

Vacation College Class Catalog 2026

This catalog provides a clear overview of all classes offered. Start with the **Classes at a Glance** section to see class times and titles, then explore the full class descriptions organized by time slot. Instructor bios are available at the end of the document. Click any header in Classes at a Glance to jump directly to that section. Please note: this catalog is subject to change until registration opens on **January 20, 2026**.

Classes at a Glance

Long Morning Classes (8:30 – 11:00 AM).....	2
Design Made Easy: Unlocking the Magic of Canva.....	2
Beginning Fused Glass.....	2
The Human Microbiome, Diet, and Health.....	3
Pickleball Mania.....	3
Van Gogh Pet Portraits.....	3
Short Morning Classes (8:30 – 9:45 AM).....	4
Full of Yoga.....	4
Golden Tales & Timeless Frames.....	4
Essential Oil Basics and More.....	5
Balance and Bodyweight: A Function Mobility Class.....	5
Walk Around Nevada.....	5
Short Morning Classes (10:00 – 11:15 AM).....	6
Signed, Sealed, Adorable!.....	6
Food Ethics.....	6
Long Afternoon Classes (1:00-3:30 PM).....	6
An Afternoon of Canasta.....	7
Sarcastic Stitching and Sipping.....	7
Basic Firearms Course.....	7
Did You Know? The Untold Stories of Film, Television, and Theatre.....	7
The Happy Hookers – Crocheting 101.....	8
Movie Journeys to Faraway Places - 2.....	8
Pickleball Drilling for Advanced Beginners.....	8
An Ode to Plants: Four Days of Fruit & Vegetable Forward Recipe Tasting.....	9
Vitality and Longevity: The Art and Science of Aging Well.....	9
Short Afternoon Classes C (1:00 – 2:15 PM).....	9
Genealogy: An Intro to Online Ancestry.....	9
Musical Solutions for Wellness.....	10
Crazy for Daisies II.....	10
Critical Thinking to Enhance Your Life.....	11
Intro to Archery.....	11
Short Afternoon Classes D (2:30 – 3:45 PM).....	11

The Adventure of Geocaching.....	11
How to Play the Native American Flute and Therapeutic Aspects.....	11
Pastels Made Easy.....	12
Golf Skills Workshop.....	12
Wedding Dances: Looking Good on the Dance Floor.....	12
Instructor Bios.....	14

Class Descriptions by Time Slot

Long Morning Classes (8:30 - 11:00 AM)

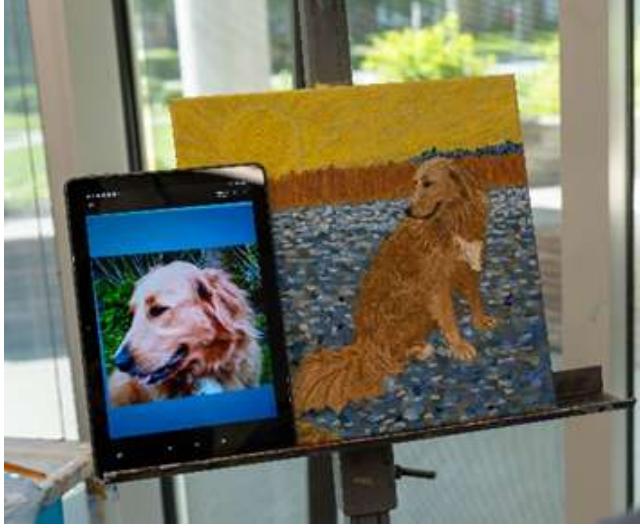
Design Made Easy: Unlocking the Magic of Canva

Instructor: Cody Page Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome	<p>Are you ready to unleash your creativity and learn how to design like a pro without breaking a sweat? Join us for Design Made Easy: Unlocking the Magic of Canva, a hands-on, beginner-friendly course for adults eager to explore graphic design and app organization. Whether you're crafting a family reunion invitation, sprucing up your club newsletter, or taking your photos from just files to beautiful collages, this class will show you how Canva can make it all easier—and fun! Together, we'll navigate the basics of Canva, from creating eye-catching designs to organizing your projects within the app. Discover practical applications like making holiday cards, flyers, and social media posts, all while learning time-saving tips and tricks. Not tech-savvy? No problem! This course is designed for beginners, with no prior design experience required.</p> <p>We'll also explore features tailored to older adults' interests, such as creating personalized photo collages, simplifying layouts for readability, and ensuring your designs can be printed or shared digitally with ease. Best of all, you'll leave the class with your very own completed project and a set of skills that will make you feel confident taking on future design tasks.</p> <p>Get ready to experience the joy of creating and organizing, all while discovering a new tool that can make your life more colorful, creative, and connected!</p>
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Beginning Fused Glass

