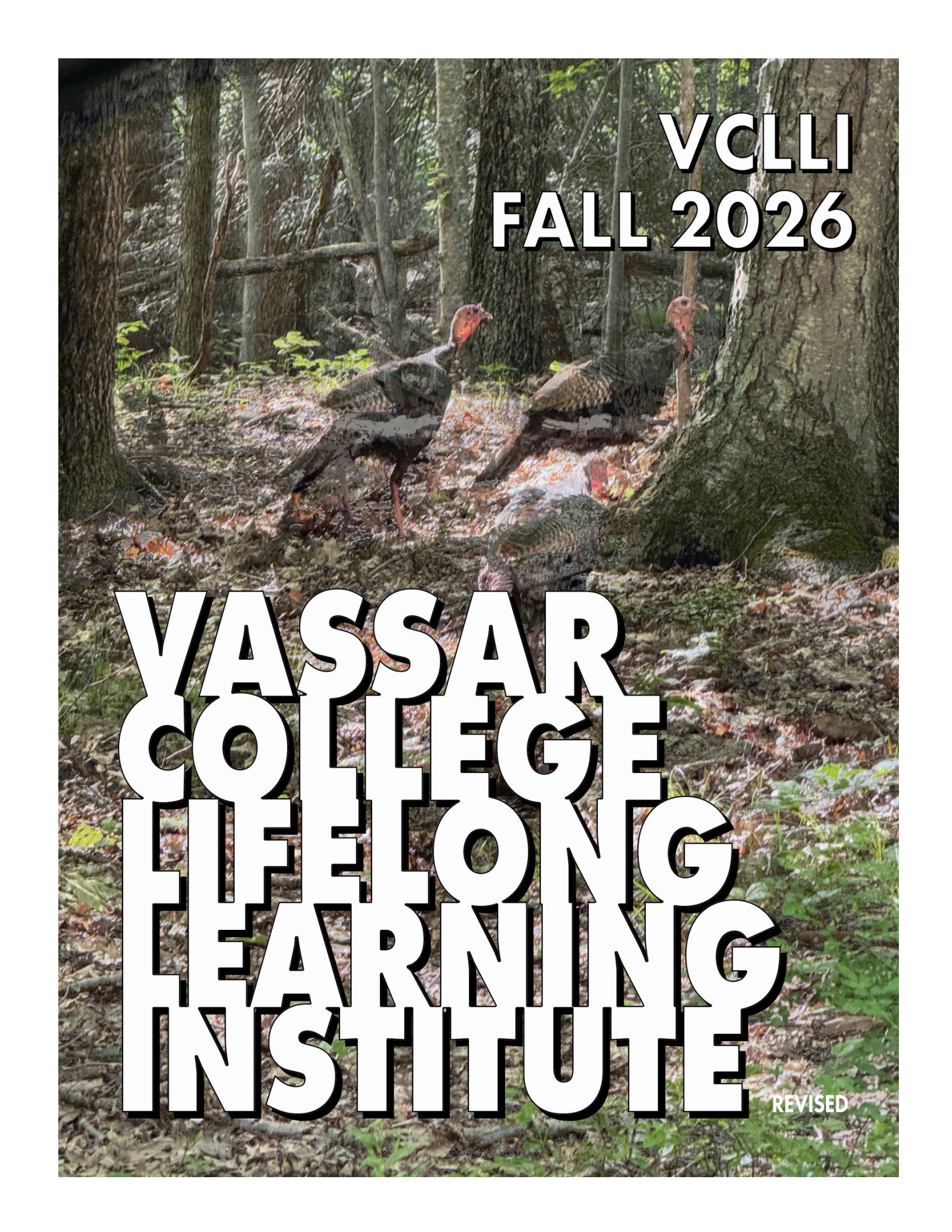




**VCLLI
FALL 2026**

**VASSAR
COLLEGE
LIFELONG
LEARNING
INSTITUTE**

REVISED

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LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE AT VASSAR COLLEGE

FALL 2026 SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

The Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) at Vassar College is a volunteer-run organization designed for adults who love to learn and who wish to contribute to the larger community in their pursuit of knowledge.

We are an adult educational program affiliated with Vassar College offering a broad range of non-credit courses and activities to members 55 and over. Classes are taught by volunteer members, retired and active faculty, and outside experts.

LLI at Vassar College believes that education is essential at every age. We are called on to continually expand our knowledge, so we might participate fully as citizens in our democracy. The education process is individually motivated as well as collaborative, with new ideas and new skills often introduced by others with a commitment to sharing.

As we age, life experiences enhance our education. We are fortunate that members with unique perspectives, skills and expertise are willing to share them with us.

Vassar LLI is committed to forming a community that advances the education of its members in a collaborative fashion. When we study, explore, and discuss together, we model engagement and expansion for each other.

Classes Are Conducted In Person and Via Zoom

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT COURSE LIMITS

Members can register for a maximum of three Eight-Week IN PERSON courses per semester: Five Week, Six-Week & Eight-Week IN PERSON classes count as Eight-Week IN PERSON courses. Two Four-Week IN PERSON classes can be combined to equal one Eight-Week IN PERSON course. Three-Week IN PERSON classes count as Four-Week IN PERSON courses.

NEW THIS YEAR

BOTH ON-CAMPUS and OFF-CAMPUS IN-PERSON courses count against the above limit.

Single Session classes (On Campus and Off Campus) **do not** count against the above limit.

Zoom classes **do not** count against the above limit.

Lunch, Then Learn classes **do not** count against the above limit.

Vassar Student Performances **do not** count against the above limit.

When selecting courses, please note the dates they meet.

Only LLI members may participate in classes; no guests are permitted.

Membership fee does not include books, photocopied material, transportation, or other fees.

FOR ZOOM ACCESS AND LOGIN INSTRUCTIONS,
YOU WILL BE CONTACTED BY YOUR INSTRUCTOR OR CLASS MANAGER

LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE AT VASSAR COLLEGE

FALL 2026 SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

SINGLE SESSION CLASSES – AT VASSAR LOEB ART CENTER

	Thursday	
Photo-Design: Persuasion, Critique, Fantasy 4:00 – 5:15 PM	Oct. 8	Pg 8
Art and Culture of the Hudson River School 3:20 – 4:35 PM	Oct. 22	Pg 8

SINGLE SESSION CLASSES – ON ZOOM

Wednesday On Zoom	11:00 AM – 12:30 PM	
Can We Talk? How Conversational Styles Affect Conversations and Relationships	Oct. 14	Pg 9
Washington's Farewell Address	Nov. 11	Pg 9

MULTI-SESSION PERFORMANCE SERIES– ON CAMPUS

NOTE: Information about each performance will be distributed the week prior to the performance

	Wednesdays On Campus	
Vassar Student Music and Dance Performances 3:30 – 5:00 PM	Oct. 7, 14, 28 and Nov. 4	Pg 10

OFF CAMPUS CLASSES – IN PERSON

Note Special Dates, Times and Locations

	Wednesdays In Person	
Tour of Art Project at WaveCrest, Hyde Park 2:00 - 4:00 PM Sept. 30	Single Session	Pg 10
Mixed Media Inspired by Romare Bearden <i>NOTE: This counts as a Four-Week Class</i> 12:00 – 1:30 PM Sept. 30; Oct. 7 and 14	First Three Weeks	Pg 11
Beginning Nordic Pole Walking 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM Sept. 23, 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21 and 28	First Six Weeks	Pg 12

		Thursdays In Person	
Gentle Hikes in the Hudson Valley			
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM	Oct. 1, 8, 15 and 22	First Four Weeks	Pg 12

FRIDAY ON CAMPUS CLASSES

Friday On Campus		9:30 - 10:45 AM	
Evolution and Literature: Continuation			
Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13		Eight Weeks	Pg 13
The Rise and Fall of the Liberal Supreme Court			
Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13		Eight Weeks	Pg 13
The Oldest Profession: History of Prostitution			
Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30		First Six Weeks	Pg 16
The “Queen City”: A Brief History of Poughkeepsie			
<i>NOTE: This counts as a Six-Week Class</i> Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30		Five Sessions; beginning Oct. 2	Pg 16
The Real History of Baseball			
Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16		First Four Weeks	Pg 17
Thrilling Conversations with Local Authors			
Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13		Last Four Weeks	Pg 20
Understanding Pain & The Brain			
Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13		Last Four Weeks	Pg 21

