



# MVILR

Mohawk Valley Institute for Learning in Retirement



## Spring 2026 Course Catalog

*Let MVILR be your bridge  
to learning and living.*



New members are  
always welcome.  
Purchase or renew  
your membership at  
[mvcc.edu/mvilr](https://mvcc.edu/mvilr)

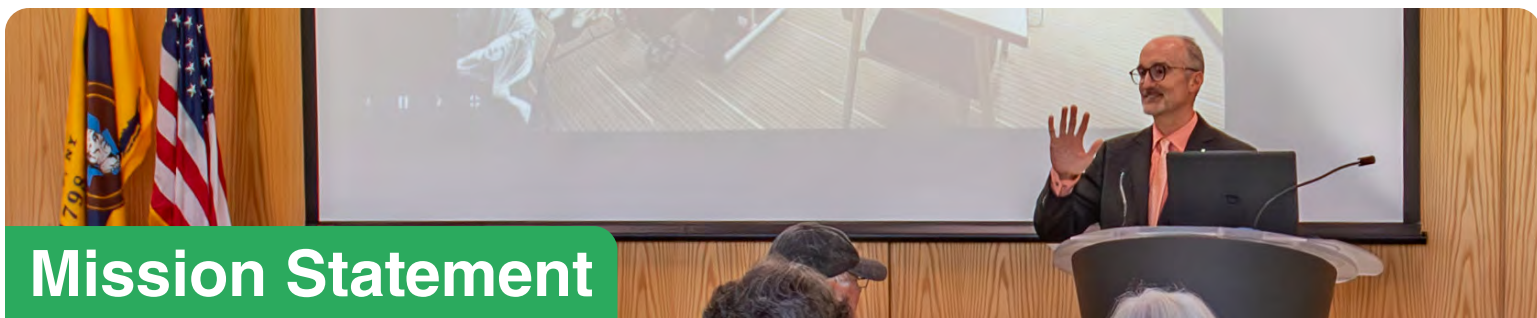
315-334-7761

[mvilr@mvcc.edu](mailto:mvilr@mvcc.edu)

Rome Campus, Plumley Complex 121E

# MVCC

MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE



## Mission Statement

The Mohawk Valley Institute for Learning in Retirement (MVILR) is a special program established within Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) to offer diverse, equitable, and inclusive educational opportunities to meet the needs and interests of the area’s retired and semi-retired population.

The Mohawk Valley Institute for Learning in Retirement (MVILR) is a non-profit organization offering opportunities for local seniors to “learn, live, grow, move, think, socialize, and create” since 1997.

### MVILR Executive Committee

President..... Nancy Ketz  
 1<sup>st</sup> V.P..... Beverly Quist  
 2<sup>nd</sup> V.P..... Carol Ginster  
 Secretary ..... Mary Earl  
 Asst. Secretary ..... Teresa Johnson  
 Treasurer..... Stephen Keyser  
 Asst. Treasurer..... Louise Martin

### MVILR Board of Directors

Sidney Blatt  
 Linda Bloser  
 Ann Falvey  
 Bruce Gaska  
 Walter Johnston  
 Judy Kahler  
 Dawn Laguerre  
 Judy Lennox  
 Robert Lowenstein  
 Heather Martin  
 Chris Reister  
 Ron Ribyat  
 Sheila Waters

Claudette Johnson. . . . .Ex-officio Curriculum Committee Chair  
 Sarah Lam. . . . .Ex-officio MVCC Administrative Representative

The above group directs MVILR with the welcome input of the full membership. The officers and directors have term limits and are elected by the members; anyone can submit their interest in being considered by the Nominating Committee.



# MVILR Committees

TITLE	CHAIR	RESPONSIBILITIES
Bylaws	Mary Earl	Annually reviews and amends the MVILR bylaws and policies
Curriculum	Claudette Johnson	Arranges classes, facilitators, and scheduling for the 3 MVILR semesters
Development	Sid Blatt & Anne Falvey	Seeks funding & writes grants
DEI	Beverly Quist	Develops strategies encouraging diversity, equity, and inclusion
Finance	Steve Keyser	Manages MVILR finances and develops the annual budget
Marketing	Dawn Laguerre	Develops advertising strategies via press and social media
Nominating	Bonnie Sanderson	Develops the annual slate of officers and BOD members
Special Programs & Open House	Dawn Laguerre & Kathleen Lloyd	Plans the Fall and Spring Open House events
Special Events	Carol Bandyck & Linda Weatherup	Plans and coordinates banquet and luncheon events
Strategic Planning	Nancy Ketz	Performs a quarterly review of the MVILR 5-year plan
Volunteering	Judy Kahler & Kathleen Lloyd	Assists all committees and all MVILR functions as needed

**All members are invited to join those committees in which they are interested. Becoming a member is meant to benefit all, as we all pitch in.**



## MVILR Class Registration Policy

All class registrations are first-come, first-served, starting on the first day of registration. Only those with active MVILR memberships will be permitted to register for MVILR facilitated classes and special events. Registration begins 25 calendar days before the start of the first class of the semester. Registration will be online or in-person; we cannot accept mail-in registrations. Members will receive a confirmation email for each class if registered online.

**Active members may register for any courses, but should only sign up for classes they can regularly attend. Space is limited—please commit to courses you can fully participate in so spots are not left unused or filled without attendance.**

Annual memberships and classes with additional fees can be paid for online or in person by credit card or check. Checks are to be made out to MVCC Auxiliary Services. Members have access to the course catalog online, and a printed copy of the course catalog is available upon request.

### Important Dates:

Spring Open House . . . . .	3/12/26
Spring Semester . . . . .	3/23-5/15/26
First Four Weeks . . . . .	3/23-4/17
Second Four Weeks . . . . .	4/20-5/15
4-Day Summer Camp . . . . .	7/13-7/16/26

### Membership Fees:

Full-year Membership . . . . .	\$265
Spring Membership . . . . .	\$135

### Contact Information:

315-334-7761  
 mvilr@mvcc.edu  
 www.mvcc.edu/mvilr  
 Rome Campus, PC121E

## Additional Fees

Some classes may have a materials fee. The materials fee is to be paid in-full directly to the class facilitator on the first day of class, in cash only. Members will be notified of this materials fee during class registration. Payment will not be collected at the time of registration or prior to the first class.

## Terms and Conditions, Waivers, Disclaimers, and Other Agreements

Some classes may require a waiver for participation. Any necessary waiver will be provided at the time of class registration. Neither MVCC nor MVILR assumes responsibility or liability for any injury or damage to persons or to property from any use of methods or ideas put forth.

