



Spring 2024 - Thursday Schedule
Zoom Class: 10:00-12:00

A few notes about our Zoom Class format:

Zoom connection

On Wednesday afternoon, an email will be sent with a link for the Thursday morning class. If the presenter has a handout, it will be attached to the email. At 9:45 on Thursday, fifteen minutes before the start of class, the meeting will be opened so you can click on the link to join. Program Director Kathryn Bennett, a student worker, or a class volunteer will be there to greet members as they are logging on. If you are unfamiliar with Zoom or need a refresher, please contact Kathryn Bennett by phone (336.278.7431) or email (kbennett@elon.edu).

Announcements and Introduction

At 10:00, the class will begin with updates and announcements, then a volunteer member will introduce the speaker.

Presentation

To minimize distractions during the presentation, all participants will have their cameras turned off and voices muted.

Virtual break

About halfway through the class there will be a ten-minute break. A virtual timer will play on the screen while you stretch your legs, get something to drink, or go to the restroom. When the timer sounds, be ready to watch the rest of the presentation.

Questions

Questions and comments for the presenter can be entered into the chat box at any time. The presenter may see and respond to the questions directly or the questions will be read to them. When the presenter is finished, there will be additional questions and discussion. At that time, you may continue to ask questions or make comments in the chat box or turn your video on and unmute yourself to speak to the presenter directly.

February 15

Anne Frank Rediscovered

Howard Kerner

Certainly, the most famous victim of the Holocaust was young Anne Frank. But how much do we really know about Anne and her family apart from her diary? Through surprising information and video clips in which relatives and friends reveal the "real" Anne Frank, this presentation will fill in mostly unknown facts about this complex Holocaust victim and her family.

*A retired English professor from Polk State College in Florida, **Howard Kerner** has spent the last thirty years researching not only the Holocaust and its victims, but unknown people who performed acts of kindness and nobility during the Holocaust. The course he developed at Polk, "Literature of the Holocaust," taught students what happened during the Holocaust, but also shined light on lesser-known non-Jewish heroes who risked their lives to help the persecuted. Howard's inspiring presentations can be heard at the Florida Holocaust Museum, University of South Florida, Eckerd College, churches, synagogues, libraries, and many civic organizations. He continues to create new programs that highlight remarkable people and the kindness in humanity.*

February 22

North Carolina at War: The Tar Heels in World War II

Jo Ann Williford

Using a combination of lectures, photos, documents, music, and videos, this session will examine the contributions of and the consequences for North Carolinians in World War II. Focusing on American society in general and North Carolina citizens, it will explore how life changed for those on the home front and in the military.

***Jo Ann Williford** has a BA in History and teacher certification from Meredith College as well as a MA in American History from UNC Greensboro. She worked for over thirty years at the Office of Archives and History, most of them as an educator, including nine years as Education Coordinator for the State Capitol Building. Her last fifteen years were spent as state coordinator for National History Day in North Carolina, an in-school academic program for students in grades 6-12. Ms. Williford has also taught in the Osher Lifelong Institute at North Carolina State.*

February 29

The Drug Development Process and the Danger of Big Pharma

Christopher D'Inzeo

How are new drugs found? How are they tested? And what happens if they are approved before they are proven safe? In the mid-1950s Thalidomide was used widely across Europe, but Dr. Frances Kelsey, a safety reviewer for the FDA, refused to approve it and her hesitation was well-founded. Ultimately, the story of thalidomide and Dr. Kelsey was used to introduce changes that have shaped how drugs are made and tested today. Using thalidomide as a case study, this presentation will walk through the drug development process from discovery to pre-clinical and clinical testing to post-approval monitoring.

***Christopher D'Inzeo** is a fourth-year chemistry major at Elon University. Throughout his undergraduate years, he has engaged in research through the Chemistry Department at Elon and through summer research programs at Duke University and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Passionate about using tools from chemistry to study biological systems, Chris is pursuing a career in research after his graduation in May.*

March 7

Stay Strong: Resistance Exercise for Health Takudzwa "Titch" Madzima, PhD

Exercise and dietary interventions can help counteract the physical and psychosocial adverse effects of both cancer and cancer therapies. Using state of the art measurement techniques, Dr. Madzima is investigating the interaction between nutrition, body composition, and metabolism. His presentation will also cover non-pharmacological interventions that can help reduce and possibly reverse the loss of muscular mass and strength in people with cancer as well as improve their quality of life.

