



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

COURSE CATALOGUE 2025



NEW COVENANT schools

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

Dearest NCS Community,

A hearty welcome to the catalogue of J-Term offerings for January 2025. You will, of course, want to know *what's next - what do we do with this catalogue?* Great question:

- First and foremost, we invite all SOR students and their parents to read through *all* of the course descriptions to get a sense of the range of options.
- Second, please do note several important details:
 - Make sure you review the pre-req/restrictions section to make sure you are eligible, and the fees section, as some courses do require that.
 - The catalogue is organized into three sections, full-day, morning and afternoon.
 - There is only one full-day offering – Peaks and Vistas of Virginia
- Third, you should rank order your desired choices so that when it comes time to register, you are ready to go. Specifically,
 - You should be ready to list your top 3 choices for the morning and top 3 choices for the afternoon session. Unless you are in one of the categories below, all students will be on campus all day so they will take two courses – thus we want your top 3 choices for both sessions.
 - SCUBA/Dive trip – You have already chosen your J-Term, so please register for this course **only** when the time comes.
 - Internships – If you have set up an internship you will need to turn in your Internship Intent Form by October 7th and sign up for the internship during registration. However, if it is not full-day, you will go ahead and choose your top 3 for the time frame you will be back on campus (morning or afternoon).
 - Peaks and Vistas – If you desire to engage this course, when you get to registration you will select it, but then we will still ask you to rank order your top choices for morning and afternoon. The Peaks and Vistas course has limited space and if you don't get that one, we need to know where else to place you.
- Finally, registration will occur on-line during specified windows. Each grade, sequentially, will receive a Microsoft Forms link and on that form will select their choices according to what was just specified. Regarding the timing of the registration process:
 - Seniors – October 10th – 11th
 - Juniors – October 17th & 18th
 - Sophomores – October 24th & 25th
 - Freshman - October 30th & 31th

As classes fill, we will notify the next group of students and remove those from the choices so that underclassman can realign their preferences. As you review these offerings, if you have particular questions about the course content or fees or travel, etc., please direct those to the listed teacher. If you have general questions about the J-Term, please send those my way.

Warmly,

Dr. Erin H. Uminn
Principal – School of Rhetoric

ALL-DAY OFFERINGS





NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

SCUBA on Blackbeard's Dive Boat in the Bahamas

Rev. Chris Deneen

Description:

Since 2015, NCS has been pleased to offer our students an opportunity to be in awe of God's creative majesty found in the underwater world. It's a joyful wonder to be exposed to the vibrant colors, mind-bending shapes, and calm serenity within which God has orchestrated the most fundamental food chain and highest oxygen producing system on the planet. It's also an awakening to the very real dangers that this marine environment is facing because of the current practices of human civilization. Many students have gone on from this experience to further involvement in employment opportunities, conservation programs, as well as life-long recreational enjoyment of the underwater world.

In this 2024-25 iteration of our SCUBA Club, we will once again partner with Fluvanna Dive Center for the Open Water Diver Certification. Larry Antonacci and Shushawn Touryan Schmal will be responsible for the oversight of all PADI Open Water Certification Training as Dive Instructors. They will also use their significant experience to act as our travel agency for the J-Term Trip on Blackbeard's Liveaboard, as well as resourcing the NCS chaperones. Rest assured, NCS chaperones will be present and involved in the dive training and will lead the dive trip. This will be my third trip with NCS on Blackbeard's Liveaboard. I can confidently say that this trip offers a perfect combination of boat life and underwater exploration very few get the chance to experience!

Length:

- Friday, January 3, 2025, is classroom preparation day
- Saturday, January 4-10, 2025, travel to and from The Bahamas from Lynchburg, VA

Travel:

- There will be airline travel from Lynchburg to Nassau, Bahamas, then berth on AllStar Liveaboard Blackbeard's 65-foot dive boat.

Fees:

- \$3250.00 per participant. Cost includes airfare, checked baggage fee, roundtrip transportation to Nassau Marina, all meals/snacks/drinks on the boat, crew Divemaster, crew gratuity, all fees instituted by the Bahamian Government, gear rental (BCD, regulator, dive computer, wetsuit, dive light).