**Please note:** All materials presented in courses at MVILR reflect the opinions of the facilitators and other presenters. They do not reflect the official policy of MVILR or MVCC. Facilitators, members and varied perspectives shall be treated with respect. The Board of Directors may take appropriate action to enforce the Code of Conduct. **All members accept the terms of the Code of Conduct, as well as a photo release, upon membership renewal.**

## Refunds/Reimbursements

For any class or special event with an additional fee, as decisions to run classes are based on enrollment, reimbursements for canceled registrations will be made as follows:

- **100% refund:** Withdraw three or more business days before class begins.
- **50% refund:** Withdraw two days or fewer before class begins.
- Consideration for withdrawal requests after the first class session must be made in writing.

Each semester has a “make-up” week built into the schedule to allow for the rescheduling of a canceled class. If a class is canceled due to inclement weather or as a result of a facilitator’s request, every effort will be made for rescheduling during the make-up week. If a class with an additional fee is canceled but is unable to be rescheduled, a refund for the amount of the single class can be issued upon request.

## Maximum Enrollment

Pending the location and type of course/event, there will be a maximum number of attendees allowed. The MVILR office will make every effort to secure appropriate classroom spaces to accommodate as many members as possible, while abiding by local laws and ordinances.

## Minimum Enrollment

If a class does not meet the minimum requirement for enrollment of six members, it is subject for cancellation, and any fees incurred for the canceled class will be refunded. The MVILR office will notify registered members before the start of the course via email.

## Classrooms

MVILR has dedicated classrooms in rooms 200, 205, and 206 on the second floor of the Plumley Complex. Elevators are available near the main entrance. Special event rooms are located on the main floor, typically in rooms 119, 120, and 150. All classes take place at MVCC's Rome Campus unless otherwise noted.

**Parking at the MVCC Rome Campus is free**

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## Inclement Weather/Class Cancellations

If MVCC campuses or Rome City schools close, all MVILR classes are canceled as well. The MVCC Marketing Department will issue communications regarding classes canceled due to inclement weather. Please monitor local media outlets and, when in doubt, call **315-792-5300** or visit **mvcc.edu**.

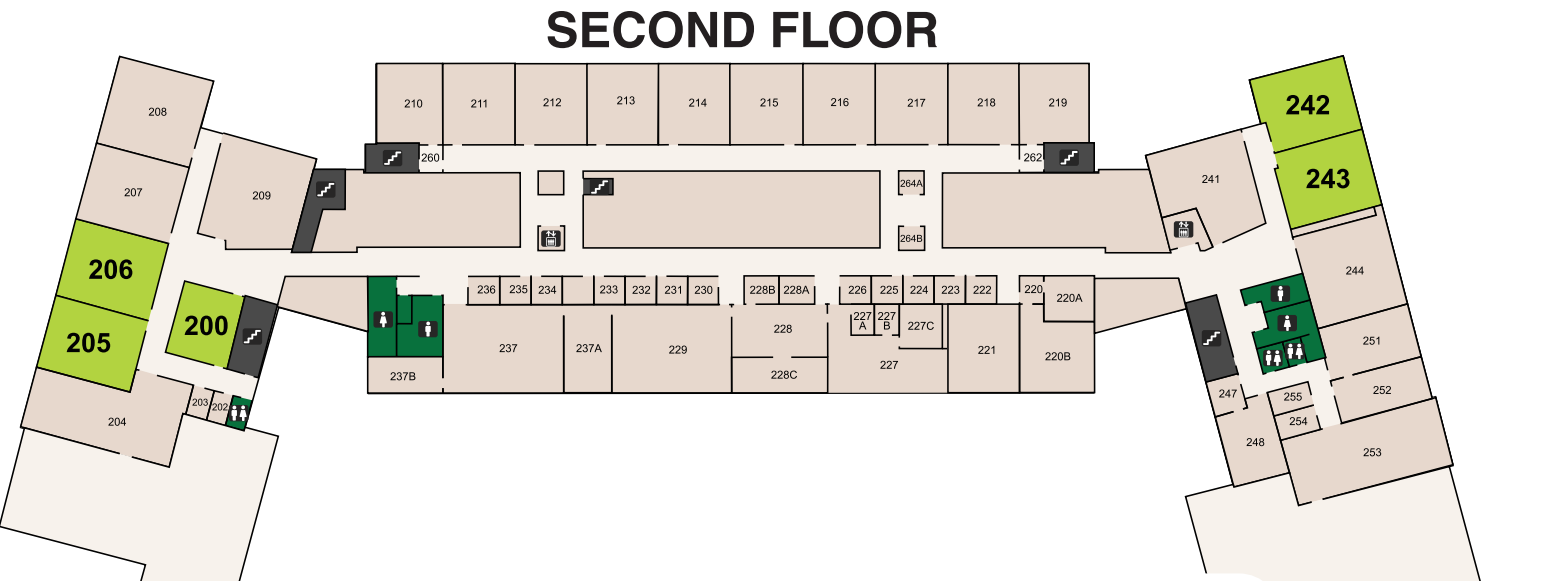
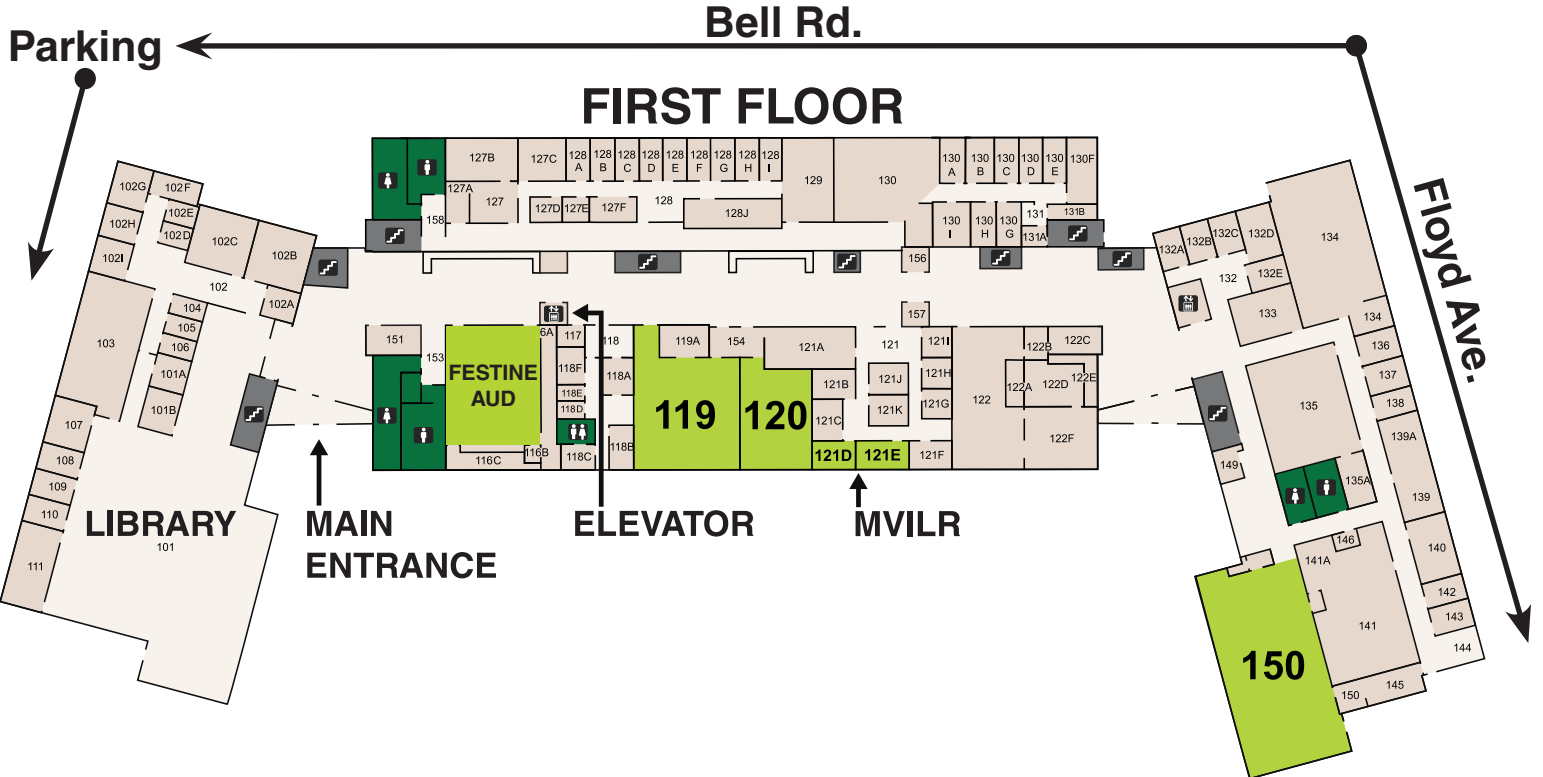
All are encouraged to sign up for alerts at the following site:

<https://www.wktv.com/weather/closings/>







# MVCC Rome Campus Plumley Complex

1101 Floyd Ave., Rome, N.Y. 13440



### Off-Campus Locations:

-  **MUNSON** ..... 310 Genesee St, Utica, NY 13502
-  **JCC** ..... 2310 Oneida St, Utica, NY 13501
-  **S.D. Annex** ..... 1729 Burrstone Rd, New Hartford, NY 13413
-  **Acacia Villiage** ..... 2160 Bleecker St, Utica, NY 13501



Spring 2026 Semester: 3/23-5/15

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:30 - 10:30 a.m.	B Fit + (A) Conversational Spanish... (A)	A Little Art, A Little History... (F) Paper Crafts/ Rubber Stamping Pt. 1 (F) Paper Crafts/ Rubber Stamping Pt. 2 (S)	Current Issues Discussion (A) Benefits of Conn. with Nature (A) Planning Ahead: Funeral... (S)	Eight Key Ideas (A) Basic Drawing 1 (F) Basic Drawing 2 (S) Three Days at Gettysburg (S)	Current Econ... (S)
10:45 - 11:45 a.m.	From Words to Song: "Saul" (A) Purpose, Not Perfection... (F) Card Making 1 (F) Card Making 2 (S)	All About Frankenstein (A) Combat Investing (F) Painting Rocks 1 (F) Painting Rocks 2 (S) The Joseph Story (S)	Special Programs (A)	Americana Music (A) Be Fit, Strong, and Balanced (A)	
<b>Lunch Break</b>					
12:30 - 1:30 p.m.	Coming Home:1947 (A) Chair Yoga & Meditation (F)	Creative Storytelling (A) Yoga for Every Body (A) Getting Acquainted with your iPhone (S)	Misogyny 2.0 (A) Shakespeare's Henry IV & V Trilogy (A)	The Underground Railroad in OC (F) 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Tech... (S) Divorced, Beheaded, Survived & Thrived (S) Vision Board Art... (S)	AARP Defensive Driving April 17
	Acrylic Painting (A)				
1:45 - 2:45 p.m.	Science Times (A)	Humor Appreciation (A) American Cemetery Art (A)	Woke? Too Woke? The DEI Controversy... (F) Foundations & Strategies for Dementia Care... (S)	A Truly Revolutionary Experience (A) How To Save Our Democracy (A)	Pickleball (A)
3 - 4 p.m.	Medicine Q&A (A)	American History of Alcoholic Beverages (A) JFK: The White House Years (S)	The Making of a Feature Film (F) Frida (S) Clinton Death Cafe May 13	People's Law Forum (A)	
4 - 5 p.m.			2051: The Return Project May 13	Mini-Medicine Series (A)	



## Your MVILR Schedule

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:30 a.m.					
10:45 a.m.					
	Lunch Break				
12:30 p.m.					
1:45 p.m.					
3:00 p.m.					

**Lunch Note:** Longer courses and clubs conflict with the lunch break from 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

**Our set class schedule:** 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 10:45-11:45 a.m.  
 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
 1:45-2:45 p.m.  
 3:00-4:00 p.m. (or TBD)








## Art, Music, Language, and Literature




### All About Frankenstein

The creature created by Dr. Frankenstein is the most popular character of all time, bumbling and mumbling through 437 feature films and countless TV episodes, cartoons, advertisements, toys, etc. But in Mary Shelley's novel (1818), he is highly intelligent and eloquent. We will examine the novel, the 1931 film with Boris Karloff, the 1973 film *Spirit of the Beehive* (about a young girl during the Spanish revolution who is haunted by the creature), and some clips from the new (2025) *Frankenstein* film. Along the twisted way we will look at some cartoons, a fine ballet, and the Chinese Dr. Frankenstein's gene editing of embryos. Shelley's novel is available on Project Gutenberg.

