

**EXPLORERS LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE**  
*Affiliated with Salem State University*  
**10 FEDERAL STREET, SUITE 10, SALEM, MA 01970**  
**Phone: (978) 744-0804**

## **SPRING SEMESTER 2026**

The Explorers Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) is a member-directed learning group, one of over 400 such organizations in the United States and Canada. Since 1992, seniors in the greater Salem community, with diverse backgrounds, have joined Explorers by paying a membership fee.

Members and presenters join in active peer learning to share their knowledge and experience by creating, coordinating and participating in courses on a voluntary basis. We provide programs that are challenging, thought-provoking, sometimes controversial and frequently interactive. These vary in length from a day to a semester; range in format from lectures and discussions to hands-on workshops and cover diverse topics.

The Explorers Lifelong Learning Institute offers two semesters a year, beginning in September and March. **Members may enroll in as many courses as they like, subject to availability.** Courses meet for one and one half to two hours, either mornings or afternoons. Classes are held Monday through Friday. Between semesters there are Intersession programs which are presented each Wednesday and are open to members and the general public, free of charge.

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### **MEMBERSHIP FEES**

The **6 month, non-refundable** single membership fee of **\$200** or married or domestic partnerships **non-refundable** membership of **\$355** admits members from **March-August**.

### **PLEASE NOTE: 6 MONTH NONREFUNDABLE MEMBERSHIP FEE**

#### **1/2 Year March-August**

**Single Membership      \$200**

#### **1/2 Year March-August**

**Married or Domestic  
Partners                      \$355**

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**Explorers LLI,  
10 Federal Street, Suite 10  
Salem, Massachusetts 01970**

**Register with credit card or PayPal online: [explorerslli.org](http://explorerslli.org)**

Notification will be sent to those confirmed; all others will be placed on a waiting list.

Fee reductions are available based on need. Your request will remain confidential and should be mailed to:

Fee Reduction Committee, c/o Explorers LLI  
10 Federal Street, Suite 10  
Salem, MA 01970

**Explorers Center**

**Telephone: 978-744-0804 Email: [explorers@verizon.net](mailto:explorers@verizon.net)**

**Complete catalogue online: [explorerslli.org](http://explorerslli.org)**

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## **2026 SPRING SCHEDULE**

**Only Members Are Eligible to Register for Courses.**

### **BOOK CLUB**

### **ZOOM ONLY**

**Monday 10-11 am**

**Coordinator:** Roz Eschelbacher

**It is limited to members only.**

**(Please register in order to receive link)**

**March 2**

***Frankenstein: The Original 1818 text Edition* by Mary Shelley**

**1818, 200-300 pages, Fiction**

"Frankenstein by Mary Shelley is still a potent examination of moral responsibility, loneliness, and ambition. The story's unadulterated passion and intellectual significance are captured in the 1818 edition, reminding readers why it's frequently said to be the first authentic piece of science fiction." The author was 18 years old when she began and 20 when published.

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**April 6**

***The Light Eaters: How the Unseen World of Plant Intelligence Offers a New Understanding of Life on Earth* by Zoe Schlanger**

**2025, 304 pages, Nonfiction science (There are some interesting video interviews with the author to clear up some of the science.)**

"Explores groundbreaking research revealing plants' remarkable abilities to communicate, remember, adapt, and behave socially, challenging our understanding of intelligence and consciousness in nature."

**May 4**

***The Cemetery of Untold Stories* by Julia Alvarez**

**2024, 272 pages Historical fiction**

"A celebrated writer inherits land in the Dominican Republic and decides to turn it into a graveyard for her unfinished stories. However, her characters have other plans and begin to defy their author, rewriting and revising themselves." Prize winning American author of Dominican-American historical fiction.

**June 1**

***Travels with Charley in Search of America* by John Steinbeck**

**1962, 277 pages Nonfiction**

"His journey and experiences are truthful, playful, and at times, raw and challenging to read. The parallels of Steinbeck's journey throughout the United States in 1960 in comparison to today's challenges in this same country are eye opening."

