

CONNECTING THROUGH CURIOSITY: VERITAS SPRING TERM

A vibrant set of Spring classes is being offered by Veritas beginning in March, giving an opportunity for our members to get back in the classroom to explore new interests, expand their knowledge, and connect with like-minded peers. As always, our classes cover a wide range of topics, ensuring there's something for everyone.

As you prepare to return to class, help recruit new members to join Veritas with our new "Veritas Community Champions" referral program. You will read more about this initiative in the pages to come. We are inviting all prospective members to our "Curiosity Hours: A Look Inside the Veritas Classroom" in the days before registration.

Our Spring schedule is reflective of the Veritas standard we set out to meet and will continue to strive for when thinking about future curriculums: **providing engaging instructors with thought-provoking topics in flexible learning formats.**

Twenty-six courses fill the Spring schedule and are highlighted on the next page. Lunch and Learn will be held on campus in Frazier Hall, allowing more members to attend, with lunch to follow in the University Dining Hall.

We will also continue to use the Bellarmine campus when space permits, the Lifelong Learning and Healthcare Innovation Center in Suite 101 at the Watterson Medical Center, the Central Bank Community Room in the Flashcube Building, and the Meadow Theater in the Masonic Home Campus.

The Spring catalog is scheduled to be emailed on Wednesday, February 4th by 5 pm. Online registration will open at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, February 11th and run until February 27th. Classes begin on March 9th and run through April 17th. The membership fee remains at \$50 for the Spring term, with 6-week courses costing \$30 each.

Lifelong learning keeps curiosity young and possibilities wide open.

Spring 2026 - Key Dates to Remember

Spring Catalog emailed - February 4

Spring Registration Opens - February 11 at 9 a.m.

Classes Begin - March 9

Classes End - April 17

Spring Celebration Banquet - May 5th

SNEAK PEEK AT SPRING CLASSES



INNER LIFE

Kick off the New Year by looking at your “Inner Life” with a variety of intriguing subjects. Watch documentaries presented by the producer himself, Morgan Atkinson, as you learn more about how prominent figures found meaning to life in unconventional ways. Then dive into philosophy with Tom Kennedy in “The Classical Tradition: Plato, Aristotle, and Augustine” to learn more about the foundations of reality. Learn all about the different denominations of Christianity with Mike Rouse, including what unites and distinguishes them from each other.

LITERATURE

Reach your reading goal with our “Literature” category. Revisit classics turned into renowned plays with “Reading Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* & Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest*” with Jonathan Smith. Discover the forces behind love by reading *All About Love* by bell hooks with Jim Bahr. Panzi Panzera will lead discussions on the book *Tuesdays with Morrie*, a memoir filled with lessons learned from the author’s weekly visits to a friend with ALS.

THE WORLD

Learn more about what lies beyond our borders with “The World” category. Celebrate the 150th anniversary of Route 66 with Dennis Wiseman before you take a trip back in time with “Archeology of the Holy Land” from Ken Stammerman, who has participated on digs himself. Learn more about the current news in “International Politics: An Era of Upheaval and Change” with John Sistarenik. Rocky Yates celebrates culture in America with “Global Immigrants and Their Positive Impact on the American Way of Life.” Eric Schmall brings to life “The Holocaust in Historical Perspective” and Don Graeter discusses “Churchill: The War Years.”

SNEAK PEEK AT SPRING CLASSES, CONTINUED

AMERICANA

Our popular “Americana” category is bursting at the seams with fascinating classes. Jeff Conner brings two classes this semester on America’s founding years, with one discussing lesser-known American Founding Fathers and the other looking at the creation of the U.S. Constitution. Then we pivot to Don Meade to discover more about Abraham Lincoln outside of his role as U.S. President. Learn more about the “Parole in the U.S.” from former warden, Larry Chandler then discuss “Cases and Controversies: The Supreme Court” with Mike Williams. Plan to dust off your walking shoes with Denise Davis as she takes you on walking tours to discover Louisville’s Olmstead Parks. Discover more local history with Ken Golliher as he takes you down the Ohio River (metaphorically) while you learn about the impact steamboats have had right here in Louisville.



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Our “Arts and Entertainment” category promises to bring an assortment of engaging content. Enjoy a variety of movies by the director Charles Laughton, selected by Bud Spalding, during “Fridays at the Movies.” Tap your feet to tunes of the past in “More of the Great American Songbook” with Mike Marple as you explore songs that defined American eras; before exploring “Western Classic Music and the Christian Tradition” with Austin Echols.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

“Dance for Health” supports physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being. Darts by Robert Sprawls is coming back after a super successful Fall semester to teach you about the rules and history of the beloved pub game, while you get to improve your own skills during class.

