2 **No Class**

April 9 **Dancing on The Quarters: Maria Tallchief and Maya Angelou**
Speaker: **Dr. Barbara Oberlander, Professor Emerita, Santa Fe College**
Facilitator: **Rick Gold**

Maria Tallchief and Maya Angelou are not only part of the American Women Quarters Program; they were also both trailblazers for diversity in the arts, ballet and literature, and were recognized for their achievements around the world.

April 16 **Introducing the Uralic Language Family**
Speaker: **Irina Burukina, Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics, UF**
Facilitator: **Phyllis Saarinen**

Professor Burukina will describe the Uralic language family, its origins in the Ural Mountains of Eurasia, and what the study of language evolution may tell us about the movement of ancient populations.



April 23 **Kidney Stones, Causes and Management**
Speaker: **Saeed Khan, Professor Emeritus, Dept of Pathology, College of Medicine, UF**
Facilitator: **Pushpa Kalra**

What are kidney stones? How prevalent is the disease? How many types of stones are there? How do they form? What are the causes of formation of the commonly occurring ones? How can recurrence be prevented?

Round Table Discussion in the Algonquin Genre

Thursdays at 10:00 am in the Multipurpose Room

Moderators: Rick Gold, Dick Suttor



Enrollment Limit 30



The Algonquin Round Table was a group of New York City writers, critics, actors, and wits. Gathering initially as part of a practical joke, members of "The Vicious Circle," as they dubbed themselves, met for lunch each day at the Algonquin Hotel from 1919 until roughly 1929. At these luncheons, they engaged in wisecracks, wordplay, and witticisms that, through the newspaper columns of Round Table members, were disseminated across the country.

ILR's Hybrid (in-person or ZOOM, your choice) Round Table is a forum for discussion of topics of mutual interest, particularly of current events. Participants bring their interests, opinions and expertise to the table and engage in spirited, though respectful, debate. Topics are determined jointly by participants, who must be registered to participate in this class.

Oak Hammock Chamber Players

Thursdays 1:00 pm in the Acorn Room

Facilitators: Cheryl Poe and Don McGlothlin

Director: Gary Langford



(In-Person Only)



The Oak Hammock Chamber Players are instrumental musicians who enjoy playing music with others. We welcome people who play or who have once played orchestral instruments. There are no auditions and some of our musicians have not played in over 50 years before joining the group. If you do not have an instrument, we can recommend local places where you might rent one. We can also recommend private music teachers for those who would like to improve their technique. Music is typically provided in digital format. You would have to bring your own music stand to each session.

Most of our selections come from the classical repertoire, but we also play traditional pieces, show tunes, and seasonal music. We learn not only about our music, but also about musical technique and both the discipline and fun of making music with others. We normally give two concerts a year at Oak Hammock.

We are very fortunate to have retired UF music professor, band director, and jazz music expert Gary Langford as our music director. We are members of the New Horizons International Music Association, which is a support network for adult musicians. For more information, go to www.newhorizonsmusic.org. If you plan to register for this course for the first time, please contact Cheryl Poe (cheryltonipoe@gmail.com or 352-316-0886) or Don McGlothlin (mcgloth@ufl.edu or 352-562-1740) to discuss your musical experience.



Cognition and Aging

Thursdays 1:30 pm in the Oak Room
Facilitator: Keith Berg



As we all know, for most, if not all of us, our cognitive abilities including our memory (short and long term, our planning ability, and even our ability to organize our daily activity) have all begun to show signs of decline. This truly is a normal aspect of aging. But are there ways to slow or even reverse these effects? And why does aging cause such a decline? Further, does this decline mean we are all destined to move to true dementia should we live long enough. And what are the signs of true dementia? This course will address these and other related issues, and may even give us hope for our future cognitive abilities.

March 19. Alzheimer's Disease: Its History, Treatment, and Prevention

Speaker: Steven T. DeKosky, MD, Deputy Director, McKnight Brain Institute, UF

Why had I never heard of this disease growing up or as a young adult - in fact, not until about 35 years ago? It wasn't part of any popular health discussions. Wasn't it just normal aging? We'll discuss the history of Alzheimer's disease, the growth of the problem and expansion of research, and the newest efforts to treat and prevent it.

