

ENCORE FALL 2026

Welcome to Encore's Fall 2026 course offerings. These learning opportunities are scheduled within the college's academic calendar. They are assigned to available areas after the credit classes have been scheduled. This scheduling is completed at least two months before classes begin. So, as you consider what to register for, please note carefully the dates, times, and places for each offering, for there are no refunds for missed classes. Neither Encore nor its instructors can make changes after that. The only exception would be a college-wide postponement, cancellation, or rescheduling i.e. snow day.

Check the college's website, sunyorange.edu for closing updates, class changes, etc....

MONDAY

*****DECOUAGING A HOLIDAY PLATE*****

1 Session: 1:00-3:00 pm

October 19, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 201

The students will learn how to decoupage a glass plate to be used during the Fall or Winter holidays. Use it as the perfect hostess gift with your cookies or keep it to serve your own treats.

Decoupage is the art of decorating objects with paper cutouts.

PLEASE NOTE: Students will need to bring their own sharp scissors. There will be a \$15.00 cash for materials due before class starts.

Instructor: Debbie Bassini

Debbie is a retired educator. She has worked in Rockland County teaching high school students for over 36 years. Her interests include reading, traveling and crafting.

*****THE HISTORY OF HARNESS RACING IN GOSHEN*****

1 session: 1:00-3:00pm

November 2, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 201

Explore the world's oldest active harness track and how it has evolved through the years. Through the use of photos, the course will cover the history of harness racing in Goshen from its early beginnings in the late 1700's to the present day.

Instructor: Ed Conner:

Ed is the Village of Goshen Historian and the author of two books on Goshen, published by Arcadia Publishing Company.

*****ROPE AND TWIG WREATH/BASKET*****

1 Session: 1:00-3:00 pm

October 5, 2026

Location: Rowley Center for Science and Engineering 010-Gerry Forum Room

The students will learn how to create a basket from rope and twigs which can be used as a wreath. We will add flowers made from pine cones and other natural materials. This can be hung indoors or outdoors.

PLEASE NOTE: Students need to bring sharp scissors or shears to cut the rope and if possible a glue gun. The cost to each student is \$20.00 cash to be brought to the class.

Instructor: Carin Aiello

Carin is a business owner, volunteer and crafter. She has taught craft classes for Encore and Hill Hold Museum in Campbell Hall, NY.

TUESDAY

*****INTRODUCTION TO MODERN AMERICAN MAHJONG*****

4 Sessions: 3:00-5:00 pm

Sept. 15, 22, 29 and Oct. 6, 2026

Location: Gilman Center Library Room 130

This class is for beginners only. Learn the basic and start playing! It is a popular class which will fill up quickly. Please be sure that you can commit to all dates. We will keep a short waiting list in case someone needs to cancel BEFORE the class begins.

Please Note: You will need to purchase the 2026 National Mahjong League cards that can be purchased on Amazon, before the start of class.

Instructors: Linda Dickman and Bonnie Smith

Linda and Bonnie are both retired from the health care profession. They learned to play Mahjong from an Encore class and play weekly.

*****INVESTMENTS *** What Investments May Do Well in an “AI” World**

4 Sessions: 2:15 – 4:15 pm

September 15, 22, 29 and October 6, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 211B

What investments may benefit from “AI” (Artificial Intelligence)? What investments should you consider? What can help you meet your goals? We will discuss stocks and “ETF’s” as well as business development companies and other high-yield investments. Beginners are welcome! All Questions welcome!!

Instructor: Robert Pollsen

Robert is a retired Certified Financial Planner professional. He has worked in NYC’s financial district for over 25 years: Standard & Poor’s, Merrill Lynch, Bank of America and more.

*****EAST AFRICA NATURE SAFARI*****

1 Session: 2:00 – 4:00 pm

September 22, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 207

The instructor has a PowerPoint presentation of his recent safari to Kenya and Tanzania. He will show the wildlife, nature, and geography of this unique area.

Instructor: William Fiero

He is a retired pharmacist and a lifelong bird/nature nut.