Instructor: Pam Daugherty Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: Beginners encouraged	<p>Discover the art of fused glass in this hands-on, beginner-friendly class designed for adults. Learn the basics of glass compatibility, cutting and grinding techniques, preparing glass for the kiln, and understanding firing schedules. With guided instruction, you'll create two small fused glass projects to take home. No prior experience required—just bring your curiosity and creativity!</p>
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<h2>The Human Microbiome, Diet, and Health</h2>	
Instructor: Manjira Ghosh Kumar Class Type: presentation/lecture/discussion Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome	<p>The human microbiome is an emerging and influential field of scientific study that explores the powerful connection between gut health, nutrition, and disease. Research suggests that a growing number of adults worldwide are affected by metabolic syndrome (MetS), such as diabetes, obesity, hypertension, and other chronic health issues—many of which may be linked to nutrition and the gut microbiome.</p> <p>In this discussion-based class, we'll explore how modern diets differ from those of our ancestors, the role the gut microbiome plays in overall health, and how imbalances may contribute to disease. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of current research, risk factors, and practical prevention strategies. No prior scientific knowledge is required.</p>
<h2>Pickleball Mania</h2>	
Instructor: Ganga Fernando & Patrick Ryan Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Moderate activity Skill Level: All levels welcome	<p>Interested in tennis but worried about the impact on your knees or the intense serves? Pickleball offers all the excitement of tennis—plus more! Played on a smaller court, indoors or outdoors, it's easier on the joints, features a smooth, bowling-like stroke, and often includes music on the sidelines. Fast-paced, energetic, and social, this sport is perfect for all skill levels.</p> <p>Bring your tennis shoes, get moving, and enjoy the fun! By day four, you'll have the basics down and participate in a friendly mock tournament.</p>
<h2>Van Gogh Pet Portraits</h2>	

<p>Instructor: Linda Wheat Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p> <p>Special Considerations: Teacher will correspond with students in advance regarding an appropriate photo of your pet, plus your choice of VanGogh background. Your combined images will be ready for you to transfer onto the canvas—no drawing involved. You'll be prepared to start painting on day one!!! Please bring an apron!</p>	<p>Create a unique portrait of your pet inspired by a Van Gogh masterpiece! Using acrylic paint on canvas, blend your pet's likeness with Van Gogh's signature style to capture vibrant colors and expressive brushstrokes. Limited painting experience is needed; just email your pet photo and your choice of Van Gogh painting to lwheat@tylerartschool.com by March 15. Your teacher (Linda '69) & you will then collaborate by email to ensure you love the positioning of your pet within your Van Gogh choice. All will be prepared for painting your very own Van Gogh pet portrait masterpiece, step by step, beginning on day one at Vacation College!</p> 
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Short Morning Classes (8:30 – 9:45 AM)

Full of Yoga

<p>Instructor: Chandlar Taul Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Moderate to vigorous activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p>	<p>This beginner-friendly yoga class offers a slow, gentle flow designed to help you feel grounded, relaxed, and connected. Modifications are provided throughout the class, allowing you to make each pose more comfortable or more challenging based on your individual level.</p> <p>Enjoy calming music and mindful movement as we move through standing, seated, and flowing poses at an easy, accessible pace. This class is perfect for those new to yoga or anyone looking for a slower, more restorative experience.</p> <p>Please wear comfortable clothing that allows you to move freely, and bring water to stay hydrated. We look forward to welcoming you to the studio!</p>
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Golden Tales & Timeless Frames

<p>Instructor: Kerry Tate Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p> <p>Special Considerations: Students are to bring 15-20 personal photos they'd like to include in their storybook album. These can be printed or digital. All crafting and decorating materials will be provided, but students are welcome to bring any special stickers, drawings, or keepsakes they'd like to use.</p>	<p>Transform your favorite photos into charming storybook-style keepsakes in this nostalgic and imaginative workshop. Inspired by the classic Little Golden Books, this class invites adults to blend personal memories with playful storytelling. You'll craft whimsical captions, add vintage-inspired design elements, and bring your photos to life in a delightful, narrative format.</p> <p>No writing or design experience is required—just bring your creativity and a few meaningful photos. Each session includes guided prompts, light instruction, and dedicated time to build your pages. Most importantly, come ready to turn your memories into magical tales!</p>
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Essential Oil Basics and More

<p>Instructor: Bobbi Jo Ogle Class Type: Presentation/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low to moderate activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p>	<p>Discover the Power of Natural Wellness with doTERRA Essential Oils</p> <p>This is an interactive essential oil class where you'll learn simple, practical ways to support sleep, stress relief, digestion, immunity, pain management, and a healthier home. We'll explore doTERRA's "Gift of the Earth" philosophy, why it's the world's leading essential oil company, and the 3 ways to use essential oils in everyday life—including a quick 2-minute morning routine.</p> <p>You'll also learn about reducing toxins in your home, AromaTouch® applications for balance and relief, and enjoy a hands-on experience creating your own all-natural, toxin-free "purefume" to take home.</p> <p>Perfect for beginners and those looking to deepen their wellness journey.</p>
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Balance and Bodyweight: A Function Mobility Class

<p>Instructor: Claire Mills Class Type: Presentation/activity Level of Physical Activity: Moderate activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p> <p>Special Considerations: Wear flexible clothing and either athletic shoes or socks. Bring a full water bottle that doesn't leak when held upside down. This will be your weight as well as a drink!</p>	<p>Start your day with a low-impact class designed to improve balance, mobility, and functional strength. Using bodyweight exercises, this class focuses on movements that support everyday activities, helping you feel stronger, steadier, and more confident in your daily life.</p> <p>Perfect for all fitness levels, this class emphasizes safe, effective movement in a supportive environment.</p>
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Walk Around Nevada

Instructor: Sarah Wall Class Type: Discussion/activity Level of Physical Activity: Moderate to vigorous activity Skill Level: All levels welcome	Start your day with a refreshing walk! This group will cover approximately two miles on parks and routes near campus. Walk at your own pace and adjust the distance to suit your comfort level. All are welcome.
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Short Morning Classes (10:00 – 11:15 AM)

Signed, Sealed, Adorable!