- Students will want to bring money for food purchases in airports and any souvenirs they purchase on Blackbeard's or in the Bahamas. Be advised that digital forms of payment are becoming more mandatory in lieu of cash.
- For entry into the country, the Bahamas requires a valid U.S. Passport that will not expire within 6 months of the stated travel time. Passport costs have been updated for 2024: Adult Passport - \$165 Minor Passport (Under 16) - \$135 Renewal - \$130
- Cost does not include mandatory Dive Accident Insurance and Travel Insurance. Divers Alert Network (DAN) is the industry standard for Dive Insurance and is suggested as a means of acquiring both types of insurance. Base package costs are estimated at \$205 (Individual Membership \$40, Dive Insurance \$42, Travel Insurance \$123, age dependent).

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- 16 Participants and 2 Chaperones
- PADI Open Water SCUBA Certification or equivalent is required to dive



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

The Peaks and Vistas of Virginia

Mr. Jimmy Kirshberger

Description:

Here in Central Virginia, we are blessed to be surrounded by some of the best hikes and views in the country as well as more miles of the Appalachian Trail than any other state. This course will offer students the opportunity to hike portions of the Appalachian Trail and visit some beautiful peaks within a day's drive of Lynchburg. Not for the faint of heart (or of legs), this course will involve 30-40 miles of hiking and many feet of elevation gain to get to this impressive views.

Length:

- This course will run on full days, totaling 42 hours.

Travel:

- Daily travel not to extend beyond the school day with the exception of Monday, January 13, which will involve an early departure and late return.

Fees:

- There is a \$25 fee for this course.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- Students should have the ability to hike 5-10 miles a day with some elevation gain.
- Students should also dress warmly and have appropriate footwear for hiking.
- Maximum of 14 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- All hikes are subject to change due to weather
- Dragon's Tooth – January 6
- Humpback Rocks – January 7
- Tinker Cliffs – January 8
- Mount Pleasant – January 9
- McAfee Knob – January 10
- Old Rag – January 13

MORNING OFFERINGS





NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

Around the World in Seven Dishes

Mrs. Jessica Arango

Description:

Food tells a special story. Food connects us. Food transports us. In this course, we will “travel” to seven different countries through the power of cooking. Not only will students learn essential kitchen skills, but they will also learn about various cultures and their cooking styles. We will first discover the unique qualities of each destination including history, art, and literature. Then we will build a meal around the stories told of the country. We will end each meeting by eating the meal which we have prepared, sharing stories of our own. This course hopes to restore what Michael Pollan describes as a “return to the kitchen to reclaim our lost traditions and to forge a deeper, more meaningful connection to the ingredients and cooking techniques that we use to nourish ourselves.”

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- None.

Fees:

- There is a \$60 fee for this course.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- Food allergies cannot be accommodated.
- Maximum of 10 students in this course.

Content Outline (Menu):

- **Italy:** Fresh pasta, homemade sauce, and tiramisu
- **Morocco:** Falafel, pita, salad, yogurt-dill sauce
- **Mexico:** Fajitas, rice, refried beans, and salad
- **Cuba:** Lechon asado, black beans, rice, and tres leches
- **Greece:** Kebobs, Mediterranean salad, tzatziki
- **England:** Fish and chips; High tea at noon
- **Romania:** Chicken schnitzel, salate de bouef, and salam de biscuiti



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

Mining the Memoir

Ms. Starlet Baker

Description:

As a high school student, you already have a wealth of core memories tucked away in the corners of your heart and mind. Waiting to be mined, these memories come to life through the genre of personal memoir. Quite unlike rhetorical analysis, the well-crafted illustrative memoir contains strong imagery that invites readers to join you in your proverbial *walk down memory lane*. Once polished, the personal memoir can be gifted to a loved one or even used for a college admissions essay.

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- None.

Fees:

- None.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- Maximum of 18 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- *Laying the groundwork:* Why take the time to write about yourself and your experiences? How does the writing process serve the author? How might your memoir best serve others?
- *Finding beauty.* Does beauty exist in every memory? How can we find beauty in the most difficult of human experiences? Are words inherently powerful, and if so are they inherently beautiful? How do writers craft beautiful sentences?
- *Listening well.* What is the connection between listening well and writing well? What is the essential posture of a good listener? A good writer? Does one need to be a good listener to be a good writer?
- *Leveraging your story:* What are the common threads in your childhood or teenage experiences? How can you leverage the “common to man” threads of your story to bless others?
- *Reflecting glory:* How do you, oh human, reflect the image of God? Does what you behold determine what you become? How does understanding ourselves as imago dei of a Creator God impact our understanding of ourselves in the world?



