

Uncovering Your Past: Practical Genealogy to Discover Your Family Story

OLLI at UNLV - Thursdays, 10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Syllabus for Fall 2026

Location: Maryland Campus, MAB2

Instructor: Ben Kempner; benjamin.kempner@gmail.com

Description: Unlock the secrets of your ancestry. Learn how to use today's online resources to build your family history. You'll develop research skills, interpret historical records, and explore leading genealogy website, many free and accessible from home. As millions of new records become available and genealogy websites evolve, you'll discover the latest tools and practical, step-by-step techniques for your own family history research.

Date	Subject	Topics
9/10	Laying the Foundation	Learn how to begin your genealogy journey, organize your research, avoid common mistakes, and discover the many free resources available to family historians. You'll leave with a solid plan for building your family tree.
9/17	FamilySearch.org	Discover how to use the world's largest free genealogy website to find historical records, build your family tree, and collaborate with relatives and researchers around the world.
9/24	Ancestry.com & Find a Grave	Learn what you can do with Ancestry's free and paid features, create and grow your family tree, use hints and powerful search tools, and discover ancestors through Find a Grave's cemetery records and memorials.
10/1	MyHeritage & Historical Newspapers	Learn how MyHeritage's innovative tools—including AI features—and historical newspapers can help you uncover new ancestors, add rich details to their lives, and preserve your family's stories.
10/8	Census	Master one of the most valuable resources in genealogy by learning how to locate, interpret, and analyze census records to trace families through time and uncover hidden clues.
10/15	Immigration & Naturalization	Explore passenger lists, naturalization records, border crossings, and other immigration resources to discover when, where, and how your ancestors came to America.
10/22	Using Social Media for Genealogy	Learn how Facebook, YouTube, blogs, podcasts, and other online communities can help you solve research problems, connect with cousins and fellow researchers and continue learning long after the class ends.
10/29	Finding Your Ancestors in the Military	Discover military records from the Revolutionary War through modern conflicts to learn about your ancestors' service, locate military documents, and honor their contributions.
11/5	Artificial Intelligence for Genealogy	See how today's AI tools can help you transcribe documents, summarize records, organize research, restore photographs, write family stories, and become a more productive genealogist.
11/12	DNA – Genetic Genealogy	Learn how to interpret ethnicity estimates, evaluate thousands of DNA matches, identify the relatives most likely to help your research, and use DNA tools from Ancestry and MyHeritage.

PDF copies of each presentation will be provided, and time will be available for questions during each class.