Instructor: Kerry Tate Class Type: Presentation/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome	<p>In this cheerful, hands-on session, students will design and craft their own one-of-a-kind greeting cards, perfect for birthdays, holidays, thank-yous, or just-because moments. With colorful supplies, creative prompts, and a sprinkle of charm, each card becomes a heartfelt keepsake ready to brighten someone's day.</p> <p>Students will create 10-15 handmade cards during the session. Participants are encouraged to think ahead about who they'd like to make cards for and, if helpful, jot down a few ideas or messages to spark creativity.</p> <p>No prior writing or art experience is required—just bring your imagination and a willingness to have fun!</p>
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Food Ethics

Instructor: Claire Mills Class Type: Presentation/lecture/discussion Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: Beginners Encouraged	<p>Explore how our food choices—and the industries behind them—affect the world around us. In this thought-provoking class, students will examine the environmental, social, and ethical impacts of what we eat and learn how to make dietary choices that better align with their personal values.</p> <p>Engage in discussions, discover practical strategies, and gain a deeper understanding of how mindful eating can make a difference—for you and the world.</p>
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Long Afternoon Classes (1:00-3:30 PM)

An Afternoon of Canasta

Instructor: Allison Fast
Class Type: Presentation/activity
Level of Physical Activity: N/A
Skill Level: Beginners encouraged

Discover the classic card game of Canasta in this fun, hands-on class. The first two sessions focus on learning the rules, strategies, and tips for successful play, with plenty of discussion and questions along the way. The final two sessions are all about putting your skills into practice—playing real games with guidance from the instructor as needed.

Designed for beginners and enthusiasts alike, this class requires a minimum of four participants and promises both learning and lively gameplay!

Sarcastic Stitching and Sipping

Instructor: TraceyJane Kammerer
Class Type: Studio/activity
Level of Physical Activity: Low activity
Skill Level: All levels welcome

Special Considerations: We will have a limited number of adult beverages available. You are welcome to bring your own beverage!

Cross-stitching: the art of stabbing something over and over again and calling it creativity! Join us for a lighthearted, no-pressure stitching session where embroidery and cross-stitch meet humor, sass, and a little sipping. Bring your sense of humor, your favorite beverage, and get ready for a crafty good time!

Basic Firearms Course

Instructor: Mike Shuster
Class Type: Presentation/activity
Level of Physical Activity: Moderate activity
Skill Level: All levels welcome

Special Considerations: Wear outdoor clothing conducive to the weather. Hearing and eye protection is provided; however, you are welcome to bring additional earplugs/ear protection for your comfort.

This course provides comprehensive instruction in firearm safety, handling, and operation for shotguns, handguns, and rifles. Participants will learn firearm and ammunition nomenclature, proper grip and stance, sight alignment and sight picture, target acquisition, recoil management, shooting fundamentals, and safe storage practices. The class also covers key legal responsibilities and state laws, emphasizing safety, confidence, and accountability.

Students will work with a variety of firearms—including a 12-gauge shotgun, 9mm handgun, and 5.56 rifle—and progress through structured training designed for both beginners and those seeking to strengthen their skills. The final day features an introductory shooting competition to apply learned techniques in a controlled, supportive environment.

Did You Know? The Untold Stories of Film, Television, and Theatre

Instructor: Cody Page
Class Type: Presentation/activity
Level of Physical Activity: Low activity

Step into the spotlight (or maybe behind it) for a week of unbelievable stories, uncanny coincidences, and jaw-dropping trivia from the worlds of film, television, and

<p>Skill Level: All levels welcome</p>	<p>theatre. "Did You Know? The Untold Stories of Film, Television, and Theatre" is a lively, conversation-driven course that peels back Hollywood glamour and Broadway glitter to reveal the strange truths, legends, and mysteries hiding just out of frame.</p> <p>From the chilling curse surrounding <i>The Exorcist</i> and the tragic fate of <i>The Crow</i> cast, to the mysterious disappearance of early film reels, on-set feuds that changed entertainment history, and the ongoing lore of shows like <i>Glee</i> and <i>Saturday Night Live</i>, we'll explore how real-life drama often rivals the stories we watch on screen.</p> <p>Each day, we'll tackle a new theme — mixing clips, stories, and group discussion — in a relaxed, engaging format that celebrates the cultural impact and human eccentricities behind the art we love. Think of it as a "pop culture salon": part history, part mystery, part gossip — all fascinating.</p> <p>You don't need to be a film buff or a theatre historian — just bring your curiosity and your sense of wonder. You'll leave with plenty of stories to tell at dinner parties, a newfound appreciation for your favorite shows and movies, and maybe even a few goosebumps.</p>
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The Happy Hookers - Crocheting 101