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

Geography of Tea: *Camellia sinensis* across the globe

Mrs. Lauren Helm

Description:

The leaves of the *Camellia sinensis* plant are brewed daily in every inhabited continent, some varieties as common as water and some valued more per pound than the most precious elements on earth. Tea defines cultures and remains an integral expression of hospitality across the world. For 3,000 years, tea (*Camellia sinensis*) was confined to East Asia, and with each century, tea became more and more rooted into their daily cultures and rituals. It remained there until the first tea leaves were brought to Europe in the 17th century. The growing appetite for tea in the West had global effects, beginning with the Opium Wars, leading to plant smuggling, formation of the East India Company and birth of a global economy, and even a protest that launched the American Revolution.

Given its indelible mark on human history, we will explore the teas that define our world both through sensory experiences and cultural practices. We will learn about the geographical features and historical background that influenced the spread of tea through these diverse regions. Non-*camellia sinensis* teas like rooibos and yerba mate are included by virtue of their similar usage in the southern hemisphere. Each day we will examine loose-leaf teas to understand their preparation and production. We will learn to properly steep the leaves, add additional ingredients like spices and herbs, and sample foods that often accompany the beverage. Together we will gain understanding and appreciation for the power these small leaves have exerted over civilizations past and present.

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- None.

Fees:

- There is a \$25 fee for this course.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- Maximum of 18 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- **Birthplace of Tea:**
Botany and Background in China
- **East Asian colorful opposites:**
Matcha and Japanese Tea Ceremony & Thai tea
- **Casbah to Cape in Africa:**
Moroccan Mint and South African Rooibos
- **South Asian Assam:**
Indian Masala Chai
- **Samovars and strong tea:**
Turkey, Russia and Persian preparations
- **South American traditions:**
Once (Elevenes) and Yerba Mate (with own bombilla)
- **The United Kingdom**
Cream tea and Conventions



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

Give My Regards To Broadway

Mrs. Gail Mitchell

Description:

Why are Broadway musicals so popular? How do they both reflect and influence American culture? This course will study the rise and development of Broadway musicals, discussing the elements of musical theater (plot, characters, songs, and dances) and examining the Broadway style as it was created and has changed over time. We will accomplish this by watching videos of several Broadway classics, analyzing and critiquing each show, building an understanding of the Broadway musical style and the factors that keep Americans flocking to New York and the “Great White Way.”

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- None.

Fees:

- None.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- Maximum of 18 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- We first look at the history of musicals with a focus on the early days of Broadway.
 - What and where is Broadway?
 - 19th-century musical influences on Broadway shows
- We will watch and critique four Broadway shows, as listed below, that represent the best musicals of their period, looking at plot, character development, and themes, and how song and dance contribute to these.
- We will then compare the shows, considering the changes in Broadway styles over time as well as what elements are consistent.
 - Early Broadway (1900-1943): *42nd Street*
 - Classic Broadway (1943-1965): *Oklahoma!*
 - Broadway and Changing Themes: *West Side Story*
 - Broadway and Changing Styles: *Phantom of the Opera*
- We will also briefly discuss other musicals, most of which are already familiar to most people, that have contributed to the changing landscape of Broadway through the years.



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

A Guide to the World Religions

Mr. Lukas Stock

Description:

This course will be an introduction to the basic teachings, practices, and history of the major world religions (Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism) as well as, time allowing, an introduction to smaller faith traditions (ie Shinto and Baha'i). Attention will also be given to the nature of orthodoxy and heterodoxy within each religion, as well as a focused discussion of forms of mysticism within each religion. The goal of studying these faiths is to understand the worldviews represented within these diverse religious traditions and to recognize the way religion influences other areas of human life. In addition, understanding other religious beliefs enables us as Christians to better understand our own faith, as well as be better able to articulate why we believe what we believe and don't believe much of what other faiths teach.

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- Travel would be to visit with members of other faiths in the Lynchburg area to learn first-hand about the religious traditions we are studying. Greater Lynchburg Islamic Association, Agudath Sholom Synagogue in Lynchburg, BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Hindu temple in Salem, St George Greek Orthodox Church in Lynchburg, and others are potential sites to visit.