Friday On Campus		11:05 AM – 12:20 PM	
Springsteen: America’s Greatest Living Patriot			
Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13		Eight Weeks	Pg 14
“A Time to be Born and A Time to Die”			
Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16		First Four Weeks	Pg 17
Local Civic Engagement: How It Works, Why It Matters			
Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16		First Four Weeks	Pg 18
What Can We Do About Political Polarization?			
Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16		First Four Weeks	Pg 18
Living the Four and Five Agreements			
Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16		First Four Weeks	Pg 19
Courageous Citizenship			
Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13		Last Four Weeks	Pg 21
Friday On Campus – 11:05 AM – 12:20 PM Continues			

Four Also Rans	<i>Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13</i>	Last Four Weeks	Pg 22
Garbage In, Garbage Out (Updated)	<i>Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13</i>	Last Four Weeks	Pg 22

Friday On Campus		1:45 – 3:00 PM	
Human Physiology	<i>Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13</i>	Eight Weeks	Pg 14
Understanding Movies: The Language of Film	<i>Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13</i>	Eight Weeks	Pg 15
Asia and European Art (Orientalism)	<i>Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30</i>	First Six Weeks	Pg 17
Spotlight on the Loeb Art Center	<i>Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16</i>	First Four Weeks	Pg 20
A History & Tour of the Wines of Spain - With Wine Tasting!	<i>Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13</i>	Last Four Weeks	Pg 22

Friday On Campus		3:20 – 4:35 PM	
Social Science Sampler	<i>Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13</i>	Eight Weeks	Pg 15
Paris in the Nineteenth Century: Part II	<i>Sept. 25; Oct. 2, 9, 16</i>	First Four Weeks	Pg 20
Drawing and Mixed Media Exploration	<i>Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13</i>	Last Four Weeks	Pg 23
Human Impacts on Brains and Behavior	<i>Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13</i>	Last Four Weeks	Pg 23

TUESDAY CLASSES – ON ZOOM

Tuesday On Zoom		9:30 – 10:45 AM	
Mystical Pacific	<i>Sept. 22, 29; Oct. 6, 13</i>	First Four Weeks	Pg 25
<i>Tuesday On Zoom – 9:30 – 10:45 AM Continues</i>			

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Music and the Law	<i>Oct. 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10</i>	Last Four Weeks	Pg 27
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Tuesday On Zoom		11:05 AM – 12:20 PM	
Discussion of Harlem Renaissance Literature	<i>Sept. 22, 29; Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10</i>	Eight Weeks	Pg 24
Unravelling the Secrets of the Eight Brocades	<i>Sept. 22, 29; Oct. 6, 13</i>	First Four Weeks	Pg 25
Breathe the Air of Trees and Other Cures	<i>Oct. 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10</i>	Last Four Weeks	Pg 27

Tuesday On Zoom		1:45 – 3:00 PM	
Women Artists: Their Inspirations and Influence	<i>Sept. 22, 29; Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10</i>	Eight Weeks	Pg 24
Psychology and Film	<i>Sept. 22, 29; Oct. 6, 13</i>	First Four Weeks	Pg 26
Living in Non-Local Consciousness	<i>Oct. 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10</i>	Last Four Weeks	Pg 28

Tuesday On Zoom		3:20 – 4:35 PM	
AI Without Hype: A Practical Introduction for Curious Adults	<i>Sept. 22, 29; Oct. 6, 13</i>	First Four Weeks	Pg 26

LUNCH, Then LEARN – FRIDAYS ON CAMPUS – 12:45 – 1:30 PM

Note: Registration for these classes will begin the Monday prior to each class. Lunch may *not* be eaten during class.

October 2	Divorce: Property Rights – Gifts and Inheritance	Pg 28
October 9	This is a True War Story	Pg 29
October 16	Four Notable Women of Clinton, NY	Pg 29
October 23	You Then, You Now: Writing Memoir	Pg 29
October 30	A Layman's Guide to Crypto	Pg 30
November 6	No Greater Love: The Life & Legacy of Charles Johnson	Pg 30
November 13	Stories In Stone	Pg 31

SINGLE SESSION CLASSES – AT VASSAR LOEB ART CENTER

Thursday, October 8	4:00 – 5:15 PM
Photo-Design: Persuasion, Critique, Fantasy	Limit: 20

Presenter: **Jessica Brier**

Photography is typically understood as a tool for seeing the world as it is, but it is equally valuable for imagining what it could be. This exhibition explores the visionary potential of photography through the lens of design. Spanning a century, from the 1920s to the present, this exhibition introduces the concept of “photo-design” to describe how graphic designers, architects, and artists use photography to imagine new ways of living in times when the future seems uncertain and not guaranteed.

Works by artists and designers including Marshall Brown, the Guerrilla Girls, László Moholy-Nagy, El Lissitzky, Eduardo Paolozzi, Jorge Rigamonte, Grete Stern, and many others illuminate how photo-design shapes our experiences of the modern world. Photo-Design offers radical ideas about how to live, taking advantage of photography’s strong association with reality, and combining it with equally radical and disruptive techniques including collage, montage, and experimental printing, in order to envision new futures. Today, as a century ago, one way we begin to emerge from disaster is to imagine our way out of it.

Jessica Brier is the Curator of Photography at the Vassar Loeb Art Center, overseeing its photography collection. Brier specializes in modernist art and design with a focus on the overlapping histories of photography, print, architecture, and graphic design. She holds a Ph.D. in art history from the University of Southern California; an MA in curatorial practice from the California College of the Arts; and a BA from New York University’s Gallatin School of Individualized Study.

Thursday, October 22	3:20 – 4:35 PM
Art and Culture of the Hudson River School	Limit: 25

Presenter: **Dan Peck**

In this session, which will include a tour of Hudson River School paintings in Vassar's Loeb Art Center, Professor Peck will explain the importance of the School in the history of American art and culture. He will highlight the works of the School's founder, Thomas Cole, and of Cole’s most accomplished follower, Frederic Edwin Church, whose 200th birthday is being celebrated this year. Notable followers of Cole, such as Asher B. Durand, as well as women painters of the Hudson River School, such as Susie M. Barstow, will also be examined, and connections will be drawn between these Hudson River School painters and later American artists, such as Georgia O'Keeffe.

H. Daniel Peck is the John Guy Vassar Professor Emeritus of English at Vassar College. He is the author and editor of numerous books about American literature and art, including, most recently, *Thomas Cole's Refrain* (Cornell University Press, 2019).

SINGLE SESSION CLASSES – ON ZOOM

Wednesday, October 14	11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Can We Talk? How Conversational Style Affects Conversations and Relationships	Limit: 100

Presenter: **Deborah Tannen**

Wouldn't this be a better world if we all just said what we mean? We do, but we do so in our own conversational styles-- all the linguistic aspects of how we say what we mean. Conversational styles tend to vary by a whole host of influences, including culture, ethnicity, gender, class, and geographic region. This lecture explains the concept of conversational style, showing how ways of speaking can differ, and how such differences can affect conversations--and relationships--among friends, family, romantic partners, and colleagues at work.

Deborah Tannen is Distinguished University Professor in the Linguistics Department at Georgetown University. Best known among her many books is *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*, which was on the New York Times bestseller list for nearly four years, including eight months as No. 1, and has been translated into 31 languages. She has written for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic*, and *The Harvard Business Review*. She has appeared on *Oprah*, *The Colbert Report*, *20/20*, *Good Morning America*, *PBS NewsHour*, *Nightline* and NPR's *Morning Edition*, *All Things Considered*, and *Fresh Air*.

Wednesday, November 11	11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Washington's Farewell Address	Limit: 100

Presenter: **John Avlon**

At the end of his second term, Washington surprised Americans by publishing his Farewell message in a newspaper. The President called for unity among "citizens by birth or choice," advocated moderation, defended religious pluralism, proposed a foreign policy of independence (not isolation), and proposed that education is essential to democracy. He established the precedent for the peaceful transfer of power.

George Washington's Farewell Address was a prophetic letter about the forces Washington feared could destroy our democracy: hyper-partisanship, excessive debt, and foreign wars. Once celebrated as civic scripture, more widely reprinted than the Declaration of Independence, the Farewell Address is now almost forgotten. Yet, its message remains starkly relevant.