<p>Instructor: Trudy Burr Class Type: Presentation/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p> <p>Special Considerations: Bring their own hooks and yarn, or items they are working on and need/want help with.</p>	<p>Whether you're picking up a hook for the first time or looking to refine your skills, this class has something for everyone. Learn and practice a range of stitches—from basic to advanced—while creating beautiful, handmade pieces you'll be proud to show off. Join us for a relaxing, creative, and hands-on crochet experience!</p>
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Movie Journeys to Faraway Places - 2

<p>Instructor: Tatiana Jones Class Type: discussion/activity Level of Physical Activity: N/A Skill Level: All levels welcome</p>	<p>Explore the wonders of nature and culture through award-winning films set in stunning locations around the world. This class takes you on a cinematic journey to breathtaking landscapes, offering insight into diverse cultures and the beauty of our planet.</p>
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Pickleball Drilling for Advanced Beginners

<p>Instructor: Ganga Fernando & Patrick Ryan Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Moderate activity</p>	<p>This "Drilling and Learning" league-style class is designed for experienced pickleball players (2.5–3.0 level) looking to improve their skills for tournament play and advance to 3.5</p>
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<p>Skill Level: Some experience suggested</p>	<p>or higher. Every game counts, and players will refine strategies, learn advanced techniques such as "Ernes" and ATPs, and enhance their court communication. The course also covers tournament organization, rule changes, bracket formats, and practical drills. Taught by a USA Pickleball Ambassador with over eight years of tournament experience, the class includes a guest speaker and valuable insights to elevate your game.</p>
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An Ode to Plants: Four Days of Fruit & Vegetable Forward Recipe Tasting

<p>Instructor: Jen Harris Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low to moderate activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p>	<p>Celebrate the flavors, colors, textures, and nutrition of plants in this hands-on culinary series inspired by <i>America's Test Kitchen's Plant-Based Cookbook</i>. We'll start each session talking about a single starring plant, then tackle a standout recipe that shows off its potential! All levels of experience are welcome in this kitchen. Our goals are to learn something new about plants and ourselves. This class is a joyful celebration of plant-based cooking, and you are invited!</p>
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Vitality and Longevity: The Art and Science of Aging Well

<p>Instructor: Dr. Maryann Mitts Class Type: Lecture/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low to moderate activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p> <p>Special Considerations: Participants will spend part of each class in presentation and discussion, and the other part engaging in a hands-on activity related to the day's topic. Please wear comfortable, active clothing and tennis shoes for all sessions.</p>	<p>Explore the keys to living a longer, healthier, and more vibrant life in this engaging, evidence-based class. Discover how nutrition, movement, mindset, and lifestyle choices all contribute to vitality as we age. Through discussion and practical strategies, you'll learn ways to support your physical, mental, and emotional well-being for years to come. This class is perfect for anyone interested in taking an active role in their health and embracing the science—and the art—of aging well.</p>
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Short Afternoon Classes C (1:00 – 2:15 PM)

Genealogy: An Intro to Online Ancestry

<p>Instructor: Chris Niles Class Type: Discussion/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: Beginners encouraged</p> <p>Special Considerations: This is not a promotion or endorsement, but everyone will be asked to create a free trial account on ancestry.com to utilize their online research and tools. This will require using your credit/debit card, and the instructor will make sure you have cancelled and closed the trial account at the end of the week if that's what you want.</p>	<p>Ever been curious about exploring your family history? Join us to see how easy it is to get started, learn the basics of genealogy, and surprise yourself with how much info is available online. If you've dabbled before, this can also be a chance to get back to it again and devote some of your Vacation College time to furthering your discoveries along with other family detectives.</p>
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Musical Solutions for Wellness

<p>Instructors: Janalea Hoffman & Marilyn Miller Class Type: Lecture/activity Level of Physical Activity: N/A Skill Level: All levels welcome</p>	<p>In this experiential class, we will cover various techniques developed by Janalea Hoffman, a Music Therapist. You will experience Musical Biofeedback, a technique for matching body rhythms to musical rhythms to lower heart rate and blood pressure; entrainment, a scientific phenomenon in which the body synchronizes with external rhythms; Musical Acupuncture for easing anxiety and pain; and the power of music and mental imagery for healing.</p> <p>Participants will also learn the different ways the brain responds to music. In the last class, we will experience a Sacred Circle Dance, a meditative, easy-to-follow movement to music that helps create a peaceful mind and a sense of unity among participants. You will learn examples of how music can help connect us to the emotional and spiritual sides of ourselves, contributing to healing and wellbeing.</p>
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Crazy for Daisies II

<p>Instructor: Randi Turk Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p> <p>Special Considerations: Students may wish to bring an apron or a large shirt. We will be painting with acrylics.</p>	<p>We're still crazy about painting daisies! If you are new to the class, we will learn how to paint beautiful daisies on several projects you can take home and use immediately. Trust me! Your daisies will be gorgeous! If you took the class a few years ago, I will have new projects for you to paint. Alternatively, if you would like to bring your own denim jacket or shirt to paint, you will create a wearable masterpiece! If you want to slip a little duck or two in there as well, even better!</p>
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Critical Thinking to Enhance Your Life