Fees:

- There is a \$10 fee for this course.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- Maximum of 14 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- What is "Religion"?
- Christianity
 - Major Branches
 - Historical Overview
 - Key Doctrines
 - Key Practices

- Judaism
 - Major Branches
 - Historical Overview
 - Key Doctrines
 - Key Practices
- Islam
 - Major Branches
 - Historical Overview
 - Key Doctrines
 - Key Practices
- Buddhism
 - Major Branches
 - Historical Overview
 - Key Doctrines
 - Key Practices
- Hinduism
 - Major Branches
 - Historical Overview
 - Key Doctrines
 - Key Practices
- Mysticism
 - Definition, examples
 - Christian Mysticism
 - Jewish Mysticism
 - Muslim Mysticism
 - Hindu Mysticism
 - Buddhist Mysticism



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC
J-TERM

Woodworking Course

At Vector Space, Lynchburg

Description:

This course provides an opportunity for teens to learn beginner and intermediate woodworking techniques. Vector Space is a non-profit makerspace dedicated to hands-on education for teens and adults. Led by retired engineer and wood craftsman Des Black and Vector Space founder Elise Spontarelli, the goals of this course are to ignite a love of making and build confidence in the wood shop for each student. Participants will begin by learning to read and interpret detailed plans and tool safety training. Throughout the course, students will learn more advanced techniques and use both hand and power tools to build three independent projects. Project will go home with students at the end of the program.

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- Students will travel each day to and from the Vector Space facility by NCS bus.

Fees

- The fee for this course is \$225 which covers transportation to and from the Vector Space facility, materials used therein and the on-site instructor.
- All supplies, safety equipment, and materials are provided.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- No prior woodworking experience is required.
- Max of 8 students. Min of 4 students needed for this offering.
- Students will receive further instruction on dress code and other considerations once enrolled in the class.

Content Outline:

- Tools used during this course will include chop saw, bandsaw, table saw, hand chisel, router table, belt sander, drill, orbital sander, square, clamps, and measuring and marking tools.
- Projects will include a cutting board, napkin holder, and fruit bowl. There will be an opportunity for some customization and decision making on the part of the student when creating their projects.

AFTERNOON OFFERINGS





NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

Conversational Spanish

Ms. Katie Eldridge

Description:

¿Dónde está la clase de español? Aquí está! Join us in learning how to hold basic conversations with native Spanish speakers. We will master vocabulary and phrases students can use during our school mission trips or when meeting Spanish speakers here in Lynchburg. Learning to speak even a few phrases and sentences in Spanish is a beautiful way to show our appreciation and comradery with others, as nothing quite communicates respect and friendship like trying to speak each other's languages.

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- None.

Fees:

- None.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- Maximum of 18 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- Introduction to Conversational Spanish
 - Introducing oneself
 - Discussing the family and pets
 - Describing the weather
 - Counting and telling time
- Preferences
 - Discussing general likes and dislikes
 - Sharing hobbies
 - Discussing sports and entertainment
 - Sharing basic stories
- Requests for Information and Help
 - Asking for help
 - Understanding locations within a building
 - Asking for and giving directions

- Describing basic medical symptoms
- Food & Culture
 - Understanding basic ingredients
 - Explaining food allergies and dietary preferences
 - Discussing dishes and comprehending recipes
 - Understanding the variety of cuisines throughout the Spanish-speaking world
 - Learning about holidays and daily life of people throughout the Spanish-speaking world
 - Learning about wildlife throughout the Spanish-speaking world



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

Cents and Sensibility

Mrs. Linda Hackenbracht / Mrs. April Andrade

Mr. John Heaton

Description:

Survey data from the end of 2022 suggest that 37% of American households do not have enough money in the bank to make it through even one month, if they lost their main source of income. Total national student loans went from \$500 billion to \$1.7 trillion in the 16 years between 2006 and 2022. Average credit card debt in the Commonwealth of Virginia is \$7,663. Too many people, young and old, are making financial choices without the benefit of financial literacy - this course is designed to help students avoid that pitfall!

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- None.

Fees

- None.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- Maximum of 18 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- General Financial Literacy - what is money, what value does it have and why.
- Personal Budgeting - cash flow management.
- Taxes – brief overview of tax returns and payroll tax forms.
- Paying for College – investigate options to pay for college, consider career path.
- Credit Cards – avoiding debt and how credit card rewards work.
- Navigating Large Purchases Decisions – buying a house or car and understanding loans.
- Responsible Ownership – discussing the upkeep of assets (homes, cars, etc.).
- Investing and Saving – retirement; rainy day; large purchases; overview of stock market.
- Insurance – understand different types.



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

Go Into the Desert

Mr. Kevin Rhea

Description:

“Go into the desert not to escape other men, but in order to find them in God”- Thomas Merton. This course will examine the Desert Fathers in the third century AD. These early monastics devoted themselves to a life of prayer, poverty, and self-denial. The Desert Fathers had a profound influence on Christian monasticism and spirituality. This influence can be seen in the Rule of St. Benedict and the Hesychast tradition of the Eastern Church. By learning about the lives of these monastics and reading their sayings from The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks, we will see how the call to the desert applies today.