 **Facilitator:** Walter Johnston  
 **206** Tuesday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.  
 All 8 weeks

### Americana Music

Only a few years after Bob Dylan and Joni Mitchell moved on from folk music to writing and performing their own amazing songs, a diverse group of singer/songwriters proliferated across the landscape of popular music, drawing from music genres such as folk, country, bluegrass, blues, and gospel. Too many of the great songwriters of the late 1970s and beyond have been ignored by those who grew up with the music of the sixties and early seventies. This class will shine a light on the later singers and groups. You might find a new favorite!

 **Facilitator:** Toby Levy  
 **Festine Aud** Thursday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.  
 All 8 Weeks




### Acrylic Painting for Beginners

If you have ever said, "I wish I could make a painting" or have an interest in learning how to paint, this class is for you. You will start and finish an acrylic landscape in three hours, painting along with the instructor using a step-by-step process. Instruction will be given on how to create colors by mixing paint and how to use specific brushes with a variety of techniques. You will start painting right away, so be sure to obtain materials before the first class, and please arrive at least 10-15 minutes early to set up your materials and easel. Note: You should be able to purchase the supplies that you will need for this course for less than \$50 if you buy "student grade" paints and brushes.

 **Facilitator:** Jeanne M Perry  
 **120** Monday, 12-3 p.m.  
 All 8 Weeks




### Basic Drawing 1: Instruction

Do you want to learn to draw or just improve your drawing skills? You will be guided in experimenting with pencil, colored pencil and pen while learning to draw what you see and make it look realistic. Come and have fun without judgment!

 **Facilitators:** Sheila Waters & Betsy McMahon  
 **209** Thursday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 First 4 Weeks

### Basic Drawing 2: Studio


This is a self-directed opportunity to practice your drawing skills with assistance and feedback from the instructors.

 **Facilitators:** Sheila Waters & Betsy McMahon  
 **209** Thursday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 Second 4 Weeks






## Card Making 1

Create 2 cards and envelopes in each class using a variety of techniques including embossing, stamping, paper folding and die cutting. A \$12 fee paid directly to the instructor at the first class will cover all materials for this 4-week session.

 **Facilitators:** Carol Bandyh & Linda Weatherup  
 **Library** Monday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.  
 **F** First 4 Weeks


## Card Making 2

Create 2 cards and envelopes in each class using a variety of techniques including embossing, stamping, paper folding and die cutting. A \$12 fee paid directly to the instructor at the first class will cover all materials for this 4-week session.

 **Facilitators:** Carol Bandyh & Linda Weatherup  
 **Library** Monday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.  
 **S** Second 4 Weeks

## Conversational Spanish with Latin American Cultural Nuances




Whether you are a beginner or looking to refresh and improve your skills, join us for a relaxed exploration of the Spanish language. This course focuses on practical conversation and the rich cultural nuances of Hispanic America. Through group practice, we will build communication skills and discuss traditions that shape the Hispanic American world. This stress-free environment is designed specifically for lifelong learners; we prioritize real -world communication and cultural nuances that bring the language to life. Whether you are planning a trip or simply want to broaden your horizons, this class offers a welcoming environment to practice speaking and enjoy the diverse heritage of Hispanic America.

 **Facilitator:** Félícita Rosario Gutierrez  
 **205** Monday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 **A** All 8 weeks



## Creative Storytelling

This course introduces beginning writers to the elements of effective storytelling. Participants will explore methods to engage readers and enhance their unique writing style using time-honored techniques. Combining in-class and out-of-class exercises with presentation, discussion and peer review, students will discover (or revisit!) literary devices to enrich personal writing projects. Topics include “Tell and Show,” “Characterization,” “Dialogue,” “Plot,” “Scenes,” “Imagery,” “Figurative Language,” and “Structural Elements.” Examples which demonstrate skillful implementation of longstanding writing practices from modern fiction and non-fiction, classical literature, film and TV will be featured.

 **Facilitator:** Jennifer Boulanger, Ed.D.  
 **205** Tuesday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
 **A** All 8 weeks




## Frida

We will explore the life, the pain and the loves of Mexico’s greatest artist, Frida Kahlo, as we study the themes and development of her painting style. Participants are invited to join the MVILR Opera Club for the May 30 Live from the Met performance of “El Último Sueño de Frida y Diego” at Munson.

 **Facilitator:** Nancy Ketz  
 **206** Wednesday, 3-4 p.m.  
 **S** Second 4 Weeks




## From Words to Song: Handel’s Oratorio “Saul”

Handel’s oratorio Saul was composed in 1738, and over 200 years later, noted Handel scholar Winton Dean proclaimed it “one of the supreme masterpieces of dramatic art, comparable with the Oresteia and King Lear.” This story of King Saul and his relationship with David, who would be king after him, encompasses jubilation, sorrow, love, envy, and rage. As we explore this great work, we will discover how the meanings and emotions of the words inspire the music.

 **Facilitator:** Dr. Rob Kolb  
 **205** Monday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.  
 **A** All 8 Weeks

## Humor Appreciation

For a welcome break from the increased complexity, tension, and chaos of our modern world, we will explore the world of humor through skits, movie clips, songs, performances, and jokes, in an attempt to escape into amusement and laughter for an hour each week. Spanning from early 20th century comedy to modern day comedians, we'll re-experience classic moments and also introduce some performers and films that may be unfamiliar to many of us. Along the way we'll explore some of the more academic aspects – theories of humor, types of humor, and the value of laughter – in hopes of helping those in attendance to recognize their own humor preferences. Finally, participants will be invited to share some of their own comic experiences and jokes.

 **Facilitator:** Brad Bennett  
 **206** Tuesday, 1:45-2:45 p.m.  
 **All 8 Weeks**

## A Little Art, A Little History & the Universal Myth

Four discreet sessions each present ways that humans experience and interact with art. First, we will examine the story of the Battle of Hastings (1066) as depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry. Then, we will take a look at the Medieval Miracle of Cathedral Building. Our exploration of the incredible life of Jeanne d'Arc will lead us to her stature as an artist's muse. And finally, Joseph Campbell will take us on the hero's journey.

 **Facilitator:** Judith Gilbert  
 **205** Tuesday 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 **First 4 Weeks**

## 2051: The Return Project

"A cautionary tale of the not-too-distant future." This original film by Dennis Dewey, making its MVILR premiere in the Festine Auditorium in Rome, is free and open to the public.