Instructor: Claire Mills Class Type: Presentation/Lecture/Discussion Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome	Learn how to apply critical thinking to everyday challenges in this practical, hands-on philosophy class. Discover strategies to avoid scams, strengthen social relationships, and make decisions that align with your personal values. This course offers useful insights for navigating life more thoughtfully—enlightenment you can actually use!
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Intro to Archery

Instructor: Sarah Trout Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low to moderate activity Skill Level: All levels welcome	This fun class will teach the fundamentals of archery, including equipment, safety, and shooting techniques. Housed in the new Sophia gymnasium archery range, students will experience archery in a comfortable, safe environment.
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Short Afternoon Classes D (2:30 – 3:45 PM)

The Adventure of Geocaching

Instructor: Chris Niles Class Type: Discussion/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low to moderate activity Skill Level: Beginners encouraged	<p>Geocaching is a real-world scavenger hunt game using GPS-enabled devices, where participants navigate to specific coordinates to find a hidden container. If found, players sign a logbook, and if there are trinkets inside, it's a take something/leave something culture.</p> <p>This hobby combines outdoor exploration with technology and can be played in many locations, from urban areas to forests, whether you're near home or on the road. This fun activity can be enjoyed solo or with friends and family of all ages.</p>
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How to Play the Native American Flute and Therapeutic Aspects

Instructor: Janalea Hoffman & Marilyn Miller Class Type: Presentation/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome	<p>In this experiential class, you will get a loaner flute (if you don't have your own) to learn to play simple native-style melodies from the heart. It is one of the easiest instruments to play, and you do not need any prior musical knowledge to benefit from this class.</p> <p>The reason the Native flute is easier to play than our traditional band and orchestral instruments is that it is a 5-note scale that does not require you to read music. In the</p>
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	<p>class, you will learn how to use this soulful scale to create music from the heart with NO prior musical knowledge. Even skeptics are amazed at how much they achieve in the first class.</p> <p>Learning a musical instrument helps the brain as we age; however, traditional instruments take so long to learn that it can be daunting. The native flute, on the other hand, can be learned very quickly, so you get rewarded much quicker while helping your brain build new pathways and have fun at the same time. You will also learn about the many therapeutic benefits of this instrument- it helps build lungs, self-expression, reduces anxiety, etc. Come to this class to experience the soulful sound and explore your inner musician!</p>
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Pastels Made Easy

<p>Instructor: Randi Turk Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Low activity Skill Level: All levels welcome</p>	<p>Pastels are easy, economical, user-friendly, and busy-person-friendly. Unlike oils, acrylics, or watercolor, when it's time to go, you just get up, wash your hands, and walk away. Come back later and work again.</p> <p>This class is for beginners to experienced pastel artists. Beginners will learn the basics of chalk pastels and receive quick tips on colors and composition (no long, boring lectures here!). Pro pastelers can enjoy time to paint with fellow artists. Photographs will be available to paint from, or participants are welcome to bring their own on a phone or tablet. Basic pastel colors, sanded paper, and plastic sleeves for transporting artwork will all be provided.</p>
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Golf Skills Workshop

<p>Instructor: Dominic Habjan Class Type: Studio/activity Level of Physical Activity: Moderate to vigorous activity Skill Level: Some experience requested</p> <p>Special Considerations: Bring your own set of clubs and wear golf or athletic apparel.</p>	<p>Sharpen your game and have fun on the green! In this hands-on class, you'll practice your swing, improve your technique, and build confidence in every aspect of golf. Bring your clubs and join us in the Swing Studio to take your skills to the next level!</p>
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Wedding Dances: Looking Good on the Dance Floor

<p>Instructor: Claire Mills Class Type: Presentation/activity Level of Physical Activity: Moderate activity</p>	<p>Learn the group dances that you see at weddings! We'll learn the most popular dances of today, the ones you are likely to see everyone doing together when certain songs play, such</p>
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Skill Level: All levels welcome	as the electric slide, cupid shuffle, cha cha slide, cotton-eyed joe, and more!
Special Considerations: Wear shoes you can easily move in	

Instructor Bios



Trudy Burr - Library Assistant for Acquisitions

Much like Clark Kent, by day, Trudy works in Acquisitions at Ross Library; by night, she's a passionate crocheter creating whimsical, one-of-a-kind pieces. A proud fourth-generation crafter, she's been sewing, cross-stitching, and crafting since childhood and fell in love with crochet four years ago.

Trudy enjoys teaching others, selling at local craft shows, and sharing her creativity with her ten grandchildren. From dish scrubbies to a two-foot-tall Shadow the Hedgehog (with a special nod to her stress ball octopus!), her projects are as fun as they are varied.

She's grateful for the chance to create and connect—here's to a week of happy hooking!