APPLIED KNOWLEDGE

Sandra Cherry will continue the Chautauqua lecture series, this time with lectures on Leadership, AI, Politics, and more!

SPRING 2026 LUNCH AND LEARN SPEAKERS

Lunch and Learn endeavors to keep Veritas members current on issues, activities and opportunities in our area. This spring, the entire series of speakers will be offered in Frazier Hall, so there is no limit on audience size. Talks will start at 11:00 AM on Friday mornings, and, as always, attendees are invited to lunch across the hall in the University Dining Hall. When you check in with the Lunch & Learn Coordinator, you will receive a ticket that is valid for lunch—that day only.

Lunch and Learns are paid for individually (\$12 each) during registration and include the speaker's presentation and lunch in the University Dining Hall. The University Dining Hall (UDH) offers all-you-care-to-eat restaurant-quality food from the steam table, grill, salad bar, sandwich station, dessert station, and more!

The lineup of speakers includes:

March 13: “Louisville’s Festival of Faiths” - Rev. Dr. Lauren Jones Mayfield

Rev. Dr. Lauren Jones Mayfield is Executive Director of the Center for Interfaith Relations, which organizes the annual event at the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts.



March 20: “Human Body Responses to Infections” - Dr. David Sandoval

Dr. David Sandoval is a retired physician who specialized in rheumatology. Prior to retirement, he worked for Eli Lilly in Indianapolis as an Executive Medical Director. David will share how the immune system responds to various infections intended to defend and protect us.

March 27: “The Mayor’s Safe Louisville Plan” - Misty Wright

Misty Wright, the Mayor’s Executive Director of Community Safety, spent nine years as a federal prosecutor in Chicago, before joining Mayor Greenberg’s administration in Jan, 2025. Her job is to execute The Mayor’s Safe Louisville Plan: Crafting a Citywide Strategy to Reduce Violence.

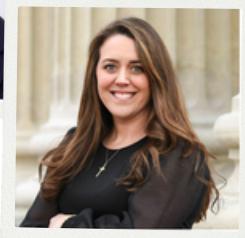


**April 10 “World War II: The Largest Art Theft in History” - Stephen Brown**

Kentucky Writer Stephen Allten Brown has always loved art, murder mysteries, and history. Hitler’s Nazi regime looted approximately 100,000 works of art from Jewish citizens in occupied France. He wrote a 3 book series about the art theft: “Stealing Renoir”, “Stealing Picasso”, and “Stealing Van Gogh”.

April 17: “Kentucky’s Economic Development and What’s with All the Data Centers?” - Secretary Jeff Noel or Commissioner Kristina Slattery

We will hear from one of the leaders of the Kentucky Cabinet of Economic Development, either the Cabinet Secretary or the Commissioner for Business and Community Development (depending on their schedules).



HOUSEKEEPING REMINDERS TO IMPROVE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

Zoom

- Save Zoom links for each class—you will use the same one each week!
- Allow adequate time to join the meeting and ensure your equipment is working.
- Change your display name to your full first and last name for attendance.
- Keep yourself muted unless asking a question/participating in discussion.
- If you can see yourself on screen, everyone else can see you too! Keeping your camera on is encouraged, but be mindful of your activities and surroundings as they can distract others.

In-Person

- Be on time for class and wait in the designated area until it is time to enter the classroom.
- Check yourself in on the attendance sheet.
- Silence your cellphone.
- Keep conversations to a bare minimum. Chatter is distracting to others and in hybrid classes can make it hard for virtual attendees to hear.
- Be respectful of peers.
- Clean up after yourself! Be respectful of the classroom space.
- Exit the classroom when class is over—chances are someone else is using the space!

JOIN THE VERITAS BOARD

This spring, eight seats of the Veritas Board of Directors' 18 directors will be up for election for a two-year term, running from June 2026 through May 2028.

If you'd like to get on the ballot – which will be emailed to members in March – contact Donna Edgar, board vice president, at woodhill7417@gmail.com by March 1. Remember, newcomers are often elected to the board, so give it a try!

It's recommended you attend a board meeting before deciding to seek election to see if your skills and interests fit with those of the organization. The next meeting is February 13 in the new classroom at the Watterson Medical Center. You must have paid membership fees for at least one term within the academic year to be eligible to run.

