



Renaissance Academy at Chicago NFP

Winter 2024

January 16 – February 22

Located at

Saint Xavier University

3700 West 103rd Street

We are back on the SXU campus for Winter!

We will also offer a selection of classes

online via Zoom.

What is the Renaissance Academy?

The Renaissance Academy is a collegial association of retired and semi-retired men and women who meet to continue to experience intellectual growth in an environment that is open to all who believe in the importance of pursuing the Academy's lifelong learning opportunities and who are willing to contribute to the common goals through active participation in the programs offered.

Renaissance Academy Information

Email: renaissancechgo@gmail.com

Phone: 773-298-3149. **This is an answering machine only. Please leave a message.**

The Newsletter can be accessed on the Renaissance Academy website:
<https://www.renaissancechgo.org>.

Winter 2024 Registration

We are back on the SXU campus for Winter and will also offer a selection of classes online via Zoom.

If you enrolled in fall, you are a current member and just need to register for classes. Registration runs from December 15 – December 31 on line at

<https://www.renaissancechgo.org>

If you are not currently a member and wish to join Renaissance Academy, please go to <https://www.renaissancechgo.org>, select “Membership” and fill out the enrollment form. The membership enrollment fee for the entire year is \$180 and instructions for payment are on the site.

Every member must have access to email. No information or materials will be mailed.

The fee includes: classes for all three terms, Christmas and Spring luncheons, use of the Shannon Center track on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Renaissance Forum (formerly Farrell Forum), and the opportunity to audit an SXU class with consent of professor.

While participating in our various programs, you may be included in photos and/or videos. These photographs and videos are used in a variety of publications and advertising materials. By registering for our programs, participants consent to the use of these photos and videos.

Requests for assistance can be emailed to
renaissancechgo@gmail.com.

**The final date for registering is
December 31, 2023.**



*If it were January all the year
I wonder if I'd like it here,
Finding every place I go—
Snow, snow, always snow.*
Annette Wynn

We are so lucky this Winter Term to have so many fascinating classes to choose from, both on campus (Tuesdays and Thursdays) and via Zoom (on Wednesdays). Some favorites continue: News, Birds, Tech, Interesting People and there are some new topics which sound intriguing: Songs, Ireland, Sculpture. Readers may choose Short Stories and/or *Great Expectations*. Film lovers will enjoy a variety of movies chosen to fit the theme of Women in Film.

Let's hope there are many sunny and bright Tuesday and Thursday afternoons when we meet on campus. Zoom Wednesdays will be a popular alternative, for sure.

We are working to schedule a TGITT event in February. Watch for the announcement via e-mail.

Be sure to save the date of March 7 for our annual Memorial Mass in the McDonough Chapel at 10 a.m. followed by the Renaissance Forum in the Butler Room.

Maureen O'Connor, President

**Winter 2024 Session
Jan. 16 – Feb. 22
On Campus**

Tuesday 2:30-3:30

- 1. More People of Interest
Mimi Burke**
- 2. History's Greatest Voyages of Exploration
Mike Young**

Tuesday 3:45- 4:45

- 3. News and Views
Mike Yeager and team**
- 4. Understanding and Enjoying Sculpture
Sue Wrzesinski**

**Winter 2024 Session
Jan.16 – Feb. 22
Zoom**

Wednesday

10:45 -11:45

5. **Women in Film, Creating the Mystique**
Kathy Konopasek

12:00 -1:00

6. **The Novels You Weren't Ready for in High School**
Great Expectations
Carol Conway

1:15 – 2:15

7. **Short Stories**
Maureen Connolly

**Winter 2024 Session
Jan.16 – Feb. 22
On Campus**

Thursday 2:30 – 3:30

8. Anatomy of a Song

Betty Kort

9. The Great Tours; Ireland and Northern Ireland

Sharon Coghlan Gerc

Thursday 3:45 – 4:45

10. Fun with Tech

Pat Schultz

11. Birds in Winter

Mike Hastings

**Tuesday 2:30 - 3:30
On Campus**

1. More People of Interest

Mimi Burke

We will again be viewing short films about people of interest from the 20th and 21st century. Some of the people are: Eric Yang, David Chang, Neil Armstrong, Robert Kennedy Sr., Gustavo Dudamel, Hans Zimmer, and others. Suggestions are always welcomed. The most important thing is to come and enjoy.