John Avlon is an award-winning journalist, author, news anchor and media executive. He is a former CNN senior political analyst and anchor, editor-in-chief of *The Daily Beast*, and the 2024 Democratic congressional nominee in New York's First District. He currently hosts a solutions journalism podcast on *The Bulwark* called "How to Fix It" and serves as the Chairman of Citizens Union, New York's oldest good government group. He was chief speechwriter for Mayor Rudy Giuliani; he wrote eulogies for the hundreds of First Responders murdered in the attack of September 11th and his essay on the attack, "The Resilient City", won acclaim as

“the single best essay written in the wake of 9/11”. Avlon has appeared on the *Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, *Real Time with Bill Maher*, and *The Daily Show* as well as on CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, NPR and C-Span. Avlon is the author of seven books including *Washington’s Farewell* and *Lincoln and the Fight for Peace*. His newest book, *Theodore Roosevelt’s Guide to Life*, is slated to be released this coming March.

MULTI-SESSION PERFORMANCE SERIES – ON CAMPUS

Vassar Student Music and Dance Performances

Wednesdays: Oct. 7, 14, 28 and Nov. 4

3:30 - 5:00 PM

NEW THIS SEMESTER!! As part of our ongoing efforts to strengthen connections between our Lifelong Learning Institute and the broader Vassar College community, we are pleased to introduce the Community Performance Prize Series for Vassar students. A monetary prize will be awarded to each student performer participating in the program. In addition to performing, students will briefly discuss their work and artistic process.

We are launching this new initiative with performances by students from the Music and Dance Departments. While locations are still being finalized, we expect the music performances to be held in Blodgett Auditorium or Skinner Hall (Thekla Hall).

We hope this inaugural series will receive enthusiastic support from our community. Last semester, we enjoyed an outstanding performance by a student string trio featuring works by Franz Schubert, and we hope to welcome them back this Fall.

Information about each performance will be distributed the week prior to the performance.

NOTE: These performances do not count toward any In-Person Class Limits. Please save these dates-- Members are encouraged to attend as many performances as they wish!

OFF CAMPUS CLASSES – IN PERSON

Note: SPECIAL DATES, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS

Off Campus – Single Session – In Person	2:00 – 4:00 PM
Wednesday: September 30	WaveCrest, Hyde Park
Tour of Art Project at WaveCrest, Hyde Park	Limit: 30

Presenter: Madeleine Segall-Marx

Tour Madeleine Segall-Marx's 10-year antiwar art project, *Listening to the Enemy*, installed in her barn in Hyde Park. The 25 large and diverse artworks represent, in a surprising way, the voices of people who have been caught in war. It centers on the idea that if you listen to your so-called "enemy," you might be less inclined to wage war on him.

The visit will begin at her home, where Madeleine will explain how the project developed and was built. Participants will then take a short walk to the barn to view the installation. The property also features sculptures and paintings by Madeleine and her late husband, Richard Marx. After the two-hour tour, all are welcome to explore the grounds and return to the house to view additional works. For those with stamina, Madeleine can tell stories for hours on myriad topics. Refreshments will be offered!

NOTE: *There are about 12 steps to get into the house. Entry to the barn involves a bit of walking across the grass and up a short, gentle slope. Participants are encouraged to visit listeningtotheenemy.com prior to the tour to become familiar with the project.*

Madeleine Segall-Marx, a former instructor of figurative sculpture, splits her time between her SoHo, NYC and Hyde Park studios. She has won myriad awards for her work, including the Dutchess County Executive Arts Award to an Individual Artist. When president of the National Association of Women Artists, she developed programs for its members that involved social justice issues. Her journey in the *Listening to the Enemy Project* (supported by grants from NYSCA and the Puffin Foundation) led to her involvement in helping Iraqi refugees and Nepal's Tharu population.

Off Campus – First 3 Weeks – In Person	12:00 – 1:30 PM
Wednesdays: Sept. 30; Oct. 7 and 14	Underwear Factory, Poughkeepsie
Mixed Media Inspired by Romare Bearden	Limit: 10

Presenter: Randi Chalfin

In this mixed media course participants will create small works on canvas inspired by the innovative collage practice of artist Romare Bearden: bringing rural memories, cityscapes, jazz music and classical music together in vibrant compositions. No previous art experience is required.

Suggested Readings: Any books on Romare Bearden that contain imagery

Required Materials: glue stick, 10" x 10" canvas, oil or regular pastels, watercolor set. Participants will reimburse the instructor for these materials (approx. \$10-\$15).

Randi Chalfin has a master's degree from Teachers College at Columbia University in Arts Education, and a Certification in Creative Arts Therapy from Adelphi University. She has also completed training in trauma-informed therapy and trauma-informed sand play at the University at Albany School of Social Welfare and School of Education. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, including a recent solo show in Hamburg, Germany. Chalfin will have a solo exhibition at The Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center in Poughkeepsie from December 2026 through January 2027. Chalfin maintains a studio at the Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory.

NOTE: *This Course counts as a Four-Week Class*

Off Campus – First 4 Weeks – In Person	11:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Thursdays: Oct. 1, 8, 15 and 22	Various Locations
Gentle Hikes in the Hudson Valley	Limit: 25

Presenters: Maureen King, Sue MacLean and Teresa Quinn

This course offers VCLLI members the opportunity to build community and get some exercise while enjoying the beauty of our Hudson Valley. Four hikes are planned in different locations in Dutchess and Ulster Counties. The hikes will range in length and are expected to take approximately two to three hours each. Trails will be in the moderate-to-difficult category, and may include woodland trails with steep hills, and uneven rock and soil surfaces.

Oct 1	Mohonk Mountain House, Eagle Cliff Loop Hike, New Paltz, NY
Oct 8	Thompson Pond Preserve, Pine Plains, NY
Oct 15	FDR Home, Roosevelt Woods Trail, Hyde Park, NY
Oct 22	Peterskill, Yellow and Blue Trail, Minnewaska State Park, Gardiner, NY

Maureen King is a retired Vassar College administrator. She finds joy in hiking the many scenic trails of the Hudson Valley. **Sue MacLean** is a retired social studies teacher who loves to hike in the Hudson Valley. Sue enjoys introducing groups to local history, different locations, and new adventures. **Teresa Quinn** is a retired Vassar College Student Affairs administrator and she looks forward to sharing her passion for hiking and being in community with VCLLI members in the beautiful Hudson Valley.

Off Campus – First 6 Weeks – In Person	11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Wednesdays: Sept. 23, 30; Oct 7, 14, 21 and 28	Various Locations
Beginning Nordic Pole Walking	Limit: 15

Presenter: Marty Zlotkin

Nordic Pole Walking is a low-impact exercise system offering numerous benefits for seniors including improved balance and stability; reduced stress on joints (like knees); strengthened muscles through full-body engagement; and better cardiovascular health. This type of exercise is also known to help with chronic pain, mood, weight management and mobility.

All walks will take place on level ground and established walkways and are adaptable to individual ability and comfort levels. Walks will not exceed two miles, and participants may turn back at any point.

The first session will focus on learning basic technique and will be held at the Vassar Noyes House Field. Sessions two and three will be guided walks beginning at the Morgan Lake Trailhead (approximately one mile), and session four will begin at the Morgan Lake Trailhead and continue to the Walkway Over The Hudson (approximately two miles). Locations for sessions five and six will be announced later.

NOTE: Participants are encouraged to consult with their physician before beginning the course. Participants must provide their own Nordic Walking poles, available through online retailers and some sporting goods

stores. For safety and effectiveness, quality poles are recommended; you should expect to pay between \$50 and \$100 or more per pair. Participants unfamiliar with Nordic Pole Walking might find it helpful to watch introductory instructional videos available on YouTube prior to the first session.

Marty Zlotkin is retired from business and is a working artist. He is also a beginner Nordic pole walker, with “shot knees” from years of running, and is feeling healthy again thanks to this form of exercise.

FRIDAY ON CAMPUS – EIGHT WEEKS – IN PERSON

Friday On Campus – Eight Weeks	9:30 – 10:45 AM
Evolution and Literature: Continuation	Limit: 25

Presenter: **Judith Saunders**

This course is a continuation of the Spring 2026 session, *Evolution and Literature: An Introduction*. Enrollment is limited to participants who completed either the Fall 2019 or Spring 2026 sessions, as foundational knowledge of evolutionary science and interdisciplinary approaches to literature will be assumed. We will continue reading Wright's book, *The Moral Animal*, examining topics such as reciprocal exchange, cooperation and alliances, deception and self-deception. At the same time, we will explore how literary texts illuminate and confront evolved adaptations. Readings will include poetry and fiction by a variety of writers, e.g., Millay, Heaney, Ryan, Maugham, Hurston and Alcott.