Being on the board is a great way to meet new people and help design and implement programs and activities. Board members attend about four meetings a year, each lasting two hours. They also chair or serve on committees, including Curriculum, Field Trips, Lunch & Learn, Membership, Newsletter, Production, Promotion, Special Events, and Volunteers. Standing committees also hold meetings, yet time commitments are reasonable.

VERITAS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Since becoming a Veritas member, you may have wondered what your Veritas membership includes. Sure, you now have the ability to register for classes, but why else are you paying that fee? See below for a listing of the many great benefits of the Society!

- Register for classes of interest. No prerequisites, tests, or grades!
- Access to year-round activities: lectures, Distance Dialogues, field trips, & social events
- Free parking on campus
- Full use of Bellarmine Library & SuRF Center
- Free Admission to most Bellarmine Athletic Events
- Bellarmine Veritas Student ID card and “Student” Discounts at local community partners with Student ID card

Check out our Membership Handbook for details about membership benefits.

VERITAS COMMUNITY CHAMPION: NEW REFERRAL PROGRAM

We're excited to announce two updates designed to help Veritas grow and better recognize member involvement. A new Community Champions Referral Program will recognize members who refer new members to Veritas—tracked through a new question on the Membership Information Form. Referrers will receive a Community Champion nametag pin, be recognized at the Spring Celebration and in the Summer Veritas Voice, and the top three recruiters will receive a small token of appreciation. To support recruitment, we'll share tips in Veritas Voice and offer new referral cards in the WMC Suite 101 lobby. We hope this program helps spread the word and gets the conversation going about all things Veritas to your communities.

Additionally, the Volunteer Committee will now be known as Veritas Ambassadors, with members serving in focused roles including presentations, social media, and administrative support. This change recognizes the specific roles that are being supported, since those involved in the “behind-the-scenes” action are all volunteers.

CURIOSITY HOUR: A LOOK INSIDE THE VERITAS CLASSROOM

FREE CLASS PREVIEWS FOR PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Veritas is hosting a **FREE Curiosity Hour: A Look Inside the Veritas Classroom** for prospective members who want to experience a Veritas class firsthand. Three preview sessions will be offered—two in person at WMC, Suite 101 and one on Zoom—with topics including:

Birth of the Skyscraper & the Chicago School of Architecture
Feb. 9, 2:00–3:30 pm at WMC, Suite 101

Central Park in New York City
Feb. 10, 10:00–11:30 am at Zoom

Comedy Duos: Laurel and Hardy
Feb. 10, 2:00–3:30 pm at WMC, Suite 101

Each session includes a one-hour presentation followed by a brief overview of Veritas and registration information; coffee and cookies will be provided for in-person sessions. Prospective members will receive email invitations and may register for one session, and current members are invited to **bring a friend** (members may attend only with a prospective guest). This Curiosity Hour series offers a relaxed, informative way to experience Veritas firsthand and see what lifelong learning in our community is all about.

Prospective members can register at <https://tinyurl.com/veritascuriosity2026>.

MEET RUTH BROWN

Editor's note: Last September, at an award ceremony luncheon at the Olmstead, forty-five people aged eighty-five or older were selected to receive an award for optimal living, from hundreds of nominations. One of the winners was Veritas member Ruth Brown, who had been nominated by her doctor. At age 97, Ruth was the oldest in the group. Our congratulations to Ruth, and our thanks to Linda Bessler, who shared this news, and also facilitated the interview below.

How long have you been a Veritas member? How would you describe your experience in the organization?

This year is my 20th year taking classes at Veritas. I live close enough to walk to classes on the Bellarmine campus. I have enjoyed meeting new people and learning new things, and especially like the music classes.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Louisville and lived at Floyd and Pearl streets as a child. I went to Frederick Douglass Elementary and Central High School.

What is your professional or career background?

I have a degree in Early Childhood Development. I have worked in various day cares and schools. I also volunteered for years in the Granny program, reading to children.

How do you relax at home?

Listening to music (show tunes are my favorite). I also like to work puzzles.

How would you describe a perfect day in Louisville?

Ballroom dancing in the morning (every Tuesday and Thursday with Bellarmine's Physical Therapy Department), Veritas classes in the afternoon, then out to eat with my children in the evening; that would be a perfect day!

What makes you laugh?

Kids... they say the funniest things!

Describe yourself in three words.

Walker, talker, reader.

What is your most vivid childhood memory?