**July 6**

***Wandering Stars: A Novel* by Tommy Orange**

**2024, 336 pages, Fiction**

From the author of *There, There*.

"A multigenerational story tracing Native American trauma from the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre through modern-day Oakland, following families affected by institutional violence and their search for healing."

**August 3**

***The Psychology of Money: Timeless Lessons On Wealth, Greed, and Happiness* by Morgan Housel**

**2020, 256 pages, Nonfiction**

"Through 19 short stories, explores how human behavior and psychology influences financial decisions, challenges the traditional math-based approach to money management and investing."

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**September 14**

***The Tiger's Wife: A Novel* by Tea Orbreht**

**2011, 384 pages, Fiction**

"A beguiling blend of realism, myth and legend"

"In this National Book Award Finalist novel, a young doctor investigating her grandfather's mysterious death in a Balkan country uncovers family legends, including tales of an immortal man and a tiger stalking a wartime village."

## **MONDAY**

**101 Everyday Law for Successful Living**

**ZOOM ONLY**

**Monday 9-11 am**

Class Leader: **Andrea A.J. Witt, Esq., CELA (Spano Dawicki & Witt, LLC)**

**March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; April 6, 13, 20**

This seminar focuses on everyday legal issues and solutions that seniors should reflect upon and consider to ensure that they remain in control of their financial and health care decisions, and to protect themselves and their assets. Each 2-hour long session will offer lecture, group discussion and case presentation with detailed focus on a particular area.

1. Essential Estate Planning Documents
2. Trusts: What They Are, What They Can and Cannot Accomplish, and How They Can be an Indispensable Part of Your Estate Plan
3. So, You've Drafted an Estate Plan....Now What?
4. Administering an Estate Through Probate, and Why and How to Avoid the Process Entirely
5. Real Estate 101: Best Tips and Practices for Both the Buyer and the Seller
6. Navigating the Guardianship and Conservatorship Process
7. The Spend-Down Scheme: What the Nursing Home Won't Tell You About Protecting Your Assets
8. Asset Protection: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Participants should finish the course with a better understanding of their legal rights, estate planning options, and how to protect their loved ones and their assets.

**Course Format:** Lecture with Power Point slides, group discussion and dialogue.

**102 Armchair Tours**

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**Monday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leader: **Jonathan Leamon**

**March 2, 9, 16, 23**

Renewed interest in Frank Lloyd Wright and his architecture, along with private sales of his homes has resulted in the availability of an increasing number of video "tours." Enthusiastic new owners seek out original plans in an effort to restore original elements that might have been lost or altered over the years. Foundations are formed due to the efforts of local preservation groups.

This semester will focus on a variety of videos that will form the basis of class discussions. In many cases, the videos will showcase private homes that would otherwise be unavailable for viewing. Still photographs will be included as well to supplement discussion.

As always, the aim of this course is to provide you with a greater appreciation of his works for when you view them yourself. If you are traveling to an area of the country where Frank Lloyd Wright structures still exist, this course can help you plan a self-guided tour.

**Course Format:** Lecture, discussion, videos and slides.

**Suggested Reading:** *"Apprentice to Genius: Years with Frank Lloyd Wright"* by Edgar Tafal, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1979.

A complete list of suggested reading will be provided to all enrollees.

**103 The Growing Evil in Society****Monday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leader: **Evan Longin**

**March 2, 9, 16, 23**

Evil is not an entity but rather a perspective created by power in authority to maintain control of the community. It occurs when there is a convergence of four factors:

1. Binary thinking (Us vs them)
2. Power over Behavior
3. Control of Information
4. Simplistic Solutions to Complex Problems

**Course Format:** A dialogue between teacher and students. A discussion of material from course readings current events.