 **Facilitator:** Dennis Dewey  
 **Festine Aud** Wednesday, May 13, 4-5:30 p.m.






## The Making of a Feature Film 2051: The Return Project

After reading two books on the science of Artificial Intelligence, Dennis Dewey had a story dream that morphed into an idea for a short film that evolved into a full, feature-length screenplay. After having made seven documentaries for the county's History Center and with no experience in making a drama with actors, he was driven to do this crazy thing: a feature film called "2051: The Return Project." This class will explore the adventure of actually making a film that is set in the not-too-distant future, a fascinating human drama about the first-ever functional download of a human brain. We'll also discuss the larger philosophical issues the film raises about the future in which our grandchildren will live. Stars of the film and its production staff will be available to provide their perspectives on the project. The movie will premiere at MVCC's Festine Auditorium on May 13, and the class will have had a hand in shaping its final touches!

 **Facilitator:** Dennis Dewey  
 **205** Wednesday, 3-4 p.m.  
 **First 4 Weeks**



## Opera Club

The Metropolitan Opera broadcasts its "Live From the Met: HD" series at the Munson Auditorium on Saturdays. Tickets are \$26 for Munson members and \$32 for non-members. Come join other MVILR opera lovers for this season's final three performances.

 **Facilitator:** Nancy Ketz  
 **MUNSON** Saturdays  
 **March 21** 12 p.m. Tristan und Isolde (Wagner)  
 **May 9** 1 p.m. Eugene Onegin (Tchaikovsky)  
 **May 30** 1 p.m. El Último Sueño de Frida y Diego (Frank)

## Painting Rocks 1

Discover the fun and inspirational creativity of painting rocks. Participants should bring their own palm-sized flat rocks. Paint, brushes and ideas will be provided.

 **Facilitators:** Teresa Johnson & Ginny Pry  
 **209** Tuesday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.  
 **First 4 Weeks**



## Painting Rocks 2

Discover the fun and inspirational creativity of painting rocks. Participants should bring their own palm-sized flat rocks. Paint, brushes and ideas will be provided.

**Facilitators:** Teresa Johnson & Ginny Pry

**209** Tuesday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.

**S** Second 4 Weeks

## Paper Crafts with Rubber Stamping 1

Rubber Stamping is an amazingly simple but versatile craft where we will transform the ordinary into extraordinary pieces. Use your creativity to create your own style of cards, pictures, tags or anything else you may come up with.

**Facilitator:** Ginny Pry

**209** Tuesday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

**F** First 4 Weeks

## Paper Crafts with Rubber Stamping 2

Rubber Stamping is an amazingly simple but versatile craft where we will transform the ordinary into extraordinary pieces. Use your creativity to create your own style of cards, pictures, tags or anything else you may come up with.

**Facilitator:** Ginny Pry

**209** Tuesday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

**S** Second 4 Weeks

## Shakespeare's Henry IV & Henry V Trilogy

We will examine the thematic and political issues raised by Shakespeare in perhaps his finest history plays, a "perfect triumph in the field of patriotic drama," beginning with Henry IV, Part One. The trilogy starts with the problematic reign of Henry IV, leading to Prince Hal's ultimate development from madcap prince to conqueror of France.

**Facilitator:** Fred Capozzella

**205** Wednesday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

**A** All 8 weeks

## Vision Board Art: Devotional

A vision board is a collage of images, words, quotes, and symbols that represent your goals and aspirations. It acts as a daily reminder of what you wish to achieve in life, whether in your artistic endeavors, your life's ambitions, or your spiritual growth. By putting together visual elements that resonate with you, you're crafting a tangible representation of your dreams that can inspire and motivate you on your journey. In this class, we will examine a variety of examples of vision boards, reflect on and discuss our personal and devotional aspirations, and explore the connection between an artistic expression and our physical and spiritual growth.

**Facilitator:** Victoria Pearson

**Library** Thursday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

**S** Second 4 Weeks



## Philosophy & Religion

### The Joseph Story

The enchanting Biblical story of Joseph has inspired innumerable works of art and literature from a multi-volume novel by Thomas Mann to "Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat." We will spend our time with the original, which might be characterized as a short novella. Participants are encouraged to read chapters 37 through 50 of Genesis before the first class.

**Facilitator:** Rabbi Henry Bamberger

**205** Tuesday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.

**S** Second 4 weeks





## Health & Wellness

### AARP Defensive Driving Course

The AARP Defensive Driving Safety Course (6.5 hours) will save 10% on the liability and collision portions of your car insurance premium for 3 years. It also shadows (does not remove) 4 points from your driver's license. Bring your lunch, driver's license, AARP card if a member. Cost is \$25 for AARP members and \$30 for non-members. Payment will be taken at the beginning of the class.

 **Facilitator:** AARP

 **206** **Friday, April 17, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.**

### B Fit +

B Fit + offers bodybuilding exercises and muscle toning. Low intensity aerobics will strengthen the heart and sculpt the body. Come have fun and find your inner person!

 **Facilitator:** Christine Blymiller

 **119** **Monday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.**

 **All 8 weeks**

### Be Fit, Strong, and Balanced

Improve your flexibility, balance and strength in a low/no-impact exercise class. Using weights of your choice and stretching, you can improve your fitness.

 **Facilitator:** Christine Reister


 **119** **Thursday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.**

 **All 8 weeks**




### Benefits of Connecting with Nature

This class is a revised and updated version of Earth Friendly Yards with a focus on how to live in partnership with nature and be a good steward of your home landscape. Learn how to make your home a beautiful and welcoming refuge in tune with nature, that benefits the planet and increases your own sense of well-being. Science has shown that spending time in a natural environment benefits humans mentally and physically. We'll share how a healthy landscape can enrich your connection with nature and add joy and tranquility to your life.

 **Facilitators:** Maryann Zogby & Jennifer Geiger

 **206** **Wednesday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.**

 **All 8 weeks**

### CPR Training

Funded by a grant from the Health-Forward Foundation, MVILR is able to offer CPR training. Register for ONE of the slots.

 **Facilitators:** TBD

 **XXX** **TBD**

### Chair Yoga and Meditation

This is a gentle chair yoga class with the added benefit of different meditations each of the 4 weeks. We will thoughtfully stretch and strengthen the body, also allowing for relaxing and centering the mind with meditation practices. Come take this deep dive into your mind that results in peacefulness, feeling centered, and an integration of mind and body.

 **Facilitator:** Joe Johnson

 **119** **Monday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.**

 **First 4 weeks**






## Clinton Death Café

A Death Café is a group-directed discussion focused on death, dying, and end-of-life issues with no specific agenda. It's a discussion group rather than a grief-support group or counseling session. The objective is to help people become more comfortable talking about death-related topics by providing a relaxed, welcoming environment. There's no obligation to speak; many people come just to listen.