Materials: Readings will be assigned from *The Moral Animal: Evolutionary Psychology and Everyday Life* by Robert Wright (Vintage 1994), which participants should already own

Judith Saunders (Professor Emerita, Marist College) has been engaged in interdisciplinary teaching and scholarship for the past three decades, exploring literary texts through the lens of evolutionary biology and psychology. In her published commentary, she has applied evolutionary theory and research to the work of a variety of English and American writers, including Edith Wharton, D.H. Lawrence, Walt Whitman, Nathaniel Hawthorne, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and others.

Friday On Campus – Eight Weeks	9:30 – 10:45 AM
The Rise and Fall of the Liberal Supreme Court	Limit: 35

Presenter: **Norman Abrams**

This course will examine the famous Supreme Court cases on civil rights, beginning with the 1857 *Dred Scott* case, then the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* "separate but equal" case, the cases leading up to *Brown v. Board of Education* and, finally, the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case itself. We will then discuss, as time allows, decisions of the Court dealing with voting rights, gay rights, gun rights, abortion and other civil rights issues.

Norman Abrams is a retired attorney who practiced corporate law for more than 35 years. He is a graduate of Harvard Law School.

Presenter: Skip Weisman

This is an updated version of the previously presented class, *Springsteen: His Passions, Patriotism, and Politics*. It will include details, and live videos of songs and pre-song statements from his Spring 2026 20-city tour, *No Kings, Land of Hope & Dreams*. Participants will learn about Springsteen's journey from awkward teenager to the most dynamic stage performer since James Brown and Elvis Presley, and someone who expanded the role of political singer/songwriter from Dylan's passive performing and recording to the realm of political participation and activism.

Sessions will include relevant video/audio clips of interviews and stage performances from Bruce's 50-plus-year career and discussion of themes that resonate in his work, including parental relationships, a sense of community and home, and responsibility to one's country. Participants will also have the opportunity to review, discuss, and vote on what they consider Springsteen's most patriotic and most political song.

Course Resource Materials: Books: *Born to Run* by Bruce Springsteen; *Bruce* by Peter Ames Carlin; *Ain't No Sin to Be Glad You're Alive* by Eric Alterman; *Deliver Me From Nowhere* by Warren Zanes; **Videos:** *Springsteen on Broadway* (Netflix); *Western Stars* (CD performance video w/string orchestra and song commentary); *Letter to You* (the making of Springsteen's most recent album); *Road Diary* (documentary of Springsteen's 2023-24 world tour); **Movie:** *Deliver Me from Nowhere* (2025 Major Motion Picture starring Jeremy Allen White and Jeremy Strong)

Skip Weisman grew up a 30-minute drive north on "Highway 9" from Springsteen's Freehold, NJ hometown. Forty-nine years after being introduced to Springsteen's *Born to Run* album, Skip has attended 112 (thru May 2026) live Springsteen performances, with and without the E Street Band, in 10 countries across two continents. Skip moved to Dutchess County in 1994 to bring the Hudson Valley Renegades professional baseball team to the community. He served as team president/CEO for eight seasons through 2001. From 2002-2023, Skip was a business coach and professional keynote speaker/workshop presenter specializing in leadership and workplace communication.

Presenter: Leathem Mehaffey III

The human body is a marvel of complex systems working in harmony to allow us to thrive in a changing environment. This course examines how four of these systems function: the nervous system, the cardiovascular system, respiration and gas transport, and the water regulatory system (kidneys). From time to time, animal models will be examined as illustrative of alternatives or simpler systems.

Leathem Mehaffey graduated from Columbia University with a bachelor's degree in zoology. He earned a master's degree in insect physiology from Fordham University and then a Ph.D. in biophysics from The Ohio State University. He spent two years at Harvard Medical School's Massachusetts Eye and Ear Institute before

coming to Vassar. He taught in the Biology Department of Vassar for thirty-three years, primarily in General Biology and Physiology. For many of those years, he held a joint appointment at the New York University Department of Ophthalmology. Since retiring, he has taught numerous courses at the Marist University Center for Lifetime Study.

Friday On Campus – Eight Weeks

1:45 – 3:00 PM

Understanding Movies: The Language of Film

Limit: 35

Presenter: Sybil DelGaudio

We've all been taught how to read literature, an art that deals essentially with words. Film, however, conveys ideas differently: there are images and sound to consider. This course provides insight into the variety of ways in which films communicate. We will examine the range of film's unique language and form (e.g., shot composition, camera movement, sound, editing, etc.) and explore how the essential properties of the medium are used by filmmakers as a means of expression. In-class screenings will include sequences from recognizable films that illustrate the unique aesthetics of motion pictures.

NOTE: *This is a REPEAT of the course offered in Fall 2018.*

Suggested Reading: *Making Movies* by Sidney Lumet

Sybil DelGaudio is Professor Emerita of Radio, Television and Film at Hofstra University, where she also served for six years as Dean of its School of Communication. She has written many journal articles, as well as a book, *Dressing the Part*. Dr. DelGaudio's own production work has combined her interest in animation scholarship with a passion for documentary, resulting in two projects she directed for public television, *Animated Women* and *Independent Spirits*. Both films have been shown on PBS stations around the country as well as at international film festivals, garnering festival prizes and an Emmy for *Animated Women*.

Friday On Campus – Eight Weeks

3:20 – 4:35 PM

Social Science Sampler

Limit: 75

Producer: David Bloom; Presenters: Vassar Social Science Faculty

This course offers a wide selection of lectures from the Social Science Faculty at Vassar College. The Departments of Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology and Asian Studies will be represented in this 8-week class. Each week a different presenter will offer a lecture from their area of specialty:

Sep 25	Zach Cofran, Associate Professor of Anthropology: "Human Evolution: From the Cradle to the Grave"
Oct 2	Seungsook Moon, Professor of Sociology: "Reinvention of Buddhist Temple Food in South Korea"
Oct 9	Rebecca Peretz-Lange, Assistant Professor of Psychology: "Tackling Prejudice at its Cognitive-Developmental Roots"
Oct 16	Lori Newman, Associate Professor of Psychology, Neuroscience and Behavior: "Why Not Forget?"
	<i>Science Sampler Sessions Continue</i>

Oct 23	Abigail Baird, Professor of Psychology: “The Experience Library: Why Grandparents Are Critical to Adolescent Brain Development”
Oct 30	Hiroshi Tsuchiya Dollase, Professor of Chinese and Japanese: “Women in the World of Manga (Japanese Comics)”
Nov 6	John Andrews, Assistant Professor of Sociology: Topic to be announced
Nov 13	Pinar Batur, Professor of Sociology: “A Taste of Honey: A Way to Look at Human Relations with the Earth”

FRIDAY ON CAMPUS – FIRST SIX WEEKS – IN PERSON

Friday On Campus – First Six Weeks

9:30 – 10:45 AM

The Oldest Profession: History of Prostitution

Limit: 30

Presenter: **Esther Odeschalchi**

This class traces the history of the world’s oldest profession from ancient times to today. The earliest known records date to Sumer around 2400 B.C., but the profession of sex worker has existed throughout history, although those involved may have held different social positions and been called a variety of names-- goddesses, concubines, mistresses, madams, streetwalkers. In the U.S., prostitution was legal until between 1910 and 1915 and is still legal in rural counties of Nevada and areas outside of Las Vegas. We will examine cultural perceptions of prostitution across time.

Esther Kando Odeschalchi, a native of Hungary, completed her education in the U.S., earning an MS in library science and a Ph.D. in communications. She worked in executive communications at IBM and was a member of the Invention Review Committee. Previously, she was the grant-consultant of the Greater NY Library System. She is a recipient of over 25 awards, has authored numerous technical and non-technical articles, four books and a play. Currently, she lectures and conducts workshops at colleges, universities, and national and international organizations. Odeschalchi is a professional ballroom dancer with a Dance Masters’ Certificate. She plays the piano and the accordion.

Friday On Campus – Five Weeks – **Beginning October 2**

9:30 – 10:45 AM

The “Queen City”: A Brief History of Poughkeepsie

Limit: 75

Presenter: **Shannon Butler**

This course will cover the rich history of Poughkeepsie through its places, people, and notable events. Lectures will include talks about Poughkeepsie's architecture, businesses, artists, and more.

NOTE: *This is an updated version of a class previously presented in Fall 2025.*

This class is Five Sessions, beginning October 2 and counts as a Six-Week class.

Shannon Butler is the Historian for the Poughkeepsie Public Library District. She has served in this role for nearly seven years. Previously, she served as the Historian for the Town of Hyde Park and worked as a park

ranger at the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Site. She is the author of two books, *Hyde Park in the Gilded Age* and *Roosevelt Homes of the Hudson Valley: Hyde Park and Beyond*. She is the co-host of the podcast, *All My Favorite People Are Dead*, and lives in the city of Poughkeepsie.