**Required reading for first class:** *The Roots of Evil A Postmodern Examination of the Unintended Consequences of Civilization* by Evan Longin, E.D. Can be found on Amazon or Barnes and Noble ISBN 1088077962

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**104 Film Club****Limited to 20****Monday 9:30-11 am**Class Leader: **Rick Cacace****March 16, 23, 30; April 6, 13, 20, 27; May 4, 11, 18; June 1, 8**

The club will watch a movie and the next week we will discuss the movie.

**Course Format:** The moderator or a volunteer will show a film and lead the following weeks discussion.**105 Russo-German War, 1941-45****Monday 11:30 am-1:30 pm**Class Leader: **Edward N. Finglas****March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; April 6, 13, 20, 27; May 4**

There is general agreement among historians that the Russian war effort to defeat Nazi Germany and its client states was the decisive factor for securing Allied victory in World War II. This course will explore the history of the conflict from the Russian perspective, utilizing readings, lectures, discussions, and video presentations.

**Course Format:** Each class will begin with a video presentation lasting approximately 50 minutes. This will be followed by a lecture/discussion session lasting one hour.**Required books or supplies:** Overy, Richard. *Russia's War*. Penguin Books ISBN 0-14-027169-4**Required reading for first class:** Overy, Preface, Introduction, and Chapter 1.**106 Play Reading****Limited to 15****Monday 11:30 am-1:30 pm**Class Leader: **John Archer****April 13, 20, 27; May 4, 11, 18**

How do our 3 plays (that we will be reading out loud, dissect, and discuss) affect us today in our lives, or do they?

1. *The Captives* by Plautus
2. *Camelot* by T.H. White, Libretto by Allen Jay Lerner
3. TBD

**Course Format:** We will be reading 3 plays and watching some videos.**107 Family Relationships in Opera****ZOOM ONLY****Monday 1:30-3 pm**Class Leader: **Margie Satinsky, President, Triangle Wagner Society****March 23, 30; April 6, 13**

Although composers of different nationalities differ in styles, they share a fascination with family relationships. We'll study four operas, Gaetano Donizetti's *La Fille du Regiment*, Alexander Borodin's *Prince Igor*, Fromental Halevy's *La Juive*, and Richard Wagner's *Die Walkure*. Each class will focus on the personal life of the composer and on the style and music of the opera. After each class, participants will receive a copy of the power point so they can listen at their convenience.

**Course Format:** The course will be offered only by Zoom and include both lecture and music.

**Required reading for first class:** *Opera 101* by Fred Plotkin. 1994. ISBN 13: 978-0-7868-8025-6 is always a good starting place for any opera appreciation class.

**Suggested books or supplies:** Osborne, Charles (1994). *The Bel Canto Operas of Rossini, Donizetti, and Bellini* (ISBN 0-931340-71-3) **Borodin:** Taruskin, Richard (1997). "Prince Igor" in the *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*. **Helevy:** MacDonald, Hugh (1997). *La Juive* in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*. **Wagner:** Berger, William (1998). *Wagner without Fear* (ISBN 0-375-700054-4. Note that *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera* comes in four volumes and is best accessed at the library.

### **108 Enjoying Wines with Bert**

**Limited to 12 Off-site**

**Monday 2-4 pm**

Class Leader: **Bert Wolf**

**March 9, 23; April 6, 13**

The class will meet on an alternating week schedule. We will be tasting wines that you should know and experience. In addition, we will be tasting an Amaro at the end of each session. An Amaro is a digestive and can be nicely used as an aperitif also on ice. My class notes on the wines, Amari and the topics that I discussed will be provided. The class must be limited to 12 participants and will meet off site at a member's home in Swampscott. Cost of the wines: an additional fee to cover the cost of the wines will be determined.

**Course Format:** Round table lecture; questions and tasting.

**Required reading for first class:** Knowledge of appropriate terms.

### **109 The New Yorker Poem**

**Limited to 35**

**Monday 2-4 pm**

Class Leader: **Claire Keyes**

**April 6, 13, 20, 27**

Do you read everything in The New Yorker but the poetry? This course will challenge your assumptions about poetry published in The New Yorker. Poems from the most recent issues will be our subject.

