

KNOCK, KNOCK! WHO'S THERE? A COURSE ON HUMOR LLC | Spring 2019 | Syllabus

Welcome to the LLC course dedicated to making you laugh while you learn! Speaking of which...

Did you hear the one about the two LLC coordinators for a humor course who wandered into a bar? Well, they ended up getting drunk simply contemplating the enormous scope of their topic. *(Drum roll...)*

Tickling your funny bone should be a mandatory daily exercise. In this course, we hope you'll get a workout to last a week. *(Drum roll...)*

Have you ever stopped to think about the power of humor, its timelessness and its importance in our lives? What make something funny versus offensive? How do we develop our sense of humor? What are its social and physical benefits? How does humor vary by age or by culture around the world? Who are some of your favorite humorists or comedians? In this course, we will explore these questions as well as humor's role in print and on stage. *Through you*, we'll investigate the different types of humor and what makes them work. We'll even roll up our sleeves to make each other laugh. In short, we hope that this will become among the most fun LLC courses you've ever taken.

CLASS MEETINGS

Our class will be meeting for eight weeks on Mondays, 10 a.m.–Noon at Temple Beth El, 70 Orchard Ave., Providence. Parking in the temple's lot is limited, so try to arrive early. To gain entry to the temple, you will need to announce yourself through the electronic security system. If you expect to miss a class, please tip off us off in advance.

YOUR ROLE IN CLASS

If you have taken other LLC courses, you'll be familiar with the class model of short presentations and lively discussion. As coordinators, we believe strongly in the collaborative model. In other words, you'll find 3 remaining opportunities to lead the class for an hour. (See the timeline on page 3.) Given the class size, feel free to enlist other class members to join you in tackling a topic. We're happy to help you to ensure a successful presentation and discussion. LLC's website also offers helpful presentation/discussion tips under the [Members Resources](#) tab.

Finally, we want to keep our focus on humor as upbeat and "clean" as we can.

HOW TO REACH US

Maggie Miles
maggie.miles@gmail.com
401.337.5445 (Home)
201.956.1235 (Cell)

Nick Miles
nbmiles@mac.com
401.337.5445 (Home)
201.956.1234 (Cell)

LLC HUMOR COURSE | SPRING 2019 SCHEDULE

Week 1, Mon., March 11 | Introduction & Overview

Nick and Maggie Miles will set the stage for the course, reviewing a short history of humor and the various types of humor (more than you might imagine). We'll share how Jerry Seinfeld writes a joke and check out your sense of humor through a humor questionnaire.

Week 2, Mon., March 18 | Types of Humor

In both hours, we'll focus more deeply on your choice of several different types of humor (as presented in Week 1).

Week 3, Mon., March 25 | Humor and Life

- In Hour 1: Explore how we develop our sense of humor from infancy to late childhood, including biological and cultural influences. How does our sense of humor change over time?
- In Hour 2: Explore the science of humor and health, including mental, emotional and physical well-being.

Week 4, Mon., April 8 | Humor in Print. Humor on Stage

- In Hour 1: Delve into how humorists have expressed themselves through literature and print media over time, possibly including such magazines as *The Onion* and *Mad*.
- In Hour 2: Focus on the evolution of humor in live or recorded performance media (everything from stand-up to radio to television and other media).

Week 5, Mon., April 15 | Humor Around the World

- In Hour 1: Explore how humor varies in different cultures.
- In Hour 2: Visit by guest humorist

Week 6, Mon., April 22 | Famous Humorists & Comedians Before our Time

In hours 1 & 2: Profile your choices of humorists before 1940. Note: We'll define a humorist as a writer or public speaker who uses humor in his or her work. Humorists are distinct from comedians, who are show business entertainers who seek to make an audience laugh. It's possible for someone to be both a humorist and a comedian in the course of a career.

Week 7, Mon., April 29 | Famous American Humorists & Comedians In our Time

In hours 1 & 2: Profile your choices of humorists within our lifetime.

Week 8, Mon., May 6 | Examining *the New Yorker* with group activity

In hours 1 and 2: Collaborate with Maggie Miles in investigating humor in the pages of the *New Yorker*, from columns to cartoons. Help lead a group activity.

Note: There will be no class the week of April 1.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

You may find the following books useful in researching a topic. Note, however, that this course does not have a required text. All of these books should be available through your local library.