Friday On Campus – First Six Weeks

1:45 – 3:00 PM

Asia and European Art (Orientalism)

Limit: 35

Presenter: **David Roberts**

Europeans have long been fascinated by Asia, "the Mysterious East". This class will examine the vision of Asia as imagined and/or misunderstood by Western minds from the Crusades and the Rococo fantasies of Chinoiserie and Turquerie to the important 19th century art movement, Orientalism, and the craze for Japonisme after Japan was opened to international trade in 1858.

David Roberts is a graduate of SUNY New Paltz. He has lectured at Vassar LLI, Marist CLS, Poughkeepsie Library, and other venues. He currently is an adjunct at FIT and has also taught at SUNY New Paltz, Marist University, and Montclair State University.

FRIDAY ON CAMPUS – FIRST FOUR WEEKS – IN PERSON

Friday On Campus – First Four Weeks

9:30 – 10:45 AM

The Real History of Baseball

Limit: 30

Presenter: **Arnie Serotsky**

This class will explore the true story of the origin and evolution of "America's game," from way before Abner Doubleday to the first World Series in 1903. A few interesting pieces of original historic baseball memorabilia will be exhibited during each session.

Arnie Serotsky has been an avid baseball fan since growing up in Brooklyn in the 1950s-1960s. He has been a supporting member of the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown for 25 years, a member of the Society of American Baseball Research, and a member of the Jackie Robinson Foundation, where several items from his collection now reside.

Friday On Campus – First Four Weeks

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

"A Time to be Born and A Time to Die"

Limit: 30

Presenter: **Renni Altman**

Using one religion as an example (in this case, Reform Judaism), we will explore ways in which traditional Jewish teachings provide guidance on issues such as reproductive rights, genetic engineering and assisted suicide. The class will encourage discussion and invite participants from all backgrounds to share their personal perspectives, as well as insights from their own religion's teachings and traditions.

Renni Altman is the Rabbi Emerita of Vassar Temple in Poughkeepsie, a Reform congregation which she served for seven years. Prior to that position, Rabbi Altman was the Associate Dean and Director of the Rabbinical Program on the New York Campus of Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion, the seminary of Reform Judaism. Throughout her rabbinate, Rabbi Altman has served both in congregations and in organizations of the Reform Movement.

Friday On Campus – First Four Weeks

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

Local Civic Engagement: How it Works, Why It Matters

Limit: 25

Presenter: **Jim Challey and Janet Gray**

Local government should be, and can be, a stage on which people can play meaningful roles in the resolution of issues they find important for their lives and communities. Using the City and the Town of Poughkeepsie as case studies, we will examine how ordinary citizens have shaped, and continue to shape, crucial local decisions, from the design of Raymond Avenue to efforts addressing climate change. Despite national authoritarian trends, these examples suggest that local civic life can be participatory, democratic and effective.

Jim Challey taught in Vassar's Physics Department and the Program in Science, Technology and Society for 40 years, retiring in 2013. From 1986 to 1992 he was the 8th Ward Alderman on the Poughkeepsie Common Council, also serving briefly as Acting Mayor. After moving to the Town, he was elected to the 6th Ward seat on the Town Board in 1999. Most recently he has served on the Joint Water Board, the Master Plan Committee and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Jim has also served on many local boards, including as a founding member of the Friends of Peach Hill.

Janet Gray taught at Vassar College for over 35 years, predominantly in the programs in Neuroscience & Behavior and Science, Technology and Society. For the past 25 years, she has been actively engaged in the public discussion over the science relating exposure to common chemicals in our environment and negative health impacts. She has served on the Boards of Breast Cancer Prevention Partners and Clean + Healthy, two environmental health organizations. During this time, she has also volunteered as staff, including as field director, for several local political campaigns.

Friday On Campus – First Four Weeks

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

What Can We Do About Political Polarization?

Limit: 35

Presenter: **Paul Stoddard**

This course is a response to the political extremes that have taken over our country in recent years. We will investigate several organizations that are working to heal the divide. We will discuss contacting members of Congress, books and ideas about democracy, and how to evaluate news sources. Note that this course is intended to be non-partisan, neither for nor against Republicans or Democrats. Constructive class participation from conservative, centrist and liberal points of view are welcome.

NOTE: *This is an updated version of a class previously presented in Fall 2025.*

Paul Stoddard is a retired computer systems architect living in Poughkeepsie, NY. He has a B.A. from the University of Rochester. He worked at AT&T for 38 years. He taught a course called Technology & Ethics at

Ashesi University (Ghana), the Vassar College Lifelong Learning Institute, and at the Marist Center for Lifetime Studies. Paul serves on the Dutchess County Advisory Board of the Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley and as a “Book Buddy” for Dutchess County Literacy Connections. He is the prior Board President of the Howland Chamber Music Circle in Beacon, NY.

Friday On Campus – First Four Weeks

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

Living the Four and Five Agreements

Limit: 30

Presenter: **Shelley Tatelbaum**

This course is based on the *New York Times* bestsellers by Don Miguel Ruiz. It is a practical guide towards personal freedom from your past that affects present-day life.

The Five Agreements are: (1) be impeccable with your word; (2) don't take things personally; (3) don't make assumptions; (4) always do your best; and (5) be skeptical but learn to listen.

How do we implement these agreements into our lives? Toltec knowledge arises from essential sacred esoteric traditions found around the world. It is not a religion. It honors all spiritual masters' teachings. It is a way of life.

NOTE: *This course is an expansion of the class originally offered in Fall 2025.*

Suggested Readings: *The Four Agreements* and *The Fifth Agreement*, each by Don Miguel Ruiz

Shelley Tatelbaum, M.S.C.G.T. is a Certified Grief Therapist, a Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Teacher, and a Certified Four Agreements Teacher. She has studied with Don Miguel for 25 years and studied The Stress Reduction Program under the direction of Jon Kabat-Zinn. She is the founder of, and has led, the Center for Grief, Loss and Life Transition for 35 years. She also teaches meditation. Shelley incorporates the teachings of many indigenous teachers from many cultures into her practice as well as using traditional grief therapy modalities. She does in-services for schools, hospitals, and corporations as well as retreats to Teotihuacan, Mexico.

Friday On Campus – First Four Weeks

1:45 – 3:00 PM

Spotlight on the Loeb Art Center

Limit: 15

Presenter: **Amanda Potter and Vassar Student Gallery Guides**

Each week, the Loeb's gallery guides (themselves all trained Vassar students) will shine a spotlight on different works from the museum's permanent collection. Think of this as an art history course without the slides!

Amanda Potter is Assistant Director of Learning and Community Engagement at the Loeb. The Loeb's gallery guides are a dynamic team of Vassar students trained to facilitate high-quality experiences. Representing a variety of majors at Vassar, our guides bring unique, knowledgeable, and diverse perspectives to the art on view.

Friday On Campus – First Four Weeks

3:20 – 4:35 PM

Paris in the Nineteenth Century: Part II

Limit: 40

Presenter: **Brian Mann**

This course is the second installment of a two-part exploration of nineteenth-century Paris and focuses on the period from 1850-1900. The course hopes to convey a sense of the almost bewildering variety of activity in the "City of Light". Subjects considered include the revolution of 1848; Louis Napoleon's coup d'état; the "Second Empire"; the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune; the poetry of Baudelaire; the operas of Bizet and others; the novels of Flaubert, Maupassant and Zola; the birth of Impressionism; the world fairs of 1867, 1878, and 1889; and the trial and conviction of Alfred Dreyfus.

Brian Mann taught courses in music history and theory for many years in the Vassar College Department of Music. He is a graduate of the University of Edinburgh (B. Mus.) and the University of California, Berkeley (M.A., Ph.D.)

FRIDAY ON CAMPUS – LAST FOUR WEEKS – IN PERSON

Friday On Campus – Last Four Weeks

9:30 – 10:45 AM

Thrilling Conversations with Local Authors

Limit: 30

Presenter: **Jodé Millman**

The Hudson Valley is home to many talented and award-winning local authors who bring you spine-

tingling stories. Join us for a series of candid conversations about the writing life, what inspires these authors to write, and how they got their start in the fascinating genres of mystery, suspense, and crime. Tentative guests include Dawn Barclay, Eleanor Kuhns, and Carol Freeman.