 **Facilitator:** Mark Hemendinger  
 **119** **Wednesday, May 13, 3-4 p.m.**




## Foundations and Strategies for Dementia Caregivers

In these classes presented by the Alzheimer's Association, we will discuss the individualized person-centered approach to caring for someone with any type of dementia. A "caregiver" is defined as anyone who interacts with a person who has dementia. Participants will learn strategies to nurture the relationship with the person(s) they are helping, including ways to support their independence, to manage challenging behaviors that may arise, as well as to develop optimal communication techniques.

 **Facilitator:** Lisa McCarthy  
 **205** **Wednesday, 1:45- 2:45 p.m.**  
 **Second 4 weeks**



## Planning Ahead: Understanding Funeral and Cemetery Choices

This question-based course explores cemetery management and the death care industry, including cremation versus full-body burial, memorialization options, and evolving industry practices. The class also highlights the importance of pre-planning funeral arrangements and how advance decisions benefit individuals, families, and professionals. Guided discussions examine cultural, environmental, and ethical considerations shaping modern death care. This class provides a safe space for people to understand all their options and to open up about their thoughts on death care.

 **Facilitator:** Kyle Waterman  
 **Library** **Wednesday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.**  
 **Second 4 weeks**




## Pickleball

Want to learn how to play pickleball, or simply want to improve your skills? Come join us on Fridays from 2:30-4:00 at the Jewish Community Center in Utica. If you have any questions, contact Bruce at 315-520-5742. \$5 per session goes to the JCC.

 **Facilitator:** Bruce Gaska  
 **JCC** **Friday, 2:30-4:00 p.m.**

## Purpose, Not Perfection: A Woman's Journey to Self-Discovery

Do you still feel like you are carrying too much baggage from your past into your life today? Have you done enough in your life? Do you feel you matter? This course will engage you in experimental and writing exercises and support you in applying these insights, leaving you with a clearer sense of your life's purpose. These reflective prompts will assist you in quieting inner negativity, thus creating improved mental health and an awareness and acceptance of the special person you already are.

 **Facilitator:** Kathy Migliaccio-Johnson  
 **206** **Monday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.**  
 **F** **First 4 weeks**

## Yoga for Every Body

This is a gentle, functional yoga class which welcomes people at all levels of practice. The focus is on listening to your body and cultivating a relationship between body, mind and breath, while enhancing mobility and range of motion. You are invited to open up, expand your perspective, and become acquainted with your whole body as a living, breathing organism, a harmonious entity, not just a collection of sometimes achy, sometimes uncooperative parts. It begins where you are now. The class is mindfully paced to accommodate individual needs, and includes warm up, breathing techniques, and a meditative approach to movement. Chair modifications will be provided. Please bring a yoga mat, water bottle, block, and strap to class. For those who need them, block and strap sets will be available for purchase on the first day of class for \$10.00.

 **Facilitator:** Mary Kroll  
 **119** **Tuesday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.**  
 **A** **All 8 weeks**



## Social Studies




### American Cemetery Art

Are cemeteries places you avoid and fear? Would you ever consider walking through a cemetery just for the sheer enjoyment of art and nature? Are graves something for the living to enjoy? If you answer no to any of these questions this is a course that will change your perspective. Art, often of museum quality, is found in many cemeteries. This beauty languishes unseen and unappreciated by most people. The wonderful visual pleasures left by people from colonial times through the twenty-first century as they have decorated for the dead are the subjects of this class. We will also cover the cultural, social and practical influences that inform what you see in a cemetery. The last class will be a tour of the Forest Hill Cemetery in Utica.

 **Facilitator:** Frank Calidonna  
 **205** Tuesday, 1:45-2:45 p.m.  
 All 8 weeks




### The American History of Alcoholic Beverages

Alcohol: Approve or disapprove, love it or hate it, alcoholic beverages have been with us since the beginning of mankind. Though they are mostly recreational now, they were often a necessity through much of human history. Beer, whiskey and wine played many crucial roles in the story of America and our economic history. Until WWI it was the main source of revenue for our governments – national and local. It also has a very colorful American history of its own. Both will be the subject of this class.

 **Facilitator:** Frank Calidonna  
 **205** Tuesday, 3-4 p.m.  
 All 8 weeks

### Coming Home: 1947

The experience of soldiers returning from the war will be shown in *The Best Years of Our Lives*, about three American soldiers from different social backgrounds (Academy Award 1947), and *Stray Dog*, a Japanese film by Kurosawa about two returning soldiers, a detective and a thief. I hope we will have a few of our own stories. We will look at the changes in several home countries after the war, like Israel/Palestine and India/Pakistan. In America, changes in “home” from the un-American Activities Committee to Jackie Robinson. On the lighter side, we’ll look at the new suburban ideal home with its spiffy appliances and the shift in women’s expectations, including Dior’s New Look in women’s fashion.

 **Facilitator:** Walter Johnston  
 **206** Monday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
 All 8 weeks




### Current Issues Discussion

In each session there will be an open-ended discussion of current issues. All opinions and beliefs are welcome as long as you respect and tolerate others’ opinions.

 **Facilitator:** Bill Whitehill  
 **205** Wednesday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 All 8 weeks

### Divorced, Beheaded, Survived and Thrived

As a sequel to last semester’s “Divorced, Beheaded, Died”, in this course we will learn about the second three wives of Henry VIII and what came after. Learn their personal stories and their influence on England. In addition, you will learn what it was like to live in Tudor England in the 1500’s.

 **Facilitator:** Christine Reister  
 **206** Thursday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
 Second 4 weeks

## Eight Key Ideas

This course is about the origins and effects of eight of the key ideas that have shaped our modern identity in the West, and that we usually take for granted: The movement of the earth; Toleration; Progress; Romanticism; The possibility of social science; Evolution; Nationalism; The role of the unconscious. Classes will be a mix of informal lectures and discussions.

**Facilitator:** Alfred Kelly, PhD  
**206** Thursday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 All 8 weeks

## How to Save Our Democracy

In this course, students will be encouraged to think constructively about the future of American society. As Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada, said in mid-January: "...we have something too – the capacity to stop pretending, to name reality, to build our strength at home and to act together." We will honestly discuss many issues. Views will vary and all will be heard, but the two key assumptions of the course are: 1, that what is normal for "us" is changing rapidly, and 2, that we have a serious obligation to others. The content of that obligation will be our focus.