**Course Format:** discussion

**Required books or supplies:** Poems will be supplied as hand-outs.

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**Required reading for first class:** come prepared with an open mind.

**110 The Mind of Art**

**Limited to 18**

**Monday 2-4 pm**

Class Leader: **Ann Marie Barry, Ph.D.**

**Monday, April 6, 13, 20**

What happens in the mind when we appreciate works of Art? This course explores how visual perception works in understanding Art, and how various artists exploit the process to catalyze thought and feeling through automatic perceptual systems. Discover how Art makes artists of us all.

**Course overview:** Why is it that, even though each artist brings his or her own unique vision to there are—and uses different techniques to reveal it, we, who have never experienced their particular vision of the world or its people, seem to feel a deep connection to it? The answer lies in the course of perception itself, where each micro stage of the process builds to a final moment of realization. Art at its best seems to be able to freeze this turbo-speed sequential process at both conscious and subconscious moments, and as it captures the pause, seems able to reveal both emotional revelations of unexpected beauty and new intellectual insights in its wake. As humans, we share the same perceptual process as the artist, so despite our differing experiences in life, we can momentarily not only share the artist's vision, but also participate in the creation of the art as well.

**1. From Vision to Perception: Perceptual process, why Descartes was wrong, and the example of Mickey Mouse**

How and what we see determines how we think and feel about what is around us. We do not see the world as it is, but according to our needs and within the limits of eye evolution. We see how the eye works to receive an image and how information on the retina ultimately creates images in the brain; why the eye is not a camera; how emotion and cognition are related, and the role each plays in the process of recognizing and appreciating art. From Primitives to Geons to Story.

**2. Impressionism Examined: Color, Emotion, and Boogie Woogie**

What and Where systems in the brain; Color and Emotion; Color vs. Form: Matisse. Equiluminance and Monet's genius. Perceptual Ambiguity; Filling in and connecting the dots; Seurat. The neurological functions Motion and Emotion. Color. Geons and Cubism: Picasso's experiment. Creating Motion: "what" vs. "where?"

**3. Abstract Art: the lie that makes us realize the truth**

Color and Form. Emotional valence. Geons and primitives revisited. Cave Art and Caricature. Hyperrealism: Marilyn Monroe, Warhol. Targeting a Market: Absolut Art of Advertising; Universals vs. Details.

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**Course Format:** Visual lecture and discussion.

**Suggested books or supplies:** In-class recommendations for further learning.

## TUESDAY

### **201 Evolution in the Age of Climate Change and Extinction**

**Tuesday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leader: **Bill Grover**

**March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; April 7**

We will review a book in progress titled "Evolution in the Age of Climate Change and Extinction-Humanity's Role in Earth's Sixth Extinction Event" Chapters include - preface – introduction – Evolution's Timeline – The First Humans – Separation – Modern World Humans – Human Nature – Love, Fear, & Addiction – Sustainability – Capitalism – Sufficiency – Climate Change & Extinction – Intention, Vision & Mission – Community – Education – Religion – Service

**Course Format:** Power Point presentation of the book draft followed by a discussion.

**Suggested Books:**

- *Carbon – The Book of Life*, Paul Hawken
- *The Universe Story* – Thomas Berry & Brian Swimme
- *The Story of Earth* – Robert M. Hazen

**Required reading for class:** *A Brief History of the Earth's Climate* – Steven Earle.

**Course Format:** In person lecture and discussion.

### **202 Introduction Conversational Spanish for Beginners**

**Tuesday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leader: **Alma Barozzi**

**March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; April 7, 14, 21, 28; May 5, 12, 19, 26**

This course blends traditional language learning methodologies and comprehensible input activities. Students will progress toward language acquisition through a variety of

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engaging communicative activities involving all language skills, but especially the oral comprehension and production of the language. Active participation and effort to use Spanish in every class are expected.