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- None.

Fees:

- None.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- Maximum of 18 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- Introduction to the Desert Fathers
 - Begin with a review of the history leading up to the desert fathers. Also, learn about key themes in their writing and their influence.
- The first Desert Father: St. Paul of Thebes
 - We will learn about the first desert father St. Paul of Thebes and examine the events that lead him to the desert and his life in the desert.
- The Father of Monks: St. Anthony the Great
 - Overview of the life of St. Anthony the Great and readings from St. Athanasius St. Antony of the Desert.
- Desert Mothers: St. Syncletica of Alexandria and St. Mary of Egypt

- The desert mothers are the female ascetics who lived in the desert. We will learn about their contributions and consider the lives of St. Syncletica and St. Mary of Egypt.
- Sayings of the Desert Fathers
 - After learning about the lives of several desert fathers and mothers, we will now look at the collection of writings from The Desert Fathers: Sayings of the Early Christian Monks.
- Influence on monasticism
 - The Benedictine, Franciscan, and Hesychast traditions are some of the most popular monastic traditions in Christianity. We will look at how the desert fathers influenced their founders and how it influenced their rules of life.
- The desert call today
 - What does it mean to go into the desert today? What does this mean for our own lives? These questions will be addressed as we conclude the course.



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC
J-TERM

Stage Combat and Shakespeare

Mr. Ethan Roberts

Description:

Wow! That looked so real! How did they do that? In our Stage Combat J-Term you will learn a wide variety of physical techniques to create simulated violence on stage. We will then apply these techniques to several scenes from Shakespeare that include physical violence. These scenes will be pulled from Shakespeare plays such as Macbeth, Hamlet, Taming of the Shrew, Comedy of Errors, and a Midsummer Nights dream.

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- None.

Fees:

- None.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- This will be a very physical class that will include some falling on mats.
- Maximum of 18 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- Basics of Stage Combat (Partner work, distance, staging)
- Unarmed Stage Combat (Punches, kicks, falls, flips, holds)
- Scene Work
 - Using physical work to create characterization on the stage.
 - Memorization of Scripts
 - Performance of Scripts



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

SCHOOL OF RHETORIC

J-TERM

Fiber Arts: Weaving and Macramé

Dr. Erin Uminn

Description:

When reflecting on persistence and patience in handcrafting, Hesiod stated, “If you add a little to a little, and do this often, soon that little will become great” (*Works and Days*, line 361, c. 700 B.C.). This course is designed to introduce the student to great thinkers who have spoken on art and beauty, to develop a fully orbéd understanding of humanity’s unique ability to reflect on and contribute to what is beautiful, and to view and discuss various fiber art pieces to inspire and engage both the novice and the more knowledgeable.

Hands on instruction is designed to equip students with essential skills in weaving and macramé. In the first half of the course, we’ll learn how to set up a loom, select materials, and create stunning woven art pieces finished for wall hanging. The second half of the course focuses on macramé, where we’ll master essential knots and patterns to create decorative items like hangers and wall art. The course emphasizes hands-on immersion and innovation.

Throughout the week you’ll benefit from personalized feedback and collaborative discussion of projects, fostering a vibrant artistic community in the classroom. By the end of this intensive course, students will leave with their own loom, handcrafted items, and the confidence to continue their fiber art journey. Join this course to unlock your creativity and passion for textile crafting!

Length:

- This course will run on half-days, totaling 21 hours.

Travel:

- None.

Fees:

- There is a \$75 fee for this course.

Pre-requisites/Restrictions

- All skill levels welcome (beginner to advanced).
- Allergies to particular fibers cannot be accommodated (cotton, synthetics, wool, etc.).
- Maximum of 18 students in this course.

Content Outline:

- Background

- History- Timeline and Artifacts
- Philosophy- Beauty and Art
- Weaving
 - Tools and Terms: loom, tapestry needle, beater, warp/weft, tension
 - Selection of fiber type and colors
 - Basic weaving- tabby (plain), basketweave, soumak, rya knot
 - Texture- variety in color, fiber type, knots, loops, braids
 - Finishing- tying off from loom technique
 - Preparing a wall hanging
- Macramé
 - Mounting knots
 - Square and half knots
 - Hitches and variations
 - Sinnets
 - Gathering
 - Working on a hoop



NEW
COVENANT
SCHOOLS

122 FLEETWOOD DRIVE | LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA 24501