March 26 How About More "Savings" For Your Brain Health? A Flexible Mind Might Help!

Speakers: Chien-Te Wu, PhD, Department of Occupational Therapy, UF

To prepare for an enjoyable aging process, most of us will start a financial saving plan very early. Rarely, however, have we thought about a saving plan for our brain health. Is it doable? We will try to share a few tips about how to enhance our brain health against aging.

April 2 Shining Light on the Brain: Revitalizing Cognition and Motion

Speaker: Dawn Bowers, PhD, Professor Emerita, Fixel Institute of Neurological Disease

Being outside in Florida, we all are exposed to sunlight, which can have positive effects on mood, metabolism and energy. Dr. Bowers will describe results of several randomized clinical trials that examine the effects of 'shining light on the brain,' on thinking, memory, and gait in older adults.

April 9 Can Gentle Electrical Stimulation Help Memory?

Speaker: Aprinda I. Queen, Asst. Professor, Asst. Director Center for Cognitive Aging and Memory, McKnight Brain Institute, UF

Many people want to keep their memory sharp as they age. This talk will share how gentle electrical stimulation is being studied in older adults and how it may help support memory. The results are promising, but they do not work for everyone. Researchers are now focused on finding the best ways to make this approach more effective.

April 16 Train your Brain: Enhancing Cognition in Aging via Real-time fMRI Neurofeedback

Speaker: Natalie Ebner, PhD, Center for Cognitive Aging and Memory, UF

Dr. Ebner will present research on how real time brain feedback can help support attention as we age. New findings show that older adults can learn to boost activity in a key attention control region of the brain - and that this training leads to faster, more accurate performance on a challenging focus task. The results highlight surprising brain adaptability in later life.

April 23 Neurometabolic Changes in Normal Aging and Cognitive Function

Speaker: Dr. Eric Porges, Associate Professor, Center for Cognitive Aging and Memory, UF

As we age, the chemical and metabolic landscape of the brain changes in ways that can now be measured directly in living humans. Drawing on research that includes neurochemical measures from magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS), this talk will examine neurometabolism broadly and its relationship to cognitive function during normal aging, highlighting patterns across individuals and factors that may accelerate or moderate neurometabolic change.

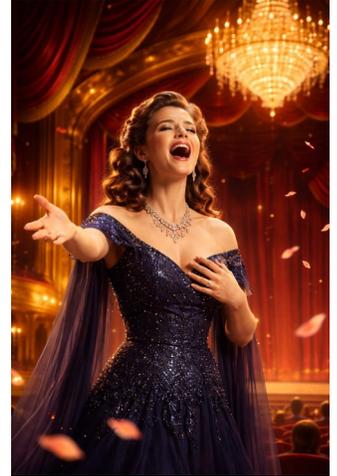
Friday Afternoons at the Opera

Friday 1:00 pm in the Acorn Room

Facilitator: Diane Haines, EdD



(In-Person Only)



Please note that A Guide to Opera and synopses for each opera will be provided via email to all registered participants. Please download.

Operas studied are recorded in HD by the NY Metropolitan Opera. The three operas for this term are from the French Romantic composer Jules Massenet who is known for his sensual lyricism and scores full of color and pictorial details. UF Music Student Live Opera Scenes will be announced in class.

March 20 Week 1 - Thais

March 27 Week 2 - Thais (continued)

Presenter: Diane Haines

What happens when an emotionally tortured monk vows to convert the most glamorous courtesan in Alexandria to a pure life? This version of Thais brilliantly sets the stage for this conflict via vibrant music and scenes. Renee Fleming shines as Thais. Thomas Hampson is convincing as the conflicted monk.

April 3 Week 1 - Manon

April 10 Week 2 - Manon (continued)

Presenter: Lynette Pfund

Based on one of the great tragic tales of literature and music, Massenet takes us from the comedic beginning to the heart wrenching end. Anna Netrebko, as Manon envelopes, us through her journey from an innocent country girl to celebrated courtesan to destitute prisoner. Piotr Beczala is captivating as Manon's lover.