Titch Madzima is associate professor and chair of Exercise Science at Elon University. He routinely mentors undergraduate research, has collaborated on multiple diversity and inclusion grant projects to support curricular and co-curricular innovations, and was recognized with the Elon College, the College of Arts & Sciences, Excellence in Teaching award in 2021. His disciplinary research involves investigating the efficacy of exercise and dietary interventions to counteract the physical and psychosocial adverse effects of both cancer and cancer therapies.

March 14

Braver Angels Steve Warshaw, PhD

“Politics” has become an increasingly toxic term. Many Americans find that it is no longer possible to have a civil conversation at with those on the opposite side of the political spectrum. Braver Angels believes this growing animosity is the crisis of our time and threatens our nation. The organization was formed shortly after the 2016 election and has grown to become the nation’s largest grassroots movement uniting red and blue Americans in a working alliance to depolarize our country. The group runs workshops, debates and other events where ‘red’ (conservative) and ‘blue’ (liberal) participants attempt to better understand one another’s positions and discover their shared values.

Dr. Steve Warshaw has been a member of Braver Angels since November of 2017. He serves as Statewide Coordinator for Braver Angels in North Carolina. He is also chair of a national team that assists local Braver Angels Alliances in hosting debates, and he is a member of the Braver Angels Alliance of Central North Carolina.

A native Texan, he received his BA in Biology from Austin College in Sherman, Texas, and his PhD in Biology from Yale University. While on active duty in the Navy, he worked for the National Naval Research Institute and was subsequently employed by Texas Water Quality Board, Texas Water Development Board, and Hardin [Texas] Independent School District. In 1985 he joined the staff of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics and served as instructor in Biology, Head of Science, and Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs during his tenure. He received the Science Teaching Achievement Recognition Award from the National Science Teachers Association in 1986 and Distinguished Service Award in Administration/Supervision from the North Carolina Science Teachers Association in 2012. He retired in 2015.

March 21

**Discoveries from the James Webb Space Telescope
Stephen Danford, PhD**

The James Webb Space Telescope is the ‘big brother’ of the Hubble Space telescope. Launched 31 years after Hubble, and with 6x the light gathering power, Webb looks significantly farther back in time than Hubble and can teach us more about the formation of the first galaxies in the early universe, about the exoplanets that orbit other stars, and about the formation of stars and planets in our own galaxy. It is little more than a year and a half since Webb was launched and the early science is starting to pour in.

Dr. Stephen Danford taught physics and astronomy at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro for 38 years before his retirement in 2014. An observational astronomer, he served as Physics Department chair for 8 years and as Director of Observatories with responsibilities for the UNCG telescopes and planetarium. He has worked with the 0.8-meter telescope at the Three College Observatory and was instrumental in its founding in 1977.

Dr. Danford was raised in Wisconsin and was educated at Dartmouth College (Physics) and Yale University (Physics and Astronomy). He is the author of numerous publications in the areas of A- and B-types stars, stellar spectroscopy, emission line stars and Population II stars.

March 28

**The Radical Grandmas of Thailand: The State of Community in Na Nong Bong
Megan Curling**

Covering the years following the 2014 coup, this presentation will help students understand the history of political affairs and student protests that led to the current climate in the country. They will learn about the history of the gold mine construction and subsequent environmental disaster that occurred in Na Nong Bong, as well as all the ways the villagers have pivoted their lifestyles to survive. Most importantly, an update on the current restoration efforts and the future plan for justice will be shared. This presentation will focus on the importance of global citizenship and cultural competence through a unique interdisciplinary lens often overlooked in Western culture.

[This lecture is an update to Megan's student presentation last spring, following two years of research. Members who heard that talk were eager to hear the current status of Na Nong Bong.]

Originally from Walnut Cove, NC., Megan Curling '23 was a Communications Fellow and Lumen Scholar during her time at Elon. She majored in journalism and public health studies with a minor in human service studies. A recipient of the Lumen Prize, she explored the cultural and environmental impact of a gold mine in northeast Thailand, working closely with the non-profit, Radical Grandma Collective, where she volunteers with their communications team. As a senior at Elon, after three years of broad involvement, she served as VP of Finance for the Student Government Association, an apartment manager, a tour guide, Elon's student board member to Harvest Table Culinary Group, the president of LEAF: Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Friends, and as the student representative to the 1923 Engagement Committee. Following graduation, Curling began her yearlong placement at Cone Health through the Elon Year of Service Fellows

Program. While still exploring career opportunities for next year, Curling is excited to serve as one of two Youth Trustees at Elon through the spring of 2025.