His passion is travelling the world, seeing and photographing birds and wildlife. Accompanied by my wife and soulmate, Jayne. I’ve seen 3,464 of the world’s birds, out of the 11,000 plus species that occur. He’d love to get 4,000 and is making plans to try for that!!

*****CHAIR YOGA*****

3 Sessions: 3:00-4:00 pm

October 27, November 3 & 10, 2026

Location: Gilman Center Library 130

Chair yoga is a gentle form of yoga exercise with breathing techniques and meditation while seated in a sturdy the chair, and incorporating body movements for health and wellness. These exercises help with balance, mobility issues, and reduces pressure on your lower back.

Benefits are: improved posture, strengthen shoulders, lubricate knee joints and your upper body flexibility.

PLEASE NOTE: Students should bring bottled water to class.

Instructor: Isabel Gomez

Isabel is an Aqua-size instructor at the Middletown YMCA.

*****MILESTONES OF ORANGE COUNTY HISTORY*****

2 Sessions: 3:00-5:00 pm
September 29 & October 6, 2026
Location: Harriman Hall 211A

We will exam the key individuals, events and consequences that led to path breaking impact on the history of Orange County and its people.

Instructor: Dr. Richard Hull

Dr. Hull is a retired professor of New York University. He has written numerous books on American and African History. He is the four-time winner of the New York University Teaching Excellence award. He also received the United Nations Distinguished Citizen Award.

*****THE COUP d'ETAT OF JFK AND ITS SHADOWY FIGURES AND
THE WARREN COMMISSION REPORT*****

2 Sessions: 3:00-5:00 pm
October 20 and 27, 2026
Location: Harriman Hall 211B

The assassination of President John F. Kennedy took place over 62 years ago, but researchers still look for the truth of what actually took place before, during and after that fateful day of November 22, 1963. This presentation will lay out a mosaic of shadowy figures that surround this case through the optic of a Criminal Investigator, a Criminologist, and a Critical Incident Case Manager. You will be given a tour through the hall of mirrors that involved the CIA, The Mob, Anti-Castro Cuban groups, Texas Businessmen, Military Personnel, Agents, Double Agents, Mercenaries and other dubious individuals. Topics to be explored will connect the dots involving a list of persons who had motive, intent and opportunity. The presentation will lay out the moves on this chessboard of deceit, intrigue, spycraft, hired gunmen, conspirators and coverup artists.

Instructor: Greg T. Gaetano

Greg is an adjunct assistant professor in the criminal justice department at SUNY/Orange College.

WEDNESDAY

*****BOOK CLUB*****

2 Sessions: 1:00 – 3:00 pm
October 14 and 21, 2026
Location: Harriman Hall 201

STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO READ EACH BOOK PRIOR TO CLASS.

On October 14th, we will discuss THE DEVIL IN THE GROVE by Gilbert King and HOPE by Pope Francis.

On October 21nd we will discuss ONE DAY, EVERYONE WILL HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AGAINST THIS by Omar El Akkad, and SONG OF SOLOMON by Toni Morrison.

Instructor: Marlena Lange

A long time Encore instructor, Marlena has also been a teacher of English at Chester High School, SUNY Orange, Harriman College and Mercy College. She has worked in many prisons. Marlena is the current president of the Middletown Thrall Library Board of Trustees. In addition, she is the current president of Friends of Thrall Library.

*****UNDERSTANDING ALZHEMER'S AND DEMENTIA*****

1 Session: 3:00-5:00 pm
October 14, 2026
Location: Harriman Hall 211A

This course covers basic information on the difference between Alzheimer's and Dementia, stages, risk factors, research, and FDA-approved treatments.

Instructor: Sharon Mills-Besheer

Sharon brings more than 25 years of experience in IT, telecommunications, professional services, marketing and sales, along with 17 years as a personal chef and catering business owner. Now focused on volunteering, she supports several Hudson Valley organizations and was named the Town of Montgomery Senior Independence Project's 2023 Volunteer of the Year. She became a community educator for the Alzheimer's Association Hudson Valley Chapter in December 2024.