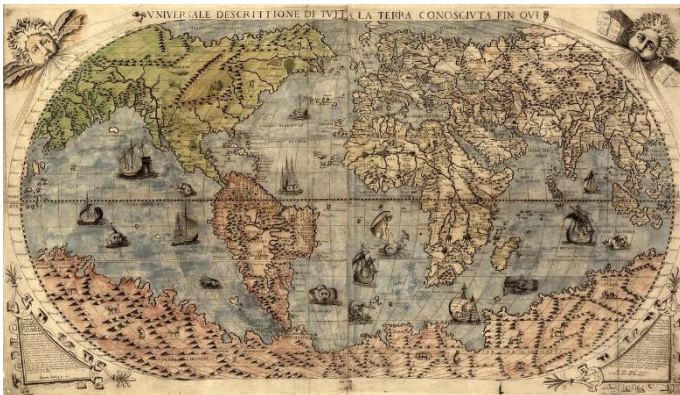
2. History's Greatest Voyages of Exploration

Mike Young

This course is based on the Great Courses/Wondrium program. Starting with some examples of our “genetic wanderlust”, Professor Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius examines the motivations and skills of ancient explorers and the expansion of humans worldwide.

Over the following five weeks, each half hour film will look at the travels of specific adventurers and the driving forces that set them on their path. Pytheas the Greek searched for scientific knowledge; St. Brendan to save souls; the Buddhist Zuanzang searched for holy texts. Leif Eriksson and the Vikings scoured vast areas looking for land and resources. Marco Polo ventured to the far east with his father and uncle looking for trade and riches.

We learn the stories of these adventurers, both successful and unsuccessful, and their consequences for history. Key themes of the course include the fact that one journey can produce a cascade of others, the range of ways unknown peoples were encountered from friendship to violence, the complicated motivations of the explorers and the common drive to discover. There should be lots to talk about!!



Tuesday 3:45 - 4:45

SXU on campus

3. News and Views

Pat Clair, Jim Condon, John Garstka, Dan Lynch, Mike Yeager, Mike Young

Today's day is filled with events that alter, illuminate and often surprise us and you are there front and center! Join us as we attempt to make sense of the news of the day. Your perspective, of course, is always welcome.



4. Understanding and Enjoying Sculpture

Sue Wrzesinski

This course will introduce the characteristics and materials of sculpture (almost anything these days). We'll focus on specific artists because they're my favorites! – at least, today. And, yes, most of them are dead.

Anish Kapoor, Isamu Noguchi, Louise Nevelson, Henry Moore, Constantin Brancusi.



Wednesday Zoom

10:45 AM – 11:45 AM

5. Women in Film, Creating the Mystique

Kathy Konopasek

This film class will discuss and uncover the creative drive, background influences, and production development of each chosen film that features the feminine side of the industry. We will use the critical lens to see the difference each film made to the historical, social and cultural atmosphere of its era and the impact, change or entertainment value the film had on the film industry and the audience.

Where relevant, each session will look at critical aspects, production, images and camera moves used, director tone, dialogue, character development, and setting and ending. We will examine the film's impact, and box office versus critic reviews. Your critique, critical eye, point of view, and observations will be most welcome.



Tentatively, the first film will be the silent, *Our Dancing Daughters*, starring Joan Crawford. Other films to complete the six sessions are: *The Women*, *Double Indemnity*, *Gilda*, *The Snake Pit* and *The Valley of the Dolls*.

A convenience of this class is that you will watch the film at your leisure, from home or chosen location. After viewing, film discussion will be on Zoom per the schedule set by SXC. Information on finding inexpensive or free ways to see the film will be shared. However, you will need Internet access or you may already own the film on DVD.



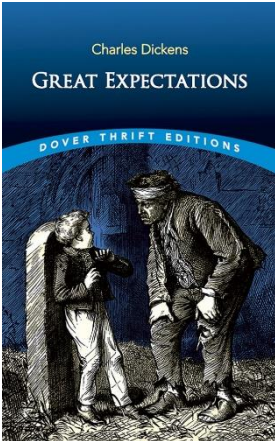
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM Zoom

**6. The Novels You Weren't Ready for
in High School**

Great Expectations

Carol Conway

**The Novels You Weren't Ready for in High School:
Great Expectations by Charles Dickens**



Join us for a Zoom discussion of the plot, characters, imagery, and themes of this classic that Geroge Bernard Shaw called Dickens' "most compactly perfect book." ('Compact' is not to indicate that it is short; it is not!) I will use the version pictured here that can be found cheaply by Googling "Dover Thrift Edition of *Great Expectations*."

Discussion questions will be emailed a few days before each class.

Please read Chapters 1-10 for the first class.