Pam Daugherty - PSP MI State Chapter

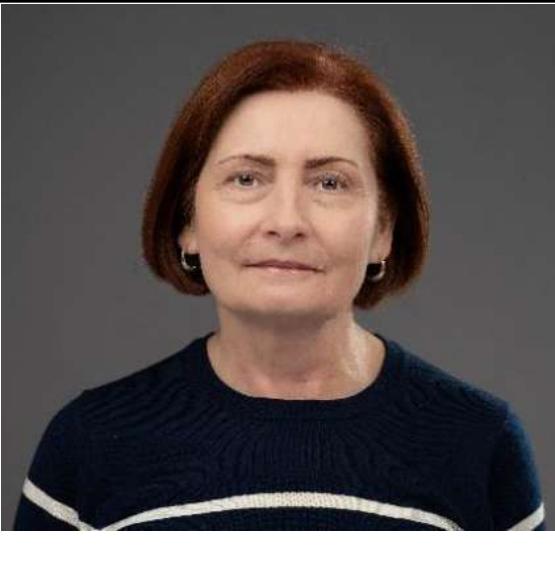
I live in Michigan's beautiful Upper Peninsula. Yes, you either cross the big Mackinac Bridge or drive 100 miles north of Green Bay to get here. I was initiated into Chapter EN, Iron Mountain, in 2014 and later joined the Michigan State Board, finishing my State Presidency in 2024.

My career began in 1981 as Secretary for D&L Plumbing, Heating, and A/C. I became a partner in 1995, purchased the company in 2001, earned my Michigan Plumbing Contractor License, and successfully ran the business until retiring in 2022.

My stained-glass journey started in 1983, and I've been hooked ever since. I learned from artists across the Midwest and now work from my professional home studio, complete with five kilns. Over the years, I've taught classes, repaired church and antique pieces, and created commission work. For the Michigan State Convention, I made 100 fused-glass daisy and star pendants and donated them to help raise funds for our convention. These were well received.

	<p>I love sharing my knowledge of this forgotten art and look forward to teaching new students the joy of working with glass.</p>
 A head-and-shoulders portrait of Allison Fast. She is a woman with short, light brown hair and glasses, wearing a dark green t-shirt. She is smiling at the camera.	<p>Allison Fast - Cottey Alumna, Class of '76</p> <p>Allison Fast retired from Cottey after a 40-year career in IT. She was at Cottey for the last 6 years. As an alumna, former CCAA board member, and Nevada resident, she has remained close to Cottey through the years. Over the past year, she has continued that connection by volunteering her time in the concession booth for home games. This year, at Founder's, she will be joining many of her classmates to celebrate 50 years since they graduated from Cottey in 1976! She enjoys spending time in Columbia, MO, with her son, daughter-in-law, and 2 grandkids (7 and 5). Her daughter and son-in-law recently moved to McKinney, TX; she and her husband visit each family as often as possible. Allison is a long-time member of the American Association of University Women, a nationally prominent organization advocating for women and girls. She has hosted a weekly Canasta group of 6, as schedules allow, since 2019. She is eager to share her experience with others looking for a relatively easy card game to learn, or re-learn, and potentially inspire them to start a card group of their own.</p>
 A head-and-shoulders portrait of Dr. Ganga Fernando. She is a woman with dark, curly hair and glasses, wearing a red sweater and a colorful scarf. She is smiling at the camera.	<p>Dr. Ganga Fernando - Professor of Chemistry</p> <p>Dr. Ganga Fernando grew up on the island of Sri Lanka and graduated with a Chemistry honors degree before moving to Texas for higher studies. She moved to Illinois and earned her Ph.D. in Analytical Chemistry, specializing in proteomic mass spectrometry, from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. She joined Cottey in 2008 as a faculty member of the Chemistry department. She is an advocate for women in STEM, especially in undergraduate research in analytical chemistry. Her family is very active in the local YMCA and participates in many sports in their free time, including pickleball.</p>

	<p>Dominic Habjan - Golf Head Coach, Sports Information Director</p> <p>Dominic Habjan is a native of Nevada, MO, growing up as the youngest of six siblings to pass through Nevada High School. He graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia with a Bachelors in Agricultural Economics-Public Policy, and also possesses a Masters in Public Affairs from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Habjan has worked at Cottey College since 2019, working in roles of Head Golf Coach, Esports Program Director, and Sports Information Director.</p>
 A professional headshot of Jen Harris. She is a woman with short, light-colored hair and glasses, wearing a patterned blazer over a black top. She is smiling and looking directly at the camera.	<p>Jen Harris - Manager of Online Programs</p> <p>Jen Harris is the Manager of Online Programs at Cottey College and is thrilled to be supporting the development of new educational pathways. She is working on her PhD in Education at Oakland University, where she plans to defend her dissertation on improving compensation for the early childhood workforce in March of 2026. Additionally, she holds a Master's in Education from St. Catherine University and a Bachelor's in English from Kalamazoo College. Jen is a fourth-generation P.E.O. who feels fortunate to be part of a community of women lifting other women. When she is not reading fictional novels or testing new recipes, she enjoys walking the shores of Lake Michigan with her family.</p>