April 17 Week 1 - Werther

April 24 Week 2 - Werther (continued)

Presenter: Terry Lee

Goethe's novel sets the scene for this moving portrayal of the tortured poet. Tenor Jonas Kaufmann brings intensity to the brilliant yet doomed hero. Massenet's deep sensitivity to female characters as yearning, passionate, and poetic is expressed touchingly by Sophie Koch as Charlotte, the object of Werther's passion.



How to Register!

2 Ways to Register for classes: Online or by Mail



1. Online REGISTRATION and PAYMENT:

After reviewing the bulletin, click on the Registration Link below, select your class choices and then press SUBMIT!

You will see a screen that says your registration is complete.

Online payment and registration link:

<https://www.oakhammock.org/ilr/register-for-a-class/>

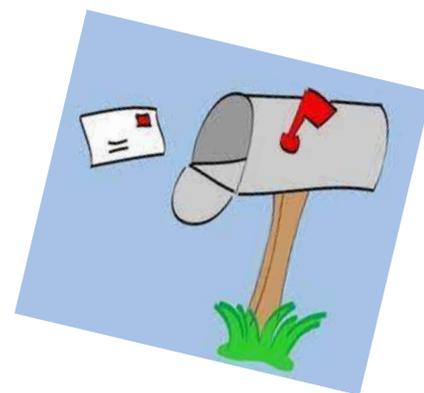
- 2026 Membership Dues, **for those who have not already paid**, are \$20 (for those who are not residents of Oak Hammock or Canopy Club members).
- If you have a credit voucher, please do not pay online. Attach your credit voucher to your registration with your check.
- Everyone who registers must pay for their classes, including Oak Hammock residents, Canopy Club members, Village residents, Gainesville & surrounding areas, and out-of-state residents.

2. Register and Pay by Mail:

Print the registration form by clicking on the email attachment.

Complete the information and mail to:

ILR at Oak Hammock
5100 SW 25th Blvd.
Gainesville, FL 32608
Attention: Mohini Stevens



SEE YOU SOON—IN CLASS OR ON ZOOM!

Please call Mohini at 352-548-1009 if you have any questions OR
ILR@oakhammock.org

Visit the website at www.oakhammock.org/ilr
 Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ILR352>
 Call Mohini at 352-548-1009
 or email ILR@oakhammock.org for more information.



ILR maintains a **YouTube channel** : **The ILR Learning Hut** where previously recorded class sessions may be viewed.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

1. Click the link: <https://www.youtube.com/@ilrlearninghut> or enter the URL.
2. This will show you all the courses for which we have recorded lectures.
3. Find the course you are interested in, and then click on “Playlist” from the main tabs. This will display all the recorded lectures for that course.
4. Click on the lecture you wish to see...and off you go.
5. To return to “View Full Playlist,” menu, click on the black arrow pointing left, in the upper margin. You can now repeat the process to view other lectures for that or other courses.
6. If you do not see a recorded lecture you want to view, contact Mohini.