My older sister Lonnie reading to me is a fond memory. I particularly remember Lonnie reading The Secret Garden to me when I was very young.

Is there a material object in your house that means a lot to you? The most important thing in my house is my cat Essie.

From the Optimal Aging Awards Program:

Ruth Brown - 97

After serving in the military, becoming a mother to five and working as an assistant, Ruth returned to school in her sixties and earned a degree in early childhood education. Now, she spends time dancing and attending courses at Bellarmine. Impressively, she can still touch her toes!



VERITAS MEMBERS PRAISE NEW CLASSROOM

The opening of Suite 101 at the Watterson Medical Center provided a new learning setting for the Veritas members. Suite 101 can hold up to 75 people for in-person classes, while also having the capability of hosting the hybrid classes. The space is equipped with state-of-the-art technology, including five large television screens for clear viewing throughout the room.

An advantage of this new classroom is the ample parking directly next to the building, along with no stairs to enter the lobby and classroom. This convenience and ease of access have made in-person classes a reality for those who had trouble on the main Bellarmine campus.

Longtime Veritas member Marian Harrell said “The room itself is right by the front door, on the ground floor, making it easy for those with mobility issues (especially walker users) & others of us senior learners to get to the classroom. This makes me feel that Veritas values us as active participants in this important organization.”



The Veritas Office was also able to create a Keurig coffee cart directly outside of the classroom entrance and would like to extend gratitude to the donations given that assist in funding this service.

Veritas member Rose Nett said “I'm happy we have the large, flexible space with the added benefit of easily accessible parking. And delighted that our WMC gathering room allows for larger classes which aren't available at Bellarmine. I do miss being on campus, but know it's only a short drive to take advantage of mingling with all those younger folk-- especially in the University Dining Hall”



Veritas was also able to host a variety of classes all in the same space, from active classes like Darts and Qigong, to discussion classes and lectures. This space is equipped with tables on wheels so the room can be adjusted to the teacher's specifications, allowing for versatile use of the space.

According to the Qigong teacher, Nancy Carrington, "The newest Veritas classroom at Watterson Medical Center is perfect. I taught a movement class. Therefore, our needs were somewhat unique. To accommodate this class, we were able to place tables and chairs wherever needed to support the postures in the class." In the past, it has been a challenge to find multipurpose spaces on campus to host these types of active classes.

Going forward, the Veritas Office and the Thrive Center are working on permanent solutions for the acoustics of the room, hopefully before the start of the term. The current plan includes wall paneling to reduce echo as well as additional microphones for ease of use with large groups. The main lobby of the Watterson Medical Center will also receive a facelift with new furniture to serve as a lounge area for members waiting for classes to start.

SO CLOSE TO OUR GOAL! - HELP US RAISE THE FINAL \$8,000

As we get closer to the start of Spring classes, The Veritas Society needs your help to raise the remaining \$8,000 of our \$25,000 goal to finish out the last portion of the renovation for our new home at "The Bellarmine University Healthcare Innovation & Lifelong Learning Center" located at the Watterson Medical Center. We are thrilled to have raised over \$17,000 so far, and so appreciative of all the support our members have provided already.

Your contribution will directly support:

- Final build-out and equipment costs
- Upgraded seating in Watterson Lobby better suited to promote Veritas fellowship in between classes
- Post-term improvements (additional wireless mic, coffee cart restock, etc.)

A tax-deductible gift will make an immediate impact.

Donation Options:

1. Mail a check made out to Bellarmine University to Veritas Society, 2001 Newburg Road, Louisville, KY 40205.
2. Donate online at www.bellarmine.edu. Click on "Give" at the top of the page. Select "Other" under "I want to Support" and enter "Veritas Society" in the "gift designation" box.

**A donation letter will be sent you from the Development Office following your gift*

JANUARY LIFELONG LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS: A MONTH OF MEANINGFUL EXPLORATION

January's lifelong learning programs were a tremendous success, bringing together curious minds to explore history, innovation, nature, and global cultures. With engaging presenters and active participation, each class sparked thoughtful reflection and lively conversation.

The month opened with The Homestead Act of 1862, where a ranger from Homestead National Historical Park examined how this landmark legislation reshaped the nation—driving westward expansion while profoundly impacting American Indians, agriculture, and industry.

Innovation took center stage in The War that Changed Your World: Science & Technology in WWII, presented by a guide from the National WWII Museum. Participants were fascinated to learn how wartime breakthroughs—from radar to early computers—laid the foundation for technologies we rely on today.