**Course Format:**

Communicative activities: dialogs, games, discussion

Grammar explanation and practice – deductive and inductive methods

Interactive media: videos, music, reading, discussion

**Required books or supplies:** We will be using the Espanol Santillana 1 textbook and workbook. I will make photocopies of parts of the textbook as well as my own materials, but I recommend students get the workbook—ISBN: 978-1-61605-247-8. If finances are an issue, I can make photocopies of relevant pages.

**Required reading for first class:** If students are able to get the workbook prior to first class, I recommend they look over the introductory unit (pp. 7-28). This is not a mandatory assignment, but only a way to gauge the existing knowledge.

**203 Health Topics**

**Tuesday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leader: **Mary Jo Wagner**

**March 17, 31; April 14, 28; May 12, 26**

Guest speakers addressing various health topics.

**Course Format:** Lecture with time for questions.

**March 17: This Presentation Will Put You to Sleep**

**Given by Paul Crosby, LICSW**

Sleep has been around since before humans have been around. But, believe it or not, sleep has been taken seriously by the scientific community in only the last 30 years. And who would think that in the United States over 10 million people each year take prescription sleep medications? This presentation will, in an entertaining and interactive way, teach you what sleep is and does for you, give you practical tips for getting a good night's sleep, and answer the always controversial questions, "Should I take a nap?". If time permits, there will be a short look at dreams and an experience in relaxation techniques. No need to bring your pillow.

Paul Crosby is a licensed, independent clinical social worker with his master's degree from Boston University in 1977. He was both a therapist and an administrator in human service organizations. His career includes working with elders, couples, teens and adults in programs for addiction, home care, hospice, counseling and community collaboration. In 2018 he retired after 29 years at the Marblehead Counseling Center as both a therapist and its executive director. Paul is a member of Explorers.

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**March 31: Insights on what female bodies need to thrive as we age.**

**Dr. Carmela Mancini of the Women's Wellness and Menopause Center of the North Shore** <https://womenswellnesscenterns.com/>

**Facebook Link:**

<https://www.facebook.com/doctorcarmelamancini/>

**April 14: Busting Breast Cancer**

**Susan Wadia-ells holds a PhD in women's studies and describes herself as a cultural change agent and investigative journalist. Her most recent book is *Busting Breast Cancer: Five Simple Steps to Keep Breast Cancer out of Your Body* (2021).**

*Busting Breast Cancer* is the first book on breast cancer prevention based on the recent metabolic understanding of cancer. Realizing that all cancers are metabolically driven/lifestyle based, rather than caused by haphazard genetic mutations, means that we finally understand why one woman develops this disease, while the rest of us never have, and hopefully never will. The five simple steps include: losing excess body weight; keeping your vitamin D3 blood level above 60 ng/ml and detoxing constantly from high levels of stress, toxic chemicals and other carcinogenic lifestyles and substances.

<https://substack.com/@susanwadiaells>; [www.bustingbreastcancer.com](http://www.bustingbreastcancer.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/bustingbreastcancer/>

**April 28: Dealing with Uncertainty**

**Ray Mount, Psychologist, PhD.**

Ray had a private practice for 30 years and continues to serve others with a special focus on veterans. Ray is an Explorers member. you-tube link:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC&GU\\_9oT9MgisFKwNda2fd0](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC&GU_9oT9MgisFKwNda2fd0) and

<https://guidedwildernessconnections.com/>

**May 12: When to Worry: Differentiating Anxiety, Grief, and Cognitive Decline in Older Adults**

**Course Description:** In later life, it can be challenging to tell the difference between the expected emotional shifts of aging and the signs of a clinical mental health condition. Taught by a psychiatric nurse and educator, this session will provide attendees with clear clinical markers needed when a change requires professional help.