Sharon's commitment is deeply personal. Her best friend Sally died from Alzheimer's, and four generations of her paternal family have experienced Alzheimer's or another dementia, including her father. After moving to Missouri to

serve as his primary caregiver, Sharon came to value the Alzheimer Association's support and resources. Today, she volunteers to offer others information, hope and a clear path forward.

*****ENCORE: 1776*****

3 Sessions: 1:00-3:00 pm

September 23, 30 and October 7, 2026

Location: Rowley Center for Science and Engineering 010-Gerry Forum Room-ITV

On 4 July 2026, the United States celebrated the 250th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. With the celebration of the semiquincentennial of the American nation, this course will explore the pivotal events that transpired in 1776 that led to the writing, adoption, and signing of this document, effectively changing the American Revolution to a war for independence.

Instructor: Professor Heidi Amelia-Anne Weber, Ph. D

Dr. Heidi Amelia-Anne Weber is a Full Professor of History in the Department of Global Studies at SUNY Orange. She is actively involved in teaching classes in the Honors program as well as for Encore. Heidi was selected as the recipient of both SUNY Orange Presidential Award for Excellence in Teaching as well as the Chancellor's Award for Teaching Excellence. Heidi has written the book *Like a Great Feudal Landlord: How Architecture and Slavery Created the World of the Upcountry Planter* published in November 2022 by Mercer University Press.

*****MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC, WAR!*****

4 Sessions: 3:00-5:00 pm

October 14, 21,28 and November 11, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 211B

Europe discovers Jazz & the first American fight WWI

In the critical stages of WWI, Britain is already heading to the beaches of Dunkirk, while decimated French army holds the line desperately waiting for the late joining unprepared USA forces. Germany is determined to strike now and end it! Asleep at the wheel "President Wilson" sends a broken-down ship, the SS Pocahontas, to France with National Guard bugle boys from Harlem who trained with broomsticks to do stevedore work on ships! Under pressure, Black Jack Pershing deals from the bottom of the deck, a black ace to France. The old 15th National Guard, the 369th US Infantry Regiment, goes underground fighting as a replacement unit under the French flag: The Harlem Rattlers! To the French they were Men of Bronze! To the Germans they were the Harlem Hell Fighters! Their stand allowed enough time for the Yankee Doodles to arrive! The birth of the Jazz Age, Swing Street, Harlem Renaissance, Jim Europe, Eubie Blake, Noble Sissle & Willie "the Lion" Smith, began.

Instructor: Frank Kieck

Frank is an avid old-time radio and history buff. He has taught multiple classes at SUNY/Orange and the Desmond campus.

*****ANXIETY HACKS*****

1 Session: 3:00-5:00 pm

October 21, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 211A

This class contains 20 real-life, on-the-spot “hacks” to manage feelings of anxiety and being overwhelmed. These tips are quick, simple and science-based.

Instructor: Erin Rion

Erin Rion is a graduate of Fordham University and SUNY New Paltz. She received her Master of Arts in Psychology with a concentration in Counseling in 2005, and worked for many years with adults with Developmental Disabilities. Her career pivot in 2022 brought her to SUNY Orange as the Director of the Wellness Center. Erin enjoys facilitating workshops on holistic health topics.

*****VISITING MUSEUM VILLAGE*****

THIS IS AN OFF-SITE CLASS

1 Session: 3:00 – 5:00 pm

October 16, 2026

Museum Village

Route 17M Monroe, NY

This will be a two-hour general tour highlighting key stops at the museum and exploring late 19th-century and early 20th-century history.

Instructor: Ethan Wojciechowski

Ethan currently serves as the Director of Education at Museum Village located in Monroe, N.Y. In his capacity as Director of Education, Ethan creates programming that helps fulfill its mission of preserving the past to serve the future.

THURSDAY

*****HISTORY OF MIDDLETOWN STATE HOSPITAL*****

1 Session: 3:00-5:00 pm

October 22, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 211B

From 1874 to 2006, the NY State Homeopathic Asylum for the Insane at Middletown (later the Middletown State Homeopathic Hospital, the Middletown State Hospital, and finally the Middletown Psychiatric Center), was a major part of Middletown. We will review the development, the growth, the buildings, the patients, the treatments, and the changes of the “City on the Hill,” and today, the “Community Campus” plan for the future.