The Big Book of New American Humor: The Best of the Past 25 Years

by William Novak and Moshe Waldoks

An anthology of the very funniest jokes, stories, scripts, cartoons, and parodies from America's top humorists, comedians, cartoonists, and entertainers of the past twenty-five years on every subject from politics to sex.

Fierce Pajamas: An Anthology of Humor Writing from The New Yorker

by David Remnick (Editor), Henry Finder (Editor)

When Harold Ross founded *The New Yorker* in 1925, he described it as a "comic weekly." And although it has become much more than that, it has remained true in its irreverent heart to the founder's description, publishing the most illustrious literary humorists of the modern era. This anthology gathers together the funniest work of more than 70 *New Yorker* contributors.

Humor Me: An Anthology of Funny Contemporary Writing (Plus Some Great Old Stuff Too)

by Ian Frazier

Billed as offering more than 50 of the greatest pieces of comic writing of our time.

The Psychology of Humor: An Integrated Approach

by Rod A. Martin

A broad-based textbook on the universality of humor's appeal, cognitive and social psychological aspects of humor, personality approaches to the sense of humor, and how humor affects both mental and physical health. Note: We own a copy of this text, so class members are welcome to borrow it.

LLC HUMOR | SPRING 2019 SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK/DATE	HOOR 1	HOOR 2
Week 1 Mon., 3/11	Nick & Maggie Miles Class intro and overview of humor, its history, etc.	
Week 2 Mon., 3/18	Types of Humor Jessie Kingston	Famous American Humorists/ Comedians in our Time Louise Moss
Week 3 Mon., 3/25	Humor and Human Development Sue Grossman	Humor and Health Patricia Davis
No class the week of April 1 (No joke!)		
Week 4 Mon., 4/8	Humor in Print Cynthia Hiatt	Humor on Stage Lily Traves
Week 5 Mon. 4/15	Humor Around the World Mark Kaplan	Comedy Tableau Nick/Maggie Miles, Bonnie Moore
Week 6 Mon., 4/22	Famous Humorists Before our Time Gregg Oehler	Examining <i>New Yorker</i> cartoons Maggie Miles
Week 7 Mon., 4/29	Famous American Humorists/ Comedians in our Time Joe & Bobbi Fisler	Types of Humor Carol Hoppe
Week 8 Mon., 5/6	Famous Humorists Before our Time Deb Chorney	Guest Humorist Charlie Thurston, Trinity Rep.

LLC HUMOR | CLASS ROSTER | SPRING 2019

NAME	TOWN	PHONE	EMAIL
<i>Coordinators</i> Nick Miles Maggie Miles	Barrington	401.337.5445 (H) 201.956.1234 (M) 201.956.1235 (M)	nbmiles@mac.com maggie.miles@gmail.com
Ed Adler	Providence	401.837.2151	adlered36@gmail.com
Jane Adler	Providence	401.274.2149	whitegate.featuressyndicate@gmail.com
Marcia Cain	N. Kingstown	401.294.2289	marshacain@cox.net
Deborah Chorney	Narragansett	401.788.9559	debchorney@yahoo.com
Patricia Davis	Somerset, MA	508.954.5916	phdavis54@gmail.com
Robert Faulkner	Barrington	401.245.1934	tpfaulk@yhoo.com
Bobbi Fisler	Providence	401.274.1410	rsfisler@gmail.com
Joe Fisler	Providence	401.274.1410	jfisler1@gmail.com
Sue Grossman	Riverside	401.831.2257	suzinrgrose@gmail.com
Cynthia Hiatt	Providence	603.991.4932	chiatt77@gmail.com
Carol Hoppe	Pawtucket	401.722.8451	hppcarol@yahoo.com
Mark Kaplan	Providence	401.484.1199	markkaplan@gmail.com
Jessie Kingston	Providence	401.421.0803	potterkingston@gmail.com
Rosemary Lowenstein	Barrington	401.245.5866	rosemary@madeinmuseum.com
Bonnie Moore	Barrington	401.245.8528	brmoore@cox.net
Louise Moss	Riverside	401.443.4035	LsdLhs32@mobiussweb.com
Gregg Oehler	Warwick	401.461.4755	goehler1825@gmail.com
Holly Trahan	Rumford	401.431.4172	hhtrahan@gmail.com
LilyTrayes	E. Greenwich	212.874.1616	lilytrayes@gmail.com
Melvin Zurier	Providence	401.272.9571	melzurier@cox.net