We will cover the critical differences between:

- Grief vs Clinical Depression
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- Age-Related Forgetfulness vs Dementia
- Situational Worry vs Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Susan Crowley MS, RN (retired) has 48 years of experience as a psychiatric nurse, the last 30 years as professor at North Idaho College, where she also taught courses for older adults. In addition, she is a life coach and Sage-ing international certified leader, focusing on the psycho-spiritual aspects of aging well. Susan is a member of Explorers.

**May 26: TBA**

### **204 Fact-Checking Key Issues of the 2026 Midterm Elections**

**Tuesday 9:30-11 am**

**Limited to 20**

Class Leader: **Herb Selesnick**

**April 7, 14, 21, 28**

The course instructor and participants will collectively fact-check the statements made by Donald Trump in TV and radio ads, social media, websites, public speeches, debates, interviews, and press releases during the first 14 months of his second term to determine which statements are factually accurate and objectively verifiable.

**Course Format:** The course instructor will provide participants with nonpartisan sources of policy-relevant information, guidance on how to access each source online, and coaching on how to draw logically defensible conclusions from objectively verifiable information.

**Required reading for first class:** The instructor will provide a handout shortly before the first scheduled class.

### **205 A Glimpse of Japan Through Its Literature**

**Tuesday 11:30 am-1:30 pm**

Class Leader: **Marilyn Day**

**March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31**

Let's read four classic novels by Japanese writers for a glimpse of life in Japan from the eleventh century through WWII. We will also read haiku, folktales, and a play as time permits.

**Course Format:** Reading and discussion

#### **Required books or supplies:**

*The Tale of Genji*: by Murasaki Shikibu, translated and edited by Kencho Suematsu, Title Classics 2018 (Please get this edition. Many others are **very** long.)

*Shipwrecks* by Akira Yoshimuro, translated by Mark Ealey, Harcourt

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*The Wild Geese* by Ogai Mori, translated by Kingo Ochiai and Sanford Goldstein, Charles E. Tuttle Company.

*An Artist of the Floating World* by Kazuo Ishiguro, Vintage International

## **206 Classical Symphony and its Instruments**

**Tuesday 11:30 am-1:30 pm**

Class Leader: **Dr. Peter Sheckman**

**April 7, 14, 21, 28; May 5**

An in depth look at the symphony orchestra, conducting in session one, then a professional musician discussing and demonstrating each family of instruments: strings, brass, woodwinds and percussion.

**Course Format:** Discussion, Didactics, Demonstrations. Willingness to participate, answer questions and try an instrument.

## **207 Aeschylus and Euripides: Two Greek Tragedians with Very Different Worldviews Limited to 14**

**Tuesday 11:30 am-1:30 pm**

Class Leader: **Dr. Linda M. Medwid**

**April 28; May 5, 12, 19, 26; June 2, 9**

In this course we shall read works by two of the leading ancient Greek tragedians, Aeschylus (525-456 BCE) and Euripides (484-406 BCE). Aeschylus was the first of what are referred to as "The Three Great Tragedians" of Athens, and Euripides was the last.

We will read Aeschylus' trilogy, *The Oresteia* and Euripides' play, *Iphigenia in Aulis*.

Each work involves a same, singular incident taken from Greek myth. Through a careful and sensitive reading of these emotionally moving works, we will find that the two authors have radically different views on what matters most about that incident.

We will see a development within Greek tragedy, as we witness these two authors wrestling with societal issues that still concern us today.

**Course Format:** Class discussion of assigned readings. Questions on the readings will be sent each week to help guide; class discussion.

### **Required books or supplies:**

1. *The Oresteia: Agamemnon; Women at the Graveside; Orestes at Athens*, Aeschylus TRANSLATED BY OLIVER TAPLIN, NY: Liveright Publishing Corp., 2018. Only available in hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-63149-466-6. **DO NOT BUY THE NORTON CRITICAL EDITION of this translation – it is not what we will be using.)**
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2. *Euripides IV* edited by Grene and Lattimore, University of Chicago Press. Many identical editions have been published. ISBN: 0-226-30783-2. The Taplin is available from about \$20.00 and the Euripides from about \$5.00 on-line, used and new available. **PLEASE NOTE: When reading literature in translation it is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT that all participants use the same translation. Please be certain to get the translations given above.**

**Required reading for first class:** A few handouts will be e-mailed to registered participants about a week before the beginning of the course. In addition, please read in *The Oresteia*, part of the first play, *The Agamemnon* – begin at Page 1 and read as far as Page 33. Please be sure to have read this far in the play before the first class meeting.