1:15 PM – 2:15 PM Zoom

7. Short Stories

Maureen Connolly

Book: *100 Great Short Stories*

Dover Thrift Editions Edited by James Daley

The book that we have chosen for our class is a treasury of one hundred tales, and it offers readers of short fiction a splendid selection of stories by masters of the form. Contributors from around the world include Edgar Allen Poe, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, Anton Chekov, Kate Chopin and others. With one hundred stories spanning more than two centuries, this comprehensive collection provides a vision of the world, over time, that one could never find in a history book. From these stories one can experience such a diversity of perspectives as well as deepening and expanding one's own view of the world – both as it has been and as it is today.

The first two stories we will read for the winter session will be: *The Ploughing* by Daniel Corkery (1916) pg. 625 and *The Judgement* by Franz Kafka (1916) pg. 636.

Story guide questions will be sent to you before each class.



100 Great Short Stories can be purchased on Amazon or Bookies@ 10324 S. Western 773-239-1110.

Thursday 2:30 – 3:30

SXU on campus

8. Anatomy of a Song

Betty Kort



Based on a Wall Street Journal contributor, Marc Myers, this class will discover the oral history of over 100+ Iconic Hits that changed Rock, R&B and Pop music. Some of the music we will hear, dates back to the 50's. Songs we know and love, what was the inspiration? We'll hear stories from the composers and the artists that performed them. Some of my favorite artists, their songs and the stories behind them, will include the Rolling Stones, The Isley Brothers, Smoky Robinson, Aerosmith, Merle

Haggard, Bonnie Raitt, Joni Mitchell, Jim Croce, the list goes on.



9. The Great Tours;

Ireland and Northern Ireland

Sharon Coghlan Gerc

Do you want to tour Ireland this winter? We are inviting you to join us as we explore the history, world-renowned culture, breathtaking landscapes, and



welcoming people of the Emerald Isle. The Great Courses will take us on the tours and offer insight on the history of Northern Ireland and its neighbors. Each 30-minute tour includes beautiful scenery and historical information about Ireland and Northern Ireland. Those who have been to Ireland already are encouraged to share their experiences as we watch and tour Ireland together during the term. The course offers us twenty-four tours that we will choose from during the next year. Tours include Prehistoric and Celtic Ireland; Dublin's Fair City; Dublin; Kilkenny; Exploring Cork; The Dingle Peninsula; North Kerry; Clare and Galway; The Irish Revival in Literature and

Art; James Joyce's Ireland; Experiencing Belfast; Pub Life and traditional Irish Music and Ireland in Film and Sport.

“Ireland’s history is a passionate, painful, and inspiring one. It’s a history defined by wave after wave of invaders, all contributing to the complex and diverse culture. In Ireland, the past is always a prominent feature of the present. Each stage of the nation’s history reveals a great deal about the Irish people – their culture and their identities – even today.” (Conner, M., *The Great Tours, Ireland, and Northern Ireland. The Great Courses*, 2020.)

Join us as we tour the beautiful cities and scenic landscapes of Ireland with our Renaissance Academy classmates this winter!



Thursday 3:45 - 4:45

SXU on campus

10. Fun with Tech

Pat Schultz

If you want to explore the possibilities of your digital devices, this class is for you. You are encouraged to bring your own laptop, iPad or other gadgets and learn how to use them in different ways. Some of the things we will cover includes how to access various newspapers online, how to use a news aggregator to get customized news, how to create and share a presentation of photos or videos with friends and family with an easy-to-use app, how to view, download and print photos and videos, and how to use some of the artificial intelligence tools available online to create realistic images and voices. This class is interactive and flexible, so you can also suggest other topics that interest you related to technology.



11. Birds in Winter

Mike Hastings

Chicago winters are extremely tough on birds. Yet they endure! Birds rely on cooperation,



competition and adaptation to confront the demands of this most challenging season.

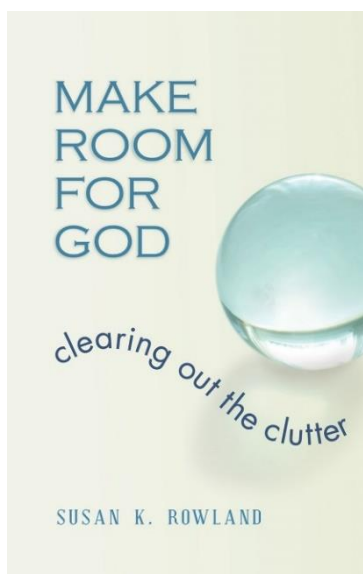
While many birds fly south as a way to survive the cold, many birds prefer to stay! This course will examine the survival skills of six "sedentary" birds.