**Facilitator:** Beverly Quist  
**205** Thursday, 1:45-2:45 p.m.  
 All 8 weeks

## JFK, Part III: The White House Years

This is the third part of the JFK series, including the Mythos of Camelot, before and after the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Courier, and what if JFK had survived.

**Facilitator:** Don Gondek  
**206** Tuesday, 3-4 p.m.  
 Second 4 weeks



## Misogyny 2.0: Some Results of the American Beta Testing

In this course, we will address the seemingly intractable power of the fear and hatred of women in American society and how misogyny fuels American politics. Issues may include the Equal Rights Amendment, feminism, misogynoir, the SAVE Act, Dobbs, the Manosphere, SA and DA/DV, compliance, Title IX, and the public and private spheres. Views will vary and all will be heard.

**Facilitator:** Beverly Quist  
**206** Wednesday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
 All 8 weeks

## Three Days at Gettysburg

This course will present the military movements of both the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War's pivotal battle of Gettysburg. We will also cover human interest stories associated with the conflict and facts about the local Central New York regiments involved, plus additional information about Gettysburg's tourist attractions and "paranormal experiences."

**Facilitators:** John Carmody & Laraine Esposito  
**205** Thursday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 Second 4 weeks

## A Truly Revolutionary Experience

The year 2026 will be celebrated as the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. In recognition of this momentous event, this course will focus on such important questions as: Why did the Revolution occur? How did immigration help determine who supported and who opposed it? How did George Washington lose most of his battles but win the war? How important was foreign assistance to the American victory? What forces shaped the development of the new government? What compromises were necessary and what questions were left unanswered? How do these questions affect us today? And more!

**Facilitator:** James Pula, PhD  
**206** Thursday, 1:45-2:45 p.m.  
 All 8 weeks




## The Underground Railroad in Oneida County

The Underground Railroad was an important feature of the Abolition Movement, helping enslaved people to escape bondage. This course will explore the Underground Railroad, from a general overview to a focus on specific sites and people in Oneida County. Learn about some of the hundreds of freedom seekers who passed along the County's "stations" and the "station-masters" who helped them.

 **Facilitator:** Jan DeAmicis, PhD  
 **206** Thursday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
 **F** First 4 weeks

## Woke? Too Woke? The DEI Controversy Continues

In this course, sponsored by the MVILR DEI Committee, students will consider ideas about diversity, equity, and inclusion in American society. Our four facilitators will share their perspectives in a roundtable setting used to encourage discussion and consider why these ideas have generated controversy.

Where have we been? Where are we going?  
 **Facilitators:** MVILR DEI Committee  
 **119** Wednesday 1:45-2:45 p.m.  
 **F** First 4 weeks



## Finance & Legal




### Combat Investing:

This course will help empower you to effectively price bonds and learn about the various types of bonds and investments available. It will include a breakdown of different types of mutual funds and how to analyze and decipher financial data from the prospectus and available fact sheets. "Stretching" your IRA to your children and using a TOD (Transfer on Death) to avoid wills and probate will be discussed, along with learning how to read the Wall Street Journal's "Insiders' Report." Confused on insurance annuities and how they work? Is your brokerage account fee based/advisory? The true costs of such plans and whether they are worth it will be discussed.

 **Facilitator:** Elliott Friedman  
 **205** Tuesday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.  
 **F** First 4 Weeks

### Current Economic & Market Events

This is an hour-long informal interactive conversation, on TEAMS, to discuss all things currently going on in the economy and financial markets at the local, state, and federal levels. Log-in to TEAMS will be sent prior to the first class.

 **Facilitator:** Clinton Kane  
 **TEAMS** Friday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
 **S** Second 4 Weeks

### People's Law Forum

This course, offered by the Oneida County Bar Association, is an in-depth exploration of numerous legal issues and diverse areas of law. Guest presenters will represent the judiciary, government and public service, and private practice in Oneida County.

 **Facilitator:** Leland McCormac  
 **205** Thursday, 3-4:00 p.m.  
 **A** All 8 Weeks





## Science & Technology

### Getting Acquainted with your iPhone

Everyone who has an iPhone can use some tips about its operation. This class, located at Acacia Village, is designed to do just that. We discuss the various versions in use, some common settings, synchronizing data, interesting apps already on your phone, those you can add, and much more. This course is meant for those who already own an iPhone or are interested in possibly owning one.

**Facilitator:** Charleen Pernat  
**Acacia Vill.** Tuesday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
 Second 4 weeks

### Medicine Q&A

In this class, we will discuss various aspects of medicine and healthcare delivery. The course will seek answers from medical professionals and explore the latest issues in the field. Note: This course provides the medical opinions of local doctors that do not reflect medical advice from MVILR. Please reach out to your physicians with any medical questions.

**Facilitator:** Robert Lowenstein, MD  
 206 Monday, 3-4 p.m.  
 All 8 weeks

### Mini-Medicine

Eight local health care practitioners will present on their field of specialty. This series is held at the Slocum Dickson annex next to Notre Dame High School. (Set your GPS for 1 Notre Dame Lane Utica, NY 13502. Park in back of the building). Funded by a grant from the Health-Forward Foundation, this program is free and open to the public. For a list of speakers and their topics, see page 19

**Facilitator:** Robert Lowenstein, MD  
 S.D. Annex Thursday, 4-5 p.m.  
 All 8 weeks

### Science Times

This is an interactive class with weekly discussions based on articles from the New York Times. The material will be selected based on current high-interest topics and scientific breakthroughs.

**Facilitator:** Robert Lowenstein, MD  
 206 Monday, 1:45-2:45 p.m.  
 All 8 weeks

### 21st Century Technology

The overarching goal of this course is to raise awareness of technologies and capabilities you may not have been familiar with but may find useful. We will explore selected applications in greater depth and discuss strategies for independent learning beyond the course in the following areas: (A) Artificial Intelligence, its history, how it works, and a demonstration of some AI applications; (B) Cryptocurrency, how this works, how value is created, and its suitability for investment; (C) Google Functionality, a demonstration of multiple free Google applications; and (D) "Internet of Things" and "Hacks" with a variety of ways you can use connected devices to manage your home environment. This course is geared to everyone regardless of computer literacy.

**Facilitator:** Stephen Keyser  
 205 Thursday, 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
 Second 4 weeks





## Special Programs

### Special Events & Cultural Series

MVILR Special Events, partnering with MVCC's Cultural Series, is thrilled to bring you an exciting lineup of speakers. This program is held in the Festine Auditorium.