Jodé Millman is the multi-award-winning mystery author of the true-crime inspired “*The Queen City Crimes*” series, which has won Clue Awards, the Independent Publisher Award, and has been finalists for the Silver Falchion Award and the Daphne Du Maurier Award for Excellence in Mystery/Suspense. She’s an intellectual property attorney, a reviewer for *Booktrib.com*, and the creator of *The Writer’s Law School*. Jodé lives with her family in the Hudson Valley, where she is at work on her next legal thriller. Visit her website at www.jodemillman.com.

Friday On Campus – Last Four Weeks

9:30 – 10:45 AM

Understanding Pain & The Brain

Limit: 35

Presenter: **Samantha Fulton and Ali Ece**

Join two physical therapists who specialize in chronic pain for this educational workshop. This course will explore how the inner workings of our brain and nervous system influence what we feel in our bodies. We will explore the ways in which we perceive, tolerate, and manage pain and how the state of our nervous system affects those processes. Things like memories of past experiences or stress levels influence how we navigate pain. The class will be part lesson, part discussion, and part practice (breathing exercises, mindfulness techniques, etc.)

Samantha Fulton is a holistic physical therapist with almost 20 years of experience, specializing in pelvic health and chronic pain. She is also a yoga and movement teacher, specializing in working with people who have chronic disabilities, pain and ailments, and with perinatal and perimenopausal women.

Ali Ece is a Doctor of Physical Therapy with 25 years of clinical experience providing psychologically- and trauma-informed care. He is a holistic, integrative physical therapist who specializes in chronic pain and men’s health. He holds multiple certifications in pain neuroscience, traumatic stress studies, male pelvic floor therapy and psychologically informed physical therapy.

Friday On Campus – Last Four Weeks

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

Courageous Citizenship

Limit: 35

Presenter: **Vahe Keukjian and Caroline Berninger**

Many Americans believe that political polarization is destroying our country but feel powerless to stop it. Braver Angels is a national non-profit dedicated to political depolarization and civic renewal through skills workshops, community forums, town halls, parliamentary conversations and community-led solutions to local problems. Our course will present some of those offerings: “Depolarizing Within” reveals how we demonize and stereotype people who disagree with us, and “Skills for Disagreeing Better”, teaches how to listen to others and express our own ideas more effectively. Finally, we will conclude with a Braver Conversation about a topic of the class’s choice.

Caroline Berninger and Vahe Keukjian are volunteer members of the Braver Angels NY-Hudson River Valley Alliance. Caroline serves as a co-chair of the Alliance and Vahe is an event organizer and moderator.

Friday On Campus – Last Four Weeks
Four Also Rans

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

Limit: 30

Presenter: **Sandra Opdycke**

This course traces the lives of four men who ran for U.S. President and failed to make it: Henry Clay, Wendell Willkie, Adlai Stevenson, and John McCain. How did they grow up, and what led them to run for president -- some of them, multiple times? How did the currents of American history shape their political experience? What were their strengths and weaknesses as candidates? And how did they deal with the disappointment of losing?

Sandra Opdycke, Ph.D. has published books about the women's suffrage movement, the flu epidemic of 1918, the WPA of the 1930s, Bellevue Hospital and Jane Addams, and has co-authored several books on social policy. She worked for a number of years at Hudson River Psychiatric Center and later taught American History and Urban History at Bard, Vassar and Marist Colleges. She now teaches frequently at the Marist Center for Lifetime Studies and the Vassar Lifelong Learning Institute.

Friday On Campus – Last Four Weeks

Garbage In, Garbage Out (Updated)

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

Limit: 30

Presenter: **Paul Ciminello**

This four-part course examines solid waste from a global to a local perspective. Topics include waste generation and its relationship to consumption, varieties of waste generated, management of waste in Dutchess County (with a focus on the Incinerator), and solutions to our mounting waste problem.

NOTE: *This course is an expansion of the class originally offered in Fall 2023.*

Paul Ciminello is a retired environmental consultant whose work focused on environmental investigations and remediation with a particular concern for groundwater. Paul received dual master's degrees in Hydrology/Hydrogeology and Public Policy Analysis from Duke University in 1986 and had over 30 years of experience in environmental consulting before retiring in 2019. In addition, Paul has been an adjunct instructor at Marist College since 1999, teaching courses in the Department of Science including "Environmental Investigations and Remediation" and "Introduction to Environmental Issues".

Friday On Campus – Last Four Weeks

A History & Tour of the Wines of Spain—With Wine Tasting!

1:45 – 3:00 PM

Limit: 15

Presenter: **Arnie Serotsky**

This class will include presentations on the major wine producing regions of Spain and include a wine tasting at each class. Regions (and wines) likely to be covered include Rioja, Ribera del Duero, Rueda, Rias Baixas, and Jerez.

NOTE: *Attendees will be asked to pay the presenter (at a 20% discount from retail) for the wines that are tasted, estimated at \$25, for the four classes. Selected wines will be "curated" in conjunction with Antoine Lefort, the proprietor of La Caviste at Eastdale. Participants are asked to bring 3 small wine glasses to each class.*

Arnie Serotsky has been teaching about, traveling for, collecting, and enjoying the wines of the world, for over 50 years. He has been associated, as an attendee and presenter, with *Les Amis du Vin International*, the *Pennsylvania Wine Society*, the *Mid-Hudson Food and Wine Society*, and *It Was A Good Year, Inc.*, for which he plans and presents tastings, advises, and serves as the AV coordinator.

Friday On Campus – Last Four Weeks

3:20 – 4:35 PM

Drawing and Mixed Media Exploration

Limit: 12

Presenters: Carol DiPalo and Christina DeMarco

Whether you are a beginner or an experienced artist, you are invited to explore new ways to express ideas, develop technical skills, and expand your artistic vision. You will experiment with traditional and non-traditional media, incorporating drawing, layering, texture, and surface enhancement processes. Techniques such as Suminagashi, ink, watercolor applications, and the use of experimental materials will be introduced to encourage creative discovery and personal expression.

Drawing inspiration from nature and still-life arrangements of natural objects, participants will study observation, composition, form, and value while also exploring imaginative and contemporary approaches to artmaking. Additional inspirational techniques, creative exercises, and guided projects will introduce new perspectives and help learners build confidence in their artistic practice.

Materials: Materials will be supplied by the instructors, although participants are encouraged to bring their own drawing supplies. There will be a modest materials fee.

Carol DiPalo and Christina DiMarco are seasoned and inspiring mixed media artists and educators. Their love and connection with nature are at the forefront of their creativity. Carol has worked for many communities and non-profits within the Hudson Valley where she played a major role in the conception and implementation of art programming. She is currently retired from the Arlington School District. Christina practices art therapy and continues to teach children and adults through classes offered by arts organizations and libraries focusing on paper marbling, drawing, painting, and bookmaking. Both instructors continue to make authentic, meaningful, and inspirational art.

Friday On Campus – Last Four Weeks

3:20 – 4:35 PM

Human Impacts on Brains and Behavior

Limit: 30

Presenter: Kate Susman

This four-week course will delve into the newest subfield in neuroscience: Environmental Neuroscience. Humans and all other animals (indeed, all living things) are faced with incredible challenges as we live in a world changing rapidly in response to the many impacts we humans are having on planet Earth-- from warming temperatures and extreme weather, to noise and night light pollution, to a massive arsenal of environmental chemicals. We will delve into these issues and seek insights into how animals--including humans--are affected and are responding and adapting to these environmental pressures.

Suggested Readings: Readings will be provided as pdf documents or web links in advance of the class. The readings will be a mixture of scientific articles and news articles or other media.

Kate Susman, Ph.D., Professor of Biology at Vassar College on the Jacob P. Giraud Jr. Endowed Chair of Natural History, studies the toxic behavioral and neural effects of common pesticides in soil organisms. The research, previously funded by the NIH, concerns links between neurodegenerative diseases like Parkinson's and pesticide exposure. She is currently on the Environmental Management Council for the Dutchess County Legislature and writes and podcasts extensively for multiple audiences through her website, *Modern Marinade*.

TUESDAY ZOOM CLASSES – EIGHT WEEKS

Tuesday On Zoom – Eight Weeks

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

Discussion of Harlem Renaissance Literature

Limit: 100

Presenter: **Jacqueline Goffe-McNish**

This course explores the literature of the Harlem Renaissance Era and the results of the Great Northern Movement. The play and poetry we will be reading force us to question the impact of institutional racism, present in the very fabric of our society, on the goals and aspirations of “people of color”, both at the time they were written, as well as in the present day. They address most of the issues and ideas presented in literature of “the Other”, such as masking, veiling, double consciousness, the role of religion, the search for El Dorado, the Sisyphean experience, and assimilation.

