



CATHERINE PROJECT

Fall 2024 Offerings

REGISTRATION FOR ALL COURSES CLOSES
FRIDAY, AUGUST 16TH AT 5PM

www.catherineproject.org

Please read before applying

Our courses are open to adults 16 years or older from all educational backgrounds and walks of life. We charge no tuition or fees.

In accordance with [our principles](#), we read books of richness, depth, and lasting value that bear repeated re-readings. Such books teach readers at all levels of preparation. *Readers do not choose tutors, tutors do not choose readers, and members of reading groups do not choose one another:* readers choose a book to read or a subject to study.

In reviewing applications to study with us, we largely use two criteria in determining placement:

1. *The statement of interest:* This is the most important part of your application. In your statement we look for enthusiasm and fit for an independent and collaborative style of learning. If you are finding it difficult to express your desire to study with us in writing, please let us know by emailing study@catherineproject.org.
2. *Past participation in the Project:* We seek to facilitate the continued learning of those making good use of the opportunities the Project affords. Readers who were previously admitted to courses and were largely absent or withdrew without communicating may not be re-admitted. If you fear that your past participation may count against you and would like to offer context for your situation, you are welcome to write to us.

We use a ranked preference system in processing applications.

Please identify the top 5 courses in which you would like to participate. We will consider you carefully for your first preference course: if we are not able to place you in that course, we will consider you for your second preference, etc.

Interest in our courses far outstrips available space. Please do not select a course unless you are able to commit fully to the course.

Access the application form [here](#).

If you are new to this kind of study or unsure where to start, you are welcome to email us at: study@catherineproject.org.

Please note: all meeting times are listed in U.S. Eastern Time and dates follow the convention of month/day/year.



Life of the Mind Seminar

The Life of the Mind Seminar is open to adults 16 years or older from all educational backgrounds and takes place on Zoom.

Each Seminar is made up of 10-16 readers and is co-led by two experienced guides in conversation who are zealous about their own learning. Seminars meet once a week for 2 hours and run for 12 weeks (sometimes longer if breaks are taken for holidays, illness, etc.).

Readers are asked to prepare a question about each week's reading prior to meetings.

Listings reflect the seminar meeting day/time and the seminar start date.

Seminar sections

Saturdays

- 10 AM-12 PM, 9/14

Sundays

- 10 AM-12 PM, 9/15

Mondays

- 3-5 PM, 9/30
- 6-8 PM, 9/9
- 7-9 PM, 9/23
- 8-10 PM, 9/9

Tuesdays

- 2-4 PM, 9/10
- 3-5 PM, 9/17
- 6:30-8:30 PM, 9/24
- 7-9 PM, 9/10
- 7-9 PM, 9/24
- 8-10 PM, 9/24

Wednesdays

- 10AM-12 PM, 9/11
- 5:30-7:30 PM, 9/11
- 6:30-8:30 PM, 9/25
- 7-9 PM, 9/18
- 8-10 PM, 9/11

Thursdays

- 12-2 PM, 9/19
- 2-4 PM, 9/12
- 5-7 PM, 9/12

Fridays

- 9-11 AM, 9/13
- 10:30 AM-12:30 PM, 9/13



Subject tutorials

Each subject tutorial meets at the listed days and times to study the identified subject. Participants may be given assignments to complete before each meeting: these are given to assist in learning and no grades or credit will be given.

Introductory language tutorials are open to any reader who is willing to put in the effort of learning a new language.

Intermediate language tutorials typically involve the translation of texts and are most appropriate for those who have spent at least a year studying the relevant language.

Advanced language tutorials are appropriate for readers who already have some experience reading texts in the relevant language (for example, through recent participation in intermediate language tutorials).

Intermediate ancient Greek: Plato, *Republic*, Book 8

- Saturday, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM, 9/14-12/14 (14 wks)

Intermediate Latin: *Deeds of the Romans* and *History of Apollonius, King of Tyre*

- Wednesday, 4:00-5:30 PM, 9/11-12/18 (15 wks)



Intensive Reading Groups

Groups meet on the identified dates and times to discuss readings in the listed text(s). Readers are expected to write short reflection papers each week and share them with the entire group. Reflection papers are intended as an aid to thinking and conversation, and no grades are given.

Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning* and Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation"

- Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 PM, 9/10-11/19 (11 wks)

Cuneiform Law: Codes of Ur-Nammu, Lipit-Ishtar, and Hammurabi

- Wednesday, 12:00-1:30 PM, 10/16-11/20 (6 wks)



Reading Groups

Groups meet on the identified dates and times to discuss readings in the listed text(s). Unless otherwise noted, meetings are conducted in English and take place online.

Scholar in Novel: Kingsley Amis, *Lucky Jim* and John Kennedy Toole, *Confederacy of Dunces*

- Thursday, 7:00-8:15 PM, 9/12-11/14 (10 wks)

Aristotle, *On the Soul* and *Poetics*

- Thursday, 11:00 AM-12:30 PM, 11/7-5/1/2025 (26 wks)

EN ESPAÑOL: Jorge Luis Borges, *Ficciones*

- Saturday, 8:30 AM-10:00 AM, 9/28-11/23 (9 wks)
- This course will be conducted in Spanish.

Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*

- Thursday, 6:30-8:00 PM, 9/12-12/12/24 (14 wks)

Frances Burney, *Evelina*

- Tuesday, 7:00-9:00 PM, 10/22-12/17 (9 wks)

Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus* and Victor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*

- Wednesday, 7:00-8:30 PM, 9/11-11/6 (9 wks)

Cantor, *Contributions to the Theory of Transfinite Numbers* and Dedekind, *Essays on the Theory of Numbers*

- Thursday, 7:30-9:30 PM, 9/12-12/12 (14 wks)

Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Part 1

- Tuesday, 4:30-6:00 PM, 10/1-11/12 (7 wks)

William Faulkner, *As I Lay Dying*

- Sunday, 7:45-9:15 PM, 9/22-11/3 (7 wks)

E. M. Forster, *Howard's End* and Zadie Smith, *On Beauty*

- Thursday, 7:00-8:30 PM, 9/12-11/14 (10 wks)

Homer, *Iliad*

- Sunday, 8:30-10:00 PM, 9/22-11/10 (8 wks)

Icelandic Sagas

- Tuesday, 9:00-10:30 PM, 9/10-12/17 (15 wks)

Søren Kierkegaard, *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air*

- Friday, 1:00-3:00 PM, 11/8-11/22 (3 wks)

Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* and *De omnibus dubitandum est*

- Wednesday, 8:00-10:00 PM, 9/11-11/6 (9 wks)

Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*

- Tuesday, 7:30-9:00 PM, 9/10-10/29 (8 wks)

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*

- Monday, 7:30-9:00 PM, 9/9-11/4 (9 wks)

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

- Monday, 2:30-4:00 PM, 9/9-11/18 (11 wks)

Sylvia Plath, Selected poetry

- Tuesday, 5:00-6:00 PM, 9/17-10/22 (6 wks)

IN-PERSON: Plato, *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, *Phaedo*

- Monday, 6:30-8:00 PM, 9/23-10/21 (5 wks)
- This course will meet in-person in NYC at Pier 57 (25 11th Ave, New York, NY 10011). Meetings are not hybrid.

Plato, *Lesser Hippias*

- Friday, 12:00-1:30 PM, 10/4-10/25 (4 wks)

Plutarch, *Lives* (selections)

- Thursday, 8:00-9:30 PM, 11/7-12/19 (7 wks)

Ezra Pound, *Hugh Selwyn-Mauberry*; W.S. Graham, *The Nightfishing*;
Geoffrey Hill, *The Mystery of the Charity of Charles Peguy*

- Sunday, 7:00-9:00 PM, 9/15-9/29 (3 wks)

Éric Rohmer, Selected films

- Thursday, 8:00-9:30 PM, 10/10-1/16/2025 (15 wks)

IN-PERSON: Rousseau, *The Social Contract* and Joseph de Maistre, *The Generative Principles of Political Constitutions* (in-person, Chicago)

- Saturdays, 1:00-2:30 PM, 9/7-10/19 (7 wks)
- This course will meet at the West Loop Public Library location (122 N. Aberdeen Street; Chicago, IL 60607). Meetings are not hybrid.

Jalal ad-Din Muhammad ar-Rumi, Selected writings

- Saturday, 1:00-2:30 PM, 10/5-11/29 (8 wks)

Spinoza, *Ethics*

- Monday, 8:30-10:00 PM, 9/16-12/16 (14 wks)

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* and Xenophon, *Hellenika*

- Thursday, 1:00-2:30 PM, 10/10-1/16/2025 (15 wks)

Robert Walser, *Jakob Von Gunten*

- Sunday, 8:00-9:30 PM, 10/13-11/3 (4 wks)

Wharton, Rhys, Parrott: Edith Wharton, *Twilight Sleep*; Jean Rhys, *Quartet*;
Ursula Parrott, *Ex-Wife*

- Sunday, 6:30-7:45:00 PM, 9/15-11/17 (10 wks)

Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* and *The Tenderest Lover*

- Thursday, 8:00-9:30 PM, 9/5-10/17 (7 wks)

Xenophon, *Anabasis* and *The Education of Cyrus*

- Monday, 8:00-9:30 PM, 9/9-12/9 (14 wks)

Guidelines for Discussion

The spontaneous discussion of profound texts requires that its participants attend carefully to the conversation. In these discussions we face a constant challenge to be perceptive, thoughtful, and flexible. The following are some guidelines that are conducive to good conversation.

Respect one another. Strive for civility. However, it is not impolite to challenge others: true respect does not entail disingenuous approval.

Be mindful of others. Avoid speaking in a monologue. Attend to those who may wish to speak, especially those hesitant to enter the discussion.

Cultivate your ability to listen well. The conversation and its participants are benefited by the engagement of those who are listening closely.

No question is too simple or elemental. If you're having trouble understanding what someone means, you're unlikely to be alone.

Be willing to doubt what you think you know. Have the courage to be willing to change your opinions.

We are thinking together for ourselves, not just studying the thoughts of others. Help one another to clarify thoughts and assumptions by asking questions of each other.

Cite the text. We all have the text in common. Conversation is deepened by focusing on the text.

When you refer to sources outside the shared reading, including historical or other context, you claim to be an expert at the table. A good conversation relies on sources that all present can evaluate; the text read in common should be central.

It is bad to interrupt, but it is worse to speak so that you need to be interrupted.

Silence isn't a problem; it's a sign that everyone is thinking. Endure it rather than rushing to fill it.

Please disregard any of these rules if they cause you to do something awful.