Instructor: Gerald Kleiner

Gerry was born at Horton Hospital in Middletown and lived on the state hospital grounds until 1955. He graduated from Middletown High School, attended OCCC and then George Washington University with a degree in political science. He then attended the University of Texas and earned a degree in post-grad philosophy. He had a career in commercial printing. He was elected Middletown Second Ward Alderman, serving two terms and reelected in 2013.

*****HISTORY OF MIDDLETOWN II*****

4 Sessions: 2:00-4:30 pm

September 17, 24 and October 1, 8, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 211B

History Comes Alive in this informative and entertaining course. The spring semester was very well received. Each session will cover a different aspect of our history. Emphasis is on the people who shaped events, including well-known and ordinary people who walked the same streets we do today. Using professional movies, photos, stories and artifacts, we will take a deep dive into the past. This semester we will cover: Famous Women; the Fire Department; Famous Men and Celebrations.

Instructor: Steve R. Cohen

Steve is a native of Middletown who graduated from Middletown High School in 1974 while also taking classes at SUNY Orange (OCCC). After graduating from the Wharton School of Business at Penn, he joined DuPont in the Information Systems Department. He served in many positions in all areas of IT and Global Businesses over a 36-year career. For ten years, he was Global CIO of DuPont Sourcing and Logistics. He retired in 2014 and assisted his parents who lived in Middletown at 140 Highland Avenue for the next seven years. He is an active member of the Historical Society (25 East Ave.) and follows in his father's (Marv Cohen) footsteps in lecturing on Middletown history. Although legally blind, he still travels by himself all over the world. He is a father of two sons and three grandchildren. Along with his wife, Cindy, they host a weekly family dinner.

*****SENIOR FRAUD II****

1 Session: 3:00-5:00 pm

October 1, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 211A

Come to a presentation by the Orange County Assistant District Attorney, Andrew Stack. We will learn about some of the types of scams that are targeted at the elderly. Some examples are: technical support scams, cheque fraud, AI-powered scams, funeral scams, Government Imposter Scams and many others. The best way to protect yourself is to be aware and be prepared.

Instructor: Andrew Stack

Andrew represented the Orange County District Attorney's Office by presenting this informative class last semester.

*****HEROIC WOMEN WHO WERE SPIES*****

3 Sessions: 1:00-3:00pm

October 15, 22 and 29, 2026

Location: Rowley Center for Science and Engineering 010-Gerry Forum Room-ITV

Women have made themselves available to our armed services since the American Revolution. However, it was not until WWI and WWII that they played an active role in the services. WWII saw the creation of women spies. These women took the job of being a spy extremely seriously. Many of them didn't even talk of the roles

they played during the wars when everything was over-taking the need for secrecy very seriously. Often even their families did not know of the danger these women faced daily. Come and learn what it was like to be a “Heroic Woman Spy”.

Instructor: Yvonne Bigney

Yvonne was a Civil War re-enactor for 10 years, participating in re-enactments including Museum Village and the 135th anniversary at Gettysburg. She has given talks at historical societies, libraries and schools.

*****CREATING CRAFT CARDS*****

3 Sessions: 2:00-4:00 pm

September 17, October 8 and November 5, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 201

In this class we will be making 2-3 cards per class that could be: birthday, sympathy, get well, etc....

PLEASE NOTE: student will need to bring sharp scissors, and \$25 cash to be collected at the first class.

Instructor: Pam Ippolito

Pam has been stamping for about 20 years and has been a stamp demonstrator for about seven years and has presented this loved class previously for Encore.

*****RISE AND FALL OF DEMOCRACY IN ANCIENT ATHENS*****

3 Sessions: 2:00-4:30 pm

October 1, 8 and 15, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 207

This course will chart the chaotic rise of the utterly unique Greek form of government called “Democracy” (*demokratia*) in late 6th Century BCE Athens. This course will analyze its evolution throughout the Golden Age of Athens in the Fifth Century, as well as the numerous factors that led to the ultimate decay and disappearance of democracy as a distinct form of government until the Enlightenment in the late 18th Century CE....