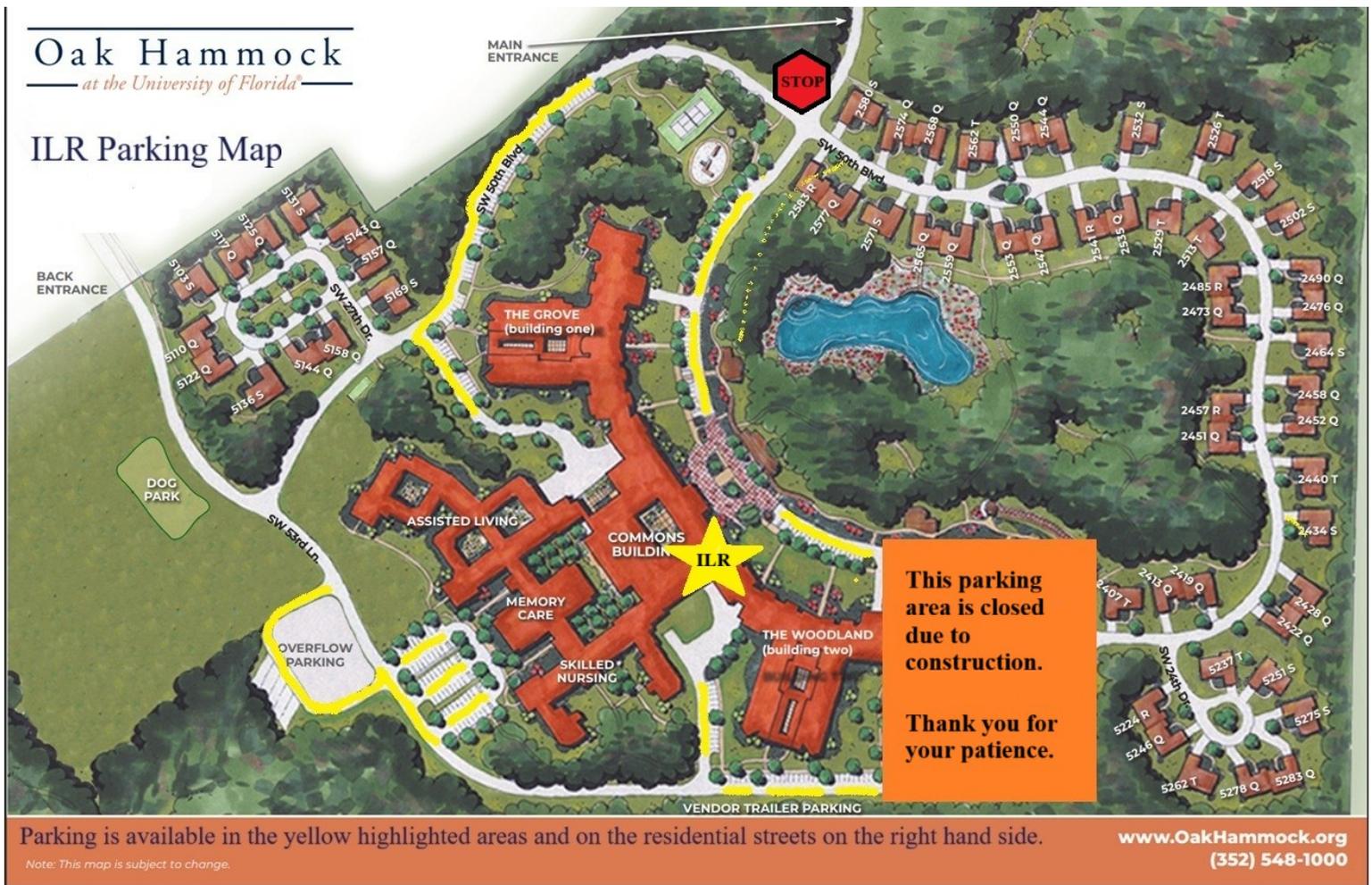
ILR is dedicated to continuing its quality programs. If you have ideas for the Curriculum Committee on topics or exemplary speakers you’d like to hear from, please contact Curriculum Chair Dave Wilson at Dwilson4070@gmail.com.

We look forward to your suggestions and participation, either as a class participant or on one of our Curriculum Subcommittees. Thank you for your continued support, encouragement and participation in ILR.

Location and Parking

Oak Hammock is located on SW 25th Terr. off SW Williston Road between SW 34th St. and SW 23rd St. GPS often directs people to the back gate where you will not be able to enter; please come in the front entrance where there is a sign for Oak Hammock and where there is a stoplight on Williston Road. Oak Hammock is a gated community; please tell the security person at the gate that you are an ILR member. After entering you will drive down a winding road through the woods that ends at a 4-way stop. Go straight ahead or follow signs that will guide you to additional parking.

There are signs inside of the buildings to guide you to the ILR rooms, after you are parked.





**Institute for Learning
in Retirement**

Oak Hammock
at the University of Florida

Serving the Gainesville Community and Beyond

Email us at: ILR@OakHammock.org

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