 A photograph of Janalea Hoffman, a woman with short grey hair, wearing a purple zip-up jacket. She is holding a Native American flute and smiling at the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees.	<p>Janalea Hoffman - Music Therapist</p> <p>Janalea Hoffman is the owner and founder of Rhythmic Medicine and a pioneer in the field of Music Therapy. A musician, author, and speaker, she teaches the healing power of music. After years of research and lecturing, Hoffman discovered that people instinctively recognize the power of expressive therapies but may not know how to apply them therapeutically. Her approach focuses on specific, steady rhythms that help lower blood pressure, slow the heartbeat, and deepen breathing. She specializes in instruments such as Native American flutes.</p>
 A professional portrait of Tatiana Jones, a woman with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue cable-knit sweater with white stripes. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.	<p>Tatiana Jones - Library Technician/Cataloger</p> <p>Tatiana was born in Volgograd (former Stalingrad), Russia, and moved to the USA in 1999. In 2008, she joined the Cottey College team in Ross Memorial Library, where her primary responsibility is cataloging. Tatiana became a P.E.O. in 2016. She has enjoyed teaching Vacation College classes for the last several years.</p>

 A professional headshot of TraceyJane Kammerer, a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a dark, V-neck top.	<p>TraceyJane Kammerer - Assistant to the President's Office</p> <p>TraceyJane Kammerer is passionate about empowering women by helping them release stress, build confidence, and embrace their strength. With a mission to help women feel powerful in every aspect of their lives, TraceyJane creates an environment where they can break literal and figurative barriers while having a blast. Whether you're looking to de-stress, sharpen your skills, or reclaim your power, she's here to support you every step of the way!</p>
 A professional headshot of Dr. Manjira Ghosh Kumar, a woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt. She is smiling at the camera.	<p>Dr. Manjira Ghosh Kumar - Associate Professor of Biology and Chemistry</p> <p>Dr. Manjira Kumar earned her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Calcutta in India, her Master of Science degree from Kalyani University in India, and her Ph.D. from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. She studies aquatic, photosynthetic microorganisms called cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) that have the distinction of being the oldest known fossils. This large group of bacteria has survived for billions of years of evolution and provides a unique model system for studying environmental pollution. Her lab focuses on the biochemical, molecular, and phenotypic changes within the bacteria due to the exposure to surface waters or other chemical toxins such as antibiotics and anti-inflammatory drugs. Dr. Kumar is also a member of the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR).</p>

 A professional headshot of Claire Mills, a woman with shoulder-length brown hair, wearing a black top and a necklace with a green pendant.	<p>Claire Mills - Assistant Professor of Philosophy</p> <p>Dr Claire Mills joined Cottey College's Philosophy Department in 2023. She earned her BA at Kalamazoo College before completing her Masters and PhD in Philosophy from the University of Georgia in 2022, defending a thesis on livestock rights. Her research interests are in the areas of political philosophy, writing pedagogy, and ethics. In her spare time she enjoys playing roller derby, as captain of the Kansas City Roller Warriors.</p>
 A professional headshot of Dr. Maryann Mitts, a woman with short, wavy blonde hair, wearing a blue polo shirt with the "COMETS ATHLETICS" logo.	<p>Dr. Maryann Mitts - Director of Athletics</p> <p>Dr. Maryann Mitts joined Cottey College after an accomplished career as a Kinesiology professor at Missouri Southern and Missouri State Universities. Before that, she coached at Rockhurst College, leading the team to a Midwest Region Championship, a Sweet Sixteen finish, and a school-record #8 national ranking. She earned two NAIA Regional Coach of the Year awards and is ranked among the Top 50 NCAA II women's basketball coaches with 272 career wins. A two-sport All-American, Mitts was named one of Kansas City Magazine's "Top 29 Under 30" and received honors like Philanthropist of the Year and Outstanding Ph.D. student. She holds a B.A. in Secondary Education from Rockhurst, a Ph.D. in Kinesiology from the University of Arkansas, an M.A. in Pastoral Studies from Loyola-New Orleans, and an M.A. in Higher Ed Administration from UMKC.</p>



Chris Niles - Presidential Spouse

Chris Niles is the husband of Cottey College's president, Dr. Stefanie Niles. Chris has built a career around leadership education and program development, working primarily in higher education, consulting, and training in the corporate arena. With a background in experiential programming and a passion for creativity, Chris has designed and delivered various innovative programs – from stand-alone workshops and intensive retreats to semester-long courses. Chris has worked on both large and small campuses and served as a Director of First-Year Programs, an Assistant Dean of Academic Services, an adjunct instructor, and, in his last campus-based position, an MBA Director. He has worked for his fraternity, Tau Kappa Epsilon, for 10 years and now serves as the Director of Alumni & Advancement. Chris completed a degree in business at the University of Vermont (his home state) and a master's in student affairs at Indiana University (where he and Stefanie were classmates). He enjoys geocaching and aquariums and has done a bit of clowning. Chris has visited all 50 states and 9 Canadian provinces/territories, as well as five other countries.