**Free and open to the public.**

 **Facilitators:** Dawn Laguerre & Kathleen Lloyd

 **Festine Aud** Wednesday, 10:45-11:45 a.m.

 All 8 weeks

#### Seeing Beyond Kindness, Difference, and Connection

Dr. Sharen Barboza  
Clinical Psychologist  
March 25

#### “A Song For Olaf”

Jennifer Boulanger  
Author  
April 1

#### Trust in Politics is Down; Let's Have an Election

John Zogby  
Pollster  
April 8

#### MUNPC's Development and The Impact Center

Hilda Jordan  
HMJ Consulting  
April 15

#### Upcoming County Projects

Anthony Picente Jr.  
Oneida County Executive  
April 22

#### Public Safety and Avoiding Scams

Robert Maciol  
Oneida County Sheriff  
April 29

#### Hydroponics: A Healthy Solution to “Food Deserts”

James Paul III  
Blacque Acres Executive Director  
May 6

#### Policies Affecting Small Farms

Dan Castor  
Local Farmer  
May 13





# Mini-Medicine Series

**Pain Management**  
Dr. Nathaniel Gould  
March 26

**Family Practice**  
Dr. Michael Redner  
April 2

**Tricks To Boost Immunity**  
Dr. Vrinda Kumar  
April 9

**Eye Care**  
Dr. Alexander Harris  
April 16

**TBD**  
Jeremy Skiechs, RPA-C  
April 23

**Geriatrics**  
Dr. Stanislav Arkadeyev  
April 30

**Neurology**  
Dr. Jameel Arastu  
May 7

**Mohs Reconstruction**  
Dr. Victor Martinez Zavala  
May 14





MVCC's Center for Corporate & Community Education (CCED) offers a variety of community education programs at the MVCC Utica and Rome Campus! These classes are offered at a variety of times and dates and are open to the general public, in the areas of Professional Development, Leisure Learning, Personal Safety, Health & Wellness, Aquatics, and more. Tuition prices are listed for each class.

### Introduction to Golf

This course introduces the fundamentals of the game in a fun, low-pressure atmosphere. Topics include basic rules and etiquette, putting, chipping, pitching, and full swing with irons and woods, along with on-course play. Class will be held at the MVCC Campus, with the fourth session taking place at a local golf course. Bringing your own equipment is optional.

**Instructor:** Ruth Weydig  
**Utica** April 27-May 18  
 Monday • 6-7:30 p.m. \$150

### Tai Chi

Enhance your overall physical fitness with Tai Chi — a traditional Chinese martial art that emphasizes slow and mindful movements to improve flexibility, balance, coordination, and inner calm. The 24-Form Tai Chi is a simplified version of the traditional Yang style and features 24 movements that are smooth, flowing, well-coordinated, and balanced in rhythm, combining softness and strength.

**Instructor:** Zhao Danhong  
**Utica** March 23-May 11  
 Monday • 6:15-7:15 p.m. \$65

### Computer and Smartphone Basics

This course is the perfect opportunity to brush up on computer and smartphone skills with extra time built in at the end of class so you can ask questions about your technology problems.

**Instructor:** Shawn Essafi  
**Rome** April 2 • Tuesday • 5-8 p.m. \$40

### Senior Self-Defense

This course covers the most common scenarios senior citizens may face in their everyday lives and teaches highly effective methods the average senior can use to avoid, manage, and survive potentially violent encounters. No experience required. Ages 55+.

**Instructor:** Tom Arcuri  
**Utica** April 24 • Friday • 6-8 p.m. \$35

For a full list of courses, visit:  
[mvcc.edu/cced](http://mvcc.edu/cced)



# mvccconnect

NON-CREDIT COURSES • ACADEMIC PROGRAMS • CAMPUS EVENTS



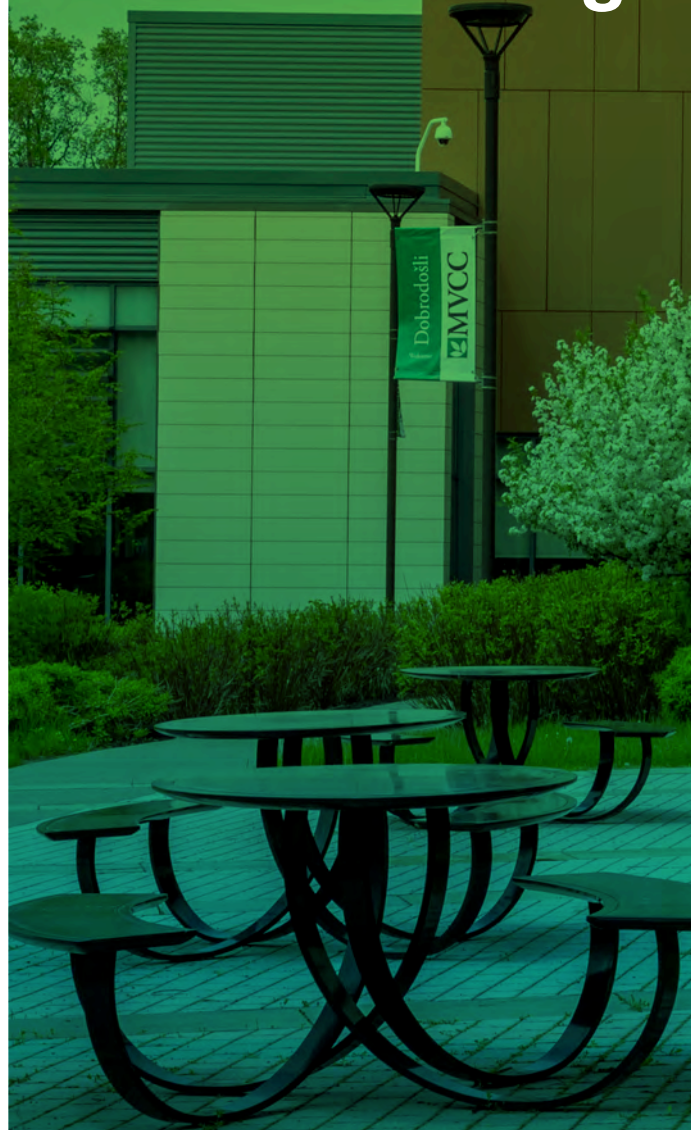


# MVILR

Mohawk Valley Institute for Learning in Retirement



## Spring 2026 Course Catalog



315-334-7761

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Rome Campus, Plumley Complex 121E



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