**Suggested books or supplies:** Notebook

## **208 Writers Group**

**Limited to 10**

**Tuesday 1-3 pm**

Class Leader: **Gay Porter**

**March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; April 7, 14, 21, 28; May 5, 12, 19, 26**

The Writers Group meets weekly on Tuesday afternoons from 1-3 pm throughout the year. This group functions to support intermediate and above level writers as they develop their voice and broaden their skill set.

**Course Format:** Writers compose their writings at home, read during group, and critique each other's writings.

## **WEDNESDAY**

### **301 How Your Body Works II**

**Wednesday 9:30-11:30 am**

Class Leader: **Peter Barker M.D.**

**March 4, 11, 18, 25**

Discussion of immunity, liver, kidneys, and another topic or two of the classes' choice. We will discuss how it works, (physiology,) and what can go wrong, (pathology).

**Course Format:** video's and discussion

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**302 The Societal Importance of Transportation from Global to National to Local** **Limited to 25**

**Wednesday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leader: **Dr. Keith Ratner**

**March 11, 25; April 15**

This course will focus on the enormous impact of transportation on all parts of society at the global, regional and local scales. The first class will examine the significant impact of improved ocean travel on global exploration, trade and colonialism in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. It will then move to the story of how, since the 1950's, the shipping container has globalized not only shipping, but the entire world. The second class will examine how the Interstate Highway System changed America into its current sprawling, auto dominated form with a discussion on the positives and negatives of this new urban form. The final class will present how, historically, the city of Boston has been at the forefront and an innovator when making major transportation changes, especially when it came to the Big Dig. The class will include slideshows and videos and strongly encourages group discussion.

**303 THE HERO'S JOURNEY TO THE STARS: The People, Places, and Philosophy of STAR WARS** **Limited to 12**

**Wednesday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leader: **Dr. Rose Wolf**

**April 1, 8, 15**

2026 brings the fiftieth anniversary of STAR WARS, a modern retelling of the classic "hero's journey." Though set long ago and far away, its vision has never been more relevant than here and now. We'll look at the first three films, examining people, places, and philosophy in Lucas's galaxy-spanning saga.

**Course Format:** Lecture with video presentation

**Required books or supplies:** Some years ago, I spotted a fascinating book that was issued in connection with the Smithsonian Institution's exhibition inspired by the first three STAR WARS films. You will need—and want—to purchase this volume, which is available in either a hardcover or paperback format, for your "Galactic Guidebook" as we steer our "course." Many copies are available on EBay for five dollars or less. *STAR WARS: THE MAGIC OF MYTH* by Mary Henderson (Bantam Books, NY: 1997.) ISBN #0-553-10206-0 (hc); ISBN #0-553-37810-4 (pb).

**Required reading for first class:** For the first session, please read pages 3-59 in *The Magic of Myth*, the section that covers SW: A New Hope. You may also want to watch this first film, though we will be looking at scenes from each installment with every class. (Don't be worried about finding a profound interpretation in any of our material; if you feel uncertain as to the meaning of the concepts, just take the wry advice offered by great science-fiction author Arthur C. Clarke to viewers puzzled by his

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mystical masterpiece 2001: *A Space Odyssey*; "Read the book, see the movie, and repeat the dosage as often as necessary!")

For the second class, look at pages 60–90, covering *The Empire Strikes Back* and watch the film should you choose. For the third, cover pages 91-113, and view Return of the Jedi if you wish. Additional material in the form of handouts will be provided on the trilogy's mythology and psychology (don't worry—it won't get too "-logy" or it not only won't get off the ground but would never "walk the sky"!).