We will consider "huddling" of the Bluebird, the stealth of the Great Horned owl, the sleeping or torpor of the Black-capped Chickadee, the shivering of the American Goldfinch, the camouflage of the Snowy owl (and the Ptarmigan) and the "cache" of Woodpeckers.



Book Club – Oak Lawn Library
January 15, 11:00 – 12:00
Meeting Room C

Make Room for God
By Susan K. Rowland
Carol Conway – Facilitator



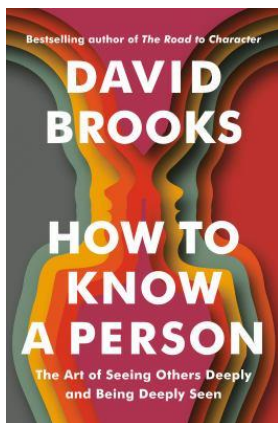
“If you feel lost in our cultural wilderness, in clutter, collecting, consuming, working, worrying and waiting for something better, I have been lost too. God has shown me a way out. This book is a bit of bright orange paint pointing to the path toward home. Let’s walk it together.”

Author Susan K. Rowland

Book Club
Evergreen Park Library
February 20, Noon-1:00
repeated on
Feb. 21, Zoom 2:30

How to Know a Person
By David Brooks

Betty Kort – Facilitator



A practical, heartfelt guide to the art of truly knowing another person in order to foster deeper connections at home, at work, and throughout our lives. Driven by his sense of curiosity, David Brooks draws from the fields of psychology and neuroscience, and from the worlds of theatre, history, and education, to present a welcoming, hopeful, integrated approach to human connection. He helps readers become more understanding and considerate towards others. Along the way he offers

a possible remedy for a society that is rife with fragmentation, hostility, and misperception. The act of seeing another person, Brooks argues, is a profoundly creative act: How can we look somebody in the eye and see something large in them, and in turn, see something larger in ourselves? This will make for a great conversation with those of us who have lived a full life already. Will David's perspective enrich and enhance our senior years?

Memorial Mass and Renaissance Forum March 7, 2024

**10:00 AM Memorial Mass
St. Xavier Mc Donough Chapel**

**11:30 AM Renaissance Forum
Butler Room
Saint Xavier University**

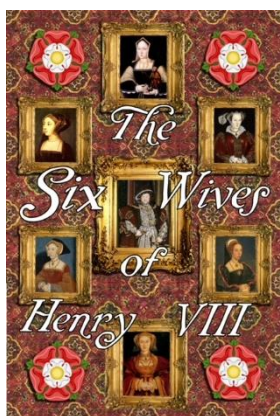
RENAISSANCE FORUM

The Six Wives of Henry VIII

An Edu-tainment Living History Program

with

Martina Mathisen



The Six Wives of Henry VIII: Six women and six stories. These fascinating women led equally fascinating lives - apart from how they ended. Martina Mathisen will artfully interweave tales of power, personality, and politics. Do these six famous wives deserve their popular labels? Join with other Renaissance Academy members on March 7th to meet the Six Wives of Henry III and decide for yourself!

Light refreshments will be served.

The forum is free of charge for Renaissance Academy members. Guests are welcome for a suggested \$5 **cash** donation.

ALL attendees (members and guests) must register by sending an email to renaissancechgo@gmail.com

For Your Information

Some have inquired about auditing a class at Saint Xavier University as this is one of the benefits of Renaissance membership.

Their next term (Spring Term) begins on January 8 and ends on May 4, 2024.

You may find a course catalog on the website:

https://www.sxu.edu/catalog/_resources/documents/undergraduate-catalog-2023-24.pdf

To request to audit a class, complete the audit form and have it signed by the instructor. The processing fee is \$25 for SXU Alums and Renaissance Academy members.

The audit form can be found at,
<https://www.sxu.edu/academics/guidance/records/forms.aspx>,

or the PDF form,
<https://www.sxu.edu/academics/guidance/records/docs/audit-form.pdf>.

Return the completed, form to the records office along with the processing fee. to audit the class.

Winter 2024

Dates to Remember

Dec.15 – 31	On line registration
January 15 11:00 AM	Book Club Oak Lawn Library Mtg. Rm C
January 16	First day of Winter term
February 20 Noon	Book Club Evergreen Park Library
February 21 2:30 Zoom	Book Club Repeat of <i>How to Know a Person</i>
February 22	Last day of Winter term
March 7 10:00 AM 11:30 AM	Memorial Mass Renaissance Forum



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2023-2024

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