Suggested Readings: *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry and *Selected Poems* by Langston Hughes

Jacqueline Goffe-McNish, Ph.D., was a professor of English and Humanities at Dutchess Community College for thirty-two years. She graduated from St. John Fisher University in Rochester and SUNY Brockport. Her master's thesis was “The Teaching of African American Literature in High Schools”. She completed a Doctorate in Education at St. John Fisher University. Her dissertation research topic was “The Retention of Faculty of Color at Community Colleges”. She has written two textbooks. She is the superintendent of Sunday school at Bethel Missionary Baptist Church. She is actively involved with Poughkeepsie AAUW and served as its president in 2012 and 2013.

Tuesday On Zoom – Eight Weeks

1:45 – 3:00 PM

Women Artists: Their Inspirations and Influence

Limit: 30

Presenter: **John McGiff**

From the Baroque era to the contemporary era, there has been an incredibly diverse group of women artists working across genres and media to create a large body of visual images that live at the heart of our culture and reflect our sense of values and identity. Looking across 400 years of Western art making, from Artemisia Gentileschi and Kathe Kollwitz to living artists like Sally Mann and Wangechi Mutu, we will look at where these women have found their inspirations and what have been their influence on their time.

Materials: Links to relevant video and text will be provided a couple of days prior to each class meeting.

John McGiff has been an artist and teacher for over 40 years. He was an adjunct at Drexel and Temple Universities in Philadelphia and was Chair of the Arts Department at St. Andrew's School, an independent boarding school in Delaware, for more than 20 years. He taught studio arts courses and art history and has shown his paintings at numerous venues across the mid-Atlantic region. He and his wife, "The Salt-Point Potter," live in Dutchess County, New York.

TUESDAY ZOOM CLASSES – FIRST FOUR WEEKS

Tuesday On Zoom – First Four Weeks

9:30 – 10:45 AM

Mystical Pacific

Limit: 100

Presenter: **Nathan Rosenblum**

A fascinating exploration of the islands of the Pacific--including New Zealand, Hawaii, Samoa, and others--and their spiritual and cultural traditions. Through examinations of history, art, and music we shall see how this region has had great mystical significance from ancient times to the present day. Ultimately, we shall discover the importance of this part of the world to our lives today.

Dr. Nathan Rosenblum is a lecturer and scholar of mysticism and esoteric studies. An ordained interfaith minister with degrees in literature, history, and metaphysical philosophy, he works to show the interconnections between many fields of knowledge and spiritual understanding.

Tuesday On Zoom – First Four Weeks

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

Unraveling the Secrets of the Eight Brocades

Limit: 50

Presenter: **Cris Caivano**

The Eight Brocades (Ba Duan Jin) is a classic Tai Chi/Qigong form, offering a complete practice in an easy-to-learn sequence of eight exercises. Although the entire form takes only about 15 minutes to do, it builds strength, flexibility, energy, a calm, focused mind and, according to a recent meta-analysis, helps improve sleep quality, too. This course will explain why the Eight Brocades practice works so well, including which meridians and acupressure points are activated, and how one can perform and modify the form to accommodate individual needs.

Cris Caivano is an exercise/movement therapist, a certified Qigong instructor (Santa Cruz Qigong Center, Lee Holden), and author of the twice-published book, *Strength Training, Staying Fit and Fabulous* (Dover, 2018). Originally a dancer, Cris taught dance at SUNY Purchase for over 11 years, as well as at the 92nd St Y in New York City and at the Davis Art Center, Davis CA. With a teaching background of 40+ years, she currently offers Qigong classes through her website, criscaivano.com, as well dance and Qigong workshops throughout the greater New York area and at Kripalu in Lenox, MA. Cris holds an M.A. from Columbia University Teachers College.

Tuesday On Zoom – First Four Weeks
Psychology and Film

1:45 – 3:00 PM

Limit: 100

Presenter: Denise Morett

Film is a powerful art medium for exploring topics in psychology, and film has had a tremendous role in our society, including entertaining, inspiring and teaching. Students will watch films that illuminate a variety of psychological themes. Class discussion will examine key elements about the psychology of a viewer's experience; the filmmaker/production; depictions of psychology and psychologists/healthcare; and psychological issues/treatment.

Students will be expected to watch the assigned film prior to class. This will require students to watch the first film selection prior to the start date of classes. Films will be available on the Vassar LLI site for free viewing.

NOTE to former students: *We will view films that are different from those used in previous semesters. While concepts will be familiar, application to new films will always expand and inform further.*

Suggested Reading: *Psychology at the Movies* by Skip Dine Young

Dr. Denise Morett is the best-selling author of *Lifeline*, a licensed psychologist with a private practice, and a consultant to various hospitals and facilities. She has taught college-level psychology courses as well as conducted workshops and trainings throughout her 30-year career. She has been an instructor for VCLLI in past semesters. Her interests are varied and include the use of expressive arts, particularly film, as it relates to the human condition and topics of psychology.

Tuesday On Zoom – First Four Weeks

3:20 – 4:35 PM

AI Without Hype: A Practical Introduction for Curious Adults

Limit: 100

Presenter: Anya Eydman

Artificial intelligence is rapidly becoming part of everyday life, influencing how people learn, communicate, research, organize information, solve problems, and express creativity. This four-part workshop series introduces participants to practical and thoughtful ways AI can support lifelong learning, personal projects, communication, travel, writing, research, wellness, and daily decision-making. Through live demonstrations, discussion, and hands-on exploration, participants will learn how to use AI as a helpful tool examining important questions around accuracy, critical thinking, privacy, creativity, and human judgment. No technical background is required — only curiosity and a willingness to explore how these emerging tools may shape daily life and society.

Suggested Reading: *Reweaving the Web* by Richard Whitt

Anya Eydman is a strategic advisor, entrepreneur, and public-private partnership leader working at the intersection of AI, energy infrastructure, and deployment strategy. As President of New Markets at Arya Energy and a 2x founder, she advises startups, infrastructure companies, investors, and public-sector organizations on commercialization, stakeholder alignment, and scalable market deployment. Her work focuses on helping organizations navigate complex operational and regulatory environments while accelerating adoption across emerging technology markets. Anya is known for her "Trust Infrastructure"

framework, which emphasizes that successful deployment depends not only on technology, but also on coordination, workforce readiness, institutional alignment, and long-term community integration.

TUESDAY ZOOM CLASSES – LAST FOUR WEEKS

Tuesday On Zoom – Last Four Weeks

9:30 – 10:45 AM

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Music and the Law

Limit: 35

Presenter: **Mickey Steiman**

If you want to learn something about courts, lawyers and the law, do not take this course! This course is a short dive into music and songs from the likes of Woody Guthrie, Gilbert and Sullivan, Stephen Sondheim, the Kingston Trio and others about the law. Some of the selections will be accompanied by little vignettes or stories tying them to the legal system and our history and some of the music will be, as our legal system often is, just nonsense or amusement.

Mickey Steiman (A.B. Colgate University; J.D. Syracuse University College of Law) has been in private practice for over thirty-nine years in Dutchess County. He has also served as senior trial attorney in the Office of Special Litigation, United States Department of Justice, Washington, D.C., and has been an adjunct professor at Marist College. He is older than before!!

Tuesday On Zoom – Last Four Weeks

11:05 AM – 12:20 PM

Breathe the Air of Trees and Other Cures

Limit: 100

Presenter: **John Platt**

The early Taoists strongly believed that the best medicine was found just outside the front door. Breathing the air of trees, sitting by large bodies of water, watching the sunrise and sunset, and gazing at the stars were prescriptions for better health and a longer life. This class will examine these ancient cures against modern research, as we learn breathing practices, walking techniques, and how to align with nature's circadian rhythms.

Suggested Reading: *The Five Element Orchard* by John C. and Mary Platt

John Platt has been learning and teaching various Chinese arts since 1966. In 1991 he began an intense study of Tai Chi Chuan under various teachers, including Shifu Jiang Jian-Ye, and a study of Qigong from Masters Lee Holden and Dr. Yang Jwing-Ming. John is certified to teach Qigong from the National Qigong Association. He is the author of two books: *The Five Element Orchard* and *Qigong: A Toolbox of Energy*. He lives and teaches in the Hudson Valley.