 A professional headshot of Bobbi Jo Ogle. She is a woman with shoulder-length, wavy, light-colored hair. She is wearing a black sleeveless top and is smiling warmly at the camera. Her hands are clasped together near her chin, and she is wearing several rings on her fingers.	<p>Bobbi Jo Ogle - Entrepreneur, Class of '75</p> <p>Bobbi Beck Ogle '75 owns Interior Motives in Nevada, Missouri, where she blends her passions for design, customer relationships, and wellness. Originally from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, she credits Cottey College with shaping her entrepreneurial journey.</p> <p>After starting in a dental office and raising three sons, Bobbi pursued her dream, launching Interior Motives in 1989. Her store has since expanded four times, becoming a must-visit boutique for home décor and specialty items. Her desire to share safe, natural, and affordable solutions with everyone she meets is at the heart of her work.</p> <p>Bobbi welcomes all Cottey alumnae to visit Interior Motives—a store that continues to surprise and delight visitors from near and far!</p>
 A professional headshot of Dr. Cody Page. He is a man with curly, reddish-brown hair and a full, dark beard. He is wearing a black t-shirt under a black and white checkered flannel shirt. He is smiling broadly at the camera.	<p>Dr. Cody Page - Assistant Professor of Theater</p> <p>Dr. Cody Page earned his Bachelor of Humanities in Communications from Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg, his Master of Arts in Educational Theatre for Colleges and Communities from New York University Steinhardt, and his Ph.D. in Theatre with a Graduate Certificate in Performance Studies from Bowling Green State University. He is a theatre practitioner who has held roles as director, intimacy choreographer, actor, props maker, and various other roles that need to be fulfilled for production.</p>

	<p>Mike Shuster - Manager of Campus Safety, Security, and Clery</p> <p>Mike Shuster served as Jasper County Sheriff's Deputy for 20 years before transitioning into the private sector as a Business Director at a security technology firm for six years. He also worked as an adjunct professor at Missouri Southern, sharing his criminal justice and public safety expertise. Now, as the Manager of Safety, Security, and Clery at Cottey College, Mike is dedicated to maintaining a secure campus environment. With a deep understanding of law enforcement practices, security technology, and education, Mike is committed to promoting safety, responsibility, and professional development in his field.</p>
 A professional headshot of a woman with short, light-colored hair, smiling. She is wearing a white blouse with a blue and white floral or leaf pattern. The background is a plain, light color.	<p>Kerry Tate - President of CCAA Board, Class of '86</p> <p>Kerry Tate is a Cottey alumna, class of '86, and the Managing Director of the AccessAbility Resource Center at the University of Texas at Dallas. She is a distinguished figure in the field of disability services, with an impressive career spanning over 31 years. While Kerry is a powerhouse in the world of disability services and advocacy, there's a lighthearted side to her, too, especially when it comes to her cherished days as a Cottey College alumna and serving as President for Cottey College Alumnae Association. With her quick wit and infectious sense of humor, she could turn any campus gathering into a comedy show (with a touch of educational wisdom, of course). Kerry is a regular Vacation College attendee and is excited to share her passion for art with you!</p>

 A headshot of Sarah Trout, a woman with shoulder-length blonde hair. She is wearing a black blazer over a light blue t-shirt with a yellow 'S' and yellow and blue horizontal stripes. She is smiling at the camera.	<p>Sarah Trout - Head Archery Coach/Community Liaison for Athletics</p>
	<p>Sarah Trout began coaching archery at Cottey College in 2024. A Barton County native, she has a background in physical education, exercise science, and sports management. She earned her bachelor's from Pittsburg State University in 2005 and a master's in Kinesiology in 2017.</p> <p>Trout spent 12 years teaching at Lamar School District, where she launched its archery program, coaching nearly 150 athletes in its first year. She then joined Missouri Southern State University, teaching and coordinating the MSSU Archery Tournament. A Level 2 U.S. Archery certified coach working toward Level 3, she is also pursuing a PhD in Kinesiology-Pedagogy at the University of Arkansas, focusing on sports psychology and exercise science.</p>

	<p>Randi Turk - CCAA Board Director, Class of '68</p> <p>Randi LeGendre Turk is a Cottey alumna, class of '68, and a third-generation Arizonan and a third-generation P.E.O. After Cottey, Randi traveled the world on World Campus Afloat, now Semester at Sea, then finished her bachelor's degree in history with a minor in art at the University of New Mexico. She obtained her master's degree in secondary education at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. While in New Mexico, she met and married Tom. They have two children and one grandson, and in retirement, they enjoy traveling the world. In 2023, Randi was the chair of the Arizona State P.E.O. Convention and served on a committee for the 2025 International P.E.O. Convention in Phoenix.</p>
	<p>Linda Wheat - Cottey Alumna, Class of '69</p> <p>Linda Wheat is a mother of three, a grandmother of four, and a devoted rescuer of cats, currently caring for her "art cats," Yeti and Sweet Pea. At Cottey, she was a Delphian President, field hockey halfback, and a Golden Key, Phi Theta Kappa, and Art Club member. She then traveled the world as a corporate fashion buyer for D.H. Holmes, earning four "Buyer of the Year" awards. Later, she co-founded <i>Wheaty's</i>, a New Orleans restaurant specializing in Natchitoches Meat Pies, which evolved into a successful wholesale business and a 45-year family tradition at JazzFest. Linda earned a BFA in Painting from Goddard College and ran <i>Artspirit Studio</i>, creating large-scale murals for hospitals, casinos, and homes. After Hurricane Katrina, she moved to Tyler, Texas, where she taught art for a decade before founding <i>Tyler Art School</i> in 2017, now home to 92 aspiring artists. Grateful for Cottey's impact, Linda continues to inspire through her art and teaching.</p>