April 4

Lives of Women in Ancient Rome: Roles, Status, Rights, and Some Unexpected Facts

Linda Danford

In this class you will be introduced to some surprising facts about Roman women of the Late Republic and Early Empire, a period in which the lives of these women compare closely with that of women in the western world as recently as the first half of the twentieth century. You will learn about the factors or variables that have the greatest impact on the roles and status of women, both then and now.

Linda Danford was born and raised in New Jersey. She took her undergraduate degree in Classics at Smith College and her graduate degree in Classical Literature and Philology from Yale University. Before retiring in 2011, Linda taught for 22 years in the Classical Studies Department of University of North Carolina at Greensboro where her specialties were Latin pedagogy and women in the ancient Greek and Roman world. She created courses on various aspects of Roman daily life, entertainment, sports, religion, and, particularly, the health and legal status of women.

April 11

Unknown Teen Diarists

Howard Kerner

When most people think of a teenager who kept a diary during the Holocaust, they think of Anne Frank. Few know that over 60 diaries written by teenagers from all over Europe survived during this same period. This intriguing audio/visual presentation introduces you to unknown boys and girls who, with awesome depth of feeling and eloquence, wrote down what they were experiencing and in so doing became historians.

*A retired English professor from Polk State College in Florida, **Howard Kerner** has spent the last thirty years researching not only the Holocaust and its victims, but unknown people who performed acts of kindness and nobility during the Holocaust. The course he developed at Polk, "Literature of the Holocaust," taught students what happened during the Holocaust, but also shined light on lesser-known non-Jewish heroes who risked their lives to help the persecuted. Howard's inspiring presentations can be heard at the Florida Holocaust Museum, University of South Florida, Eckerd College, churches, synagogues, libraries, and many civic organizations. He continues to create new programs that highlight remarkable people and the kindness in humanity.*

April 18

Undergraduate Research Presentations

Various Elon Students

Join us for a riveting exploration of new scholarship from Elon's brightest young voices. Undergraduate Research is one of five learning requirements promoted by the University. Research offers a unique opportunity for students to engage in inquiry in their chosen field of study

and to experience first-hand what professionals in a chosen field do. The research presentations of these students will encourage you to think about the world in ways you had not before.

At each LIFE@Elon session, three Elon students will present their research from various fields across the University. Each class will feature different student presentations, as class schedules and availability all vary. No matter which students speak to your class, the presentations will be compelling.

The last two classes will be taught by Andrew O'Brien.

April 25

The British Country House Weekend: Life at Downton Abbey

The years between 1860 and 1914 were the “golden age” of the English country house. Three percent of the population owned eighty percent of the land. The Dukes of Devonshire, the Rothschilds, and the Churchills amongst others hosted weekend parties for other members of Britain’s elite, although the term “weekend” was considered a vulgar Americanism. Explore the social lives of this fabulously wealthy, landed aristocracy. From how to enter a dining room correctly to the subtle cues given by a hostess across a dinner table, this world was highly choreographed. At the same time, these weekend parties required enormous numbers of footmen, maids, and kitchen staff to serve these guests. Learn about the lives of the domestic staff as we also take a peek downstairs.

May 2

British Royal Quirks, Strange Protocols, and Just Downright Weird Stuff

The royal family is just like us... or are they? Do you keep your house heated at a maximum of 60 degrees like Queen Victoria or do you post signs that say "Don't Flush for a Pee" like Queen Elizabeth? Did you know that Queen Victoria loved to pick up greasy chicken with her fingers or that Queen Elizabeth used Tupperware as a serving dish at breakfast? What about Prince Charles' reaction when he lost a cufflink? Join me for these stories and other royal idiosyncrasies during the last two hundred years.

Andrew O'Brien was born in England and graduated with a bachelor's and master's degree in history from Oxford University. Andrew also has a teaching degree from London University and a master's degree in teaching from Johns Hopkins University. After teaching in England, he taught middle school for 21 years in Maryland. Recently retired, Andrew and his wife live in North Carolina and St. Petersburg, FL. Andrew currently teaches courses in person and through Zoom to senior living communities and through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Eckerd College and the Learning is Forever Program.

Presenters and topics for the weekly classes are subject to change.
Classes cancelled for any reason will not be made up and no refund will be given.