### **304 More Finding Your Green Thumb: Container Gardening**

**Wednesday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leader: **Dr. Peter Barker**

**April 22, 29; May 6, 13**

This is a continuation of the Finding Your Green Thumb class from spring 2025, but new comers welcome. We will focus on container gardening but other interests will be addressed.

**Course Format:** Presentation and, hands on. You may get your hands dirty.

### **305 The Trial of Socrates**

**Limited to 25**

**Wednesday 11:30 am-1:30 pm**

Class Leader: **Rebecca Hartnett**

**March 4, 11, 18, 25; April 1, 8, 15**

This discussion group will read and consider the extant contemporary writings about Socrates and his trial to understand the man, his mission, the charges against him, whether or not the verdict was right and his sentence just, and the relevance of it all.

**Course Format:** Reading and discussion

**Required books or supplies:** *The Trials of Socrates: Six Classic Texts*, C.D.C. Reeve, ed. Hackett Publishing 2002, ISBN-10: 0872205894; ISBN-13: 978-0872205895. Text is paperback and is available new (\$15.00) as well as used on Amazon and other sites such as abebooks.com.

**Required reading for first class:** Crito, pp. 62-79 in *The Trials of Socrates*

### **306 Pod-versations (A Lifelong Learning Discussion Group)**

**Wednesday 11:30 am-1 pm**

**Limited to 18**

Class Leader: **Susan Crowley**

**April 1, 8, 15, 22**

A short-term book club without the book! We will all listen to the same podcast episode related to a particular subject topic, and then meet for a structured, guided discussion. The discussion will address both the intellectual/cognitive dimensions of the topic and reflections associated with our personal life experience. The intent of this course is to

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capitalize on the participant's hard-earned wisdom and continued interest in personal and intellectual growth, fostering a sense of delight and connection.

**Course Format:** The facilitator will provide the first podcast discussion topic: *Hidden Brain*, 4/19/21 *Humor Us*. From that point the class will decide on future podcast discussion topics based on a recommended list from facilitator. There will be a required, primary podcast episode and a secondary, recommended but not required, podcast, which participants will listen to outside of class. Typically, both of these podcast episodes will be 45-60 minutes in length. Registered participants will receive the podcast selections between one and two weeks prior to class; sooner, if possible.

**Required books or supplies:** Participants will need a device on which to listen to the podcast. A computer, tablet, or smart phone will work. They should be able to access their podcast app on one of these devices, although a direct link to selections will be sent via email.

**Required reading for first class:** Listening to selected podcast episode as described in Course Format, above.

### **307 History of Choral Music, Part 1**

**Limited to 50**

**Wednesday 2-4 pm**

Class Leader: **Edward Lundergan**

**March 4, 11, 18, 25; April 1**

A survey of choral music from the Middle Ages until about 1750, including Gregorian chant, English and Italian madrigals, Renaissance church music, and Baroque masterworks by Bach and Handel

**Course Format:** Lecture-discussion

**No required texts:** we will watch selected videos on You Tube.

### **308 Continuing Spanish**

**Wednesday 2-4 pm**

Class Leader: **Marilyn Cassidy**

**March 4, 11, 18, 25; April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; May 6, 13, 20, 27**

A solid base in Spanish/a genuine desire to learn and/or improve/a dedication to studying and participating/a good sense of humor.

**Course Format:** conversation and reading

**Required books or supplies:** TBD

## **THURSDAY**

### **401 I love a Piano**

**Thursday 9:30-11 am**

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Class Leader: **Bill Sano**  
**March 5, 12, 19, 26**

**Class I: The Classical Era:** Haydn, Mozart. Beethoven. And how to listen to a concerto intelligently.

**Class II: Remembering Ragtime:** 1900! Scott Joplin, Eubie Blake, Jelly Roll Morton, Zez Confrey, and