Nature and preservation were celebrated in Kentucky's 44 State Parks, an engaging overview of the park system's history, regional diversity, and hidden stories, followed by a virtual journey to Maine in Acadia's Top 10, where a park ranger showcased Acadia National Park's dramatic landscapes and iconic landmarks.

Global perspectives rounded out the month with Travel to the South Caucasus, as Marilyn Schorin shared personal insights from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the Republic of Georgia, bringing the region's history and culture vividly to life.

The series concluded with a powerful session on Brown v. Board of Education, presented by a ranger from the national historical park in Topeka, Kansas. The program offered a moving look at the landmark Supreme Court decision and its lasting impact on the civil rights movement.

Together, these programs highlighted the strength of our lifelong learning community and the enthusiasm of participants eager to deepen their understanding of the world. We look forward to building on this momentum in the months ahead. There is still time to sign up for our two February mini-courses!

AI 3.0: Always Developing — This three-part series builds on the popular AI 1.0 and 2.0 programs, featuring new guest speakers and fresh insights as moderator Bob Tiell guides participants through the rapidly evolving world of artificial intelligence.

Art Across Cultures — Through guided exploration of masterworks from the National Museum of Asian Art and related collections, this course examines how diverse Asian cultures express values, beliefs, and histories through art across time, place, and media.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Beyond the Veritas classes—and not limited to term-time—Veritas members are invited to take part in a variety of voluntary interest groups. Here are the ones currently meeting.

THE HEALTHY EATING GROUP OR LET'S DO LUNCH

Meeting on the fourth Tuesday of each month, eating at various restaurants chosen by the members. Contact Barb Simmons at barbsimmons88@gmail.com for reservations or additional information.

THE MYSTERY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Meeting in person and on Zoom; it meets the first Tuesday of the month from 10:30 a.m. to noon at the Highlands-Shelby Park Library in the Mid-City Mall. Contact Rebecca Beyerle by email at beyerler@gmail.com to receive notices of future book choices.

THE SPIRITUAL SEEDLINGS INTEREST GROUP

Meets the second and fourth Wednesday of each month, 10:30 a.m., at the Immanuel United Church of Christ, 2300 Taylorsville Road. The group is led by Barbara MacDonald, who has presented classes on Christianity, Spirituality, Cosmology, and Inter-religious Dialogue. For more information or to register, email Barbara at barbpmac@gmail.com.

THE ETHNIC LUNCH GROUP

Meets the second Thursday of the month at 11:30 a.m. at various locations for different ethnic food each time. For information and reservations, contact organizer Mary Helen Thompson at (502) 459-5750 or email her at thompsonmaryhelen1@gmail.com.

DOBU (DO BELLARMINE UNIVERSITY EVENTS)

This group will select and attend BU music, theater, sports, lecture events—anything happening at BU that looks interesting and fun. One a month, depending on event schedules. Most events are free or have a nominal charge. Dinner beforehand at BU or nearby is an option. If interested, please email Ann McWilliams at veritasDoBU@yahoo.com.

Who We Are

Since 1995, Veritas has offered the preeminent learning experience to people over 50 in the Louisville area. Our mission is to keep our minds active, open and growing, with the goals of:

- Understanding our past history and cultural heritage
- Informing members about what is happening around us
- Recognizing changes in the world and finding our place in it

We are retired or semi-retired people: doctors, educators, homemakers, office workers, administrators, artists, laborers, and executives. We are governed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership.



What We Do

We are an active, participatory group that devises and develops its own programs, enlisting the best of regional talent for presentations. We offer a six-week program each fall and spring, and activity throughout the year.

Board of Directors

OFFICERS

President	Ann McWilliams '26
Vice President	Donna Edgar '27
Secretary	Maureen Fitzgerald '26

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Curriculum	Judith Skretny '26
Field Trips	Ann Nunn '26
Lunch & Learn	Bud Spalding '27 & Jonathan Smith '26
Finance	Abigail Walsh
Membership	Maureen Fitzgerald
Newsletter	Jonathan Smith
Production	Ron Gordon '26
Promotion	Don Snow '27
Special Events	Sandra Cherry '26
Volunteers	Herb Shulhafer '26
BU Liaison	Abigail Walsh

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Jeff Conner '26
Marilyn Schorin '27
Denise Davis '27
Dennis Wiseman '27
Patty Fitzgerald '27
Deloris White '27
Rose Nett '27

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