Instructor: Michael Quinn

Michael Quinn is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Global Studies at SUNY Orange, who specializes in the history and archaeology of the ancient Mediterranean world, with particular interest and expertise in the cultures of the Greeks and Romans. He regularly teaches courses in ancient World History, Greek and Roman history, Medieval European history, as well as various honors and seminars. His prior Encore classes have been extremely well received.

*****TOURO COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE*****

THIS IS AN OFF-SITE CLASS

1 Session: 10:00 am

September 10, 2026

Touro College (Horton Hospital)

60 Prospect Avenue, Middletown, NY 10940

This is a guided tour of the small college and its classrooms; we will be able to observe these future doctors as they are learning. (People who have done this tour have found it very interesting).

Touro is a prominent medical school that is focused on a current, continuously updated curriculum that allows the training of highly skilled and resourceful osteopathic physicians ready to maximize medical knowledge and hands-on clinical skills. Middletown is one of the three college locations.

NOTE: The date is tentative as Touro has not finalized its Fall Schedule. If you are interested, please let us know, and we will update you as we learn if there is a change of date.

FRIDAY

*****ROCK MUSIC'S HIDDEN SECRETS II*****

2 Sessions: 1:00 - 3:00 pm

September 25 and October 23, 2026

Room: Harriman Hall 111 (Auditorium)

In this two-session course, we will continue to discuss well-known singers and songs of the rock era and little-known facts about them. The focus will be on the music of the late 50's 60's and early 70's. Topics will include legal wrangling behind the scenes, bridge songs that became hits and songs passed over by top singers that others converted into hits. The sessions will include relevant videos.

Instructors: Mark Schwartz and Darryl Wilbur

Mark, a retired journalist, is a long-time resident and a big-time music aficionado. He has been attending concerts for more than 50 years and has heard everything from kids strumming ukuleles to Santana and Clapton making magic on their guitars, from elementary school orchestras to the New York Philharmonic. A devoted fan of trivia and useless factoids, he has turned his focus toward the fascinating world of rock music.

Darryl is from a family who loved music. He taught at Warwick Middle School where he formed a large student club which performed annually for over 900 people. He has played with several bands and taught beginners' guitar classes for children and adults at SUNY Orange.

*****AMERICA'S 250TH HISTORIC FILMS *****

4 Sessions: 2:00-4:00 pm

October 2,9,16 and 30, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 111(Auditorium)

Films to celebrate America's 205th Anniversary!

October 2: *Last of the Mohicans*

October 9: *1776*

October 16: *Selma*

October 30: *On the Basis of Sex*

Instructor: Matthew Pfisterer

Matt has served as the Director at Middletown Thrall Library since 2011. Matt earned a Master's Degree in Information Science from SUNY Albany, worked as a public Librarian and gained experience as a director of public libraries in Ulster and Dutchess counties.

*****FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR BEGINNERS*****

1 Session 2:00 – 4:00 pm

October 2, 2026

Location: Harriman Hall 211B

Students will learn how to make a floral arrangement.

NOTE: Participants need to bring garden clippers or pruning shears.

\$20 cash will be collected at the beginning of the class.

Instructor: Eileen Hogan

Eileen has taken several floral design classes. We will be making a fall arrangement.

*****A TOUR OF HILLSIDE CEMETERY IN MIDDLETOWN*****

THIS IS AN OFF-SITE CLASS.

1 Session: 10:00 am

September 18, 2026

Hillside Cemetery, Middletown, NY

This class will consist of one session in which the instructors will take the students on a guided tour of the 60-acre historic cemetery. Students will learn about the cemetery itself as well as many of the notable Orange County residents who are buried there.

This class is for people who are able to walk on uneven terrain and walk about a mile or two. It is NOT handicapped friendly.

Please wear comfortable shoes and bring water.

We will meet at 10am at the cemetery office (which was the caretaker's house).

PLEASE NOTE:

Changes may occur since the original catalog was issued.

Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Encore's office phone number is (845) 341-4896 or

encore@sunyorange.edu