Presenter: **Lyla Yastion**

Why is it that we have experiences like thinking of a person and suddenly the person calls us, or letting the mind go quiet and suddenly remembering where we left the car keys, or even having glimpses of past lives or future events? Because we live in non-local consciousness: the primal, universal energy Einstein called "*the unified field*". Though this energy connects everything and everyone, enfolding time and space, we are often too distracted to notice. We will examine this phenomenon through the portals of physics, the human mind, Earth's ecosystem, the social compact, and spiritual teachings.

Lyla Yastion received a Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Albany and taught courses in anthropology and religious studies for 18 years at the college level. Since her retirement she has presented courses at various lifelong learning centers in the Hudson Valley. Lyla has written three books: *Pause Now: Handbook for a Spiritual Revolution*, *Homesick: Finding Our Way Back to a Healthy Planet*, and *My Years as an Alzheimer's Caregiver: Transcending Loss by Nurturing Spirit*, which won an award as finalist in the Health: Aging category in the 2026 American Legacy Book Awards. Lyla is a reiki master trained in mindfulness-based stress-reduction.

LUNCH, Then LEARN

FRIDAY – SINGLE SESSION CLASSES – ON CAMPUS – 12:45 – 1:30 PM

NOTE: Registration for these classes will begin the Monday prior to each class. Lunch may *not* be eaten during class

Friday, Oct 2

Divorce: Property Rights – Gifts and Inheritance

Limit: 30

Presenter: **Diane O'Leary**

When a divorce occurs to a loved member of your family, what happens to those generous gifts that you have bestowed upon them, such as gifts given when they married, purchased a first home, or needed help with their mortgage or business? What becomes of the bequests they receive through your will? How those gifts and bequests are handled throughout their marriage has an impact on the ultimate division of that couple's assets when they divorce. What may be claimed as separate often becomes hard--and expensive-- to unravel. And all too often, the donor is unpleasantly surprised at the outcome. This class will help you understand how the law is applied in order to avoid unexpected surprises.

Diane O'Leary is an attorney, retired from the practice of law. She practiced in Poughkeepsie for over 30 years, concentrating primarily in matrimonial law. She received the highest peer review rating for her expertise in the field of matrimonial law and for her ethical standards. She taught matrimonial and family law early in her career as an adjunct in the Marist College Paralegal Program.

Friday, Oct 9	This is a True War Story	Limit: 75
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Presenter: **Robert Brigham**

While many a historian has felt compelled at some point to write about a subject close to them personally, Robert Brigham did not think he was doing that. But, at age fifty-eight, Brigham, who had long known he was adopted, discovered that he'd improbably and unknowingly been studying and talking about his biological father for decades. That man, Bruce Atwell, was a Marine Corps photographer in Vietnam who took some of that war's most indelible and widely reproduced pictures. Brigham had used those images in decades' worth of classes and public lectures, never knowing his connection to them.

Both Brigham and Atwell were products of the American foster care and adoption system, and both were defined professionally by Vietnam. Brigham explores his own history as an adoptee; the fragility of American families; the power of social norms and taboos to shape lives; and the forces that inequitably disrupt families, not least of them war.

Robert K. Brigham is Professor of History and International Relations on the Shirley Ecker Boskey Chair at Vassar College. He has been at Vassar since 1994. Brigham is the author or co-author of ten books, among them *Argument Without End: In Search of Answers to the Vietnam Tragedy*, co-authored with Robert S. McNamara, Kennedy and Johnson's Secretary of Defense. *This is a True War Story: My Improbable History with Vietnam* (Chicago, 2026) is Brigham's latest book.

Friday, Oct 16	Four Notable Women of Clinton, NY	Limit: 30
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Presenter: **Cynthia Koch**

Clinton Historical Society President Cynthia Koch describes the lives of four Clinton women who broke barriers to pursue influential careers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Amanda Deyo, Ophelia Shadbolt Amigh, her granddaughter Nina McCulloch Mattern, and Helena G. Van Vliet all left Clinton, New York, to make their marks in the larger world of international peace activism and the ministry, the reform movements for “delinquent” girls, women’s suffrage, and nursing education in China.

Cynthia Koch, Ph.D. is President of the Town of Clinton Historical Society where she is leading the restoration of the historic Creek Meeting House, built 1777-80. She is also Historian for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Foundation at Adams House, Harvard University. Cynthia was Director of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park, and from 2013-2016, she taught public history at Bard College.

Friday, Oct 23	You Then, You Now: Writing Memoir	Limit: 30
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Presenter: **Lu Chekowsky**

Most people trying to write their life story make the same mistake: they transcribe memory instead of transforming it. In this hour, author and former advertising executive Lu Chekowsky introduces the essential skill that separates memoir from journaling: learning to write as two distinct selves. The star

is who you were then: living inside the moment, not yet knowing how it ends or what it leads to. The narrator is who you are now: the one who survived it all and gets to decide what the meaning is. Learn this distinction and watch your life stories come alive on the page.

This workshop gives you a powerful tool you can use immediately: the ability to step back from your own life and shape it with intention, the way a novelist shapes fiction. No writing experience is required. You'll leave with a framework and a clearer sense of how to tell the stories of your life with more depth and resonance for your reader.

Lu Chekowsky is an Emmy Award-winning writer, creative director and author of *Don't Buy What I'm Selling: On Breaking Up With Advertising* and *Finally Learning to Love My Whole, Fat Self* (Little, Brown 2026). Previously, Lu was lead creative director for video at Facebook; SVP of brand creative at *Comedy Central*; VP, creative director at MTV; and a creative director and copywriter at Wieden+Kennedy. Lu is a 2023 New York State Council on the Arts/New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow in non-fiction literature, and her writing has been supported by MASS MoCA and the Vermont Studio Center.

Friday, Oct 30	A Layman's Guide to Crypto	Limit: 30
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Presenter: **Bruce Judson**

Cryptocurrency seems to be everywhere, but it's rarely explained. This course will provide a framework to understand "all things crypto." The talk will explain why cryptocurrency exists, how it operates, how to understand changes in the value of Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, and how to understand enacted and proposed federal legislation. The talk will explain why critics believe that cryptocurrencies are the equivalent of 2008 mortgage-backed securities (or worse).

Bruce Judson is a former Senior Faculty Fellow at the Yale Management School, where he served for a decade. He is also a former "braintruster" at the Roosevelt Institute. Judson is the bestselling author of multiple books on business success, technology, and public policy, including *NetMarketing* (Wolff/Random House), *Hyperwars* (Scribner), and *It Could Happen Here* (HarperCollins). At the start of the internet era, Judson was co-founder of Time Warner's first web initiative (*Pathfinder*), and he is frequently credited with inventing the concept of the Web banner ad, which established the standardized system that enabled the rapid growth of internet advertising.

Friday, Nov 6	No Greater Love: The Life & Legacy of Charles Johnson	Limit: 30
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Presenter: **Frank Pepe**

Charles Johnson received the Medal of Honor, posthumously, from President Biden in 2025, seventy years after his extraordinary heroism in Korea, 1953. He was intentionally ignored at that time by military leaders because of his race. Although this popular and talented young Black man's death was deeply grieved by family, friends, and community, the miraculous story was lost for 50 years. Rediscovered by a middle school teacher and his students in 2001, they discovered that the character and values Johnson displayed in Korea were evident throughout his young life and these are now recognized, honored, and promoted at his former school and church.

Frank Pepe, retired Superintendent of Schools for the Arlington Central School District, began his career in special and elementary education after graduating from Villanova University. Following coursework at Rowan University and a master's degree from Rutgers University, he began a rewarding career as Business Administrator, Assistant Superintendent, and then Superintendent of Schools. Following a geographical career path from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and a short stint in Saudi Arabia, he concluded his career in the Arlington Central School District. He has been recognized for his support of the arts in education with a special interest in high school theater. In retirement, he continues to reside in Dutchess County.

Friday, Nov 13	Stories in Stone	Limit: 30
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Presenter: **Elisabeth Sheehey**

By the year 1016, less than ten percent of the population in Europe could read, and the Church had a message it wanted and needed to communicate. It transmitted its message using drawings, paintings and carvings, in wood and stone, as well as through the judicious use of relics and the adoption of patron saints. Pilgrims traveled to churches in the hope of receiving benefits in this life, curing illnesses and gaining admission to heaven on death, and they provided a stream of money to support churches throughout Europe. This class examines one of these churches and its art.

Elisabeth Sheehey studied stained glass and ecclesiastical art for five years at Swansea School of Art and received a National Diploma in Design. She also holds a master's degree in social work from Fordham University. Elisabeth has taught art in the U.K. to college and adult students, and at the Fordham University Graduate School for over 25 years. She has lived and worked in France, Spain and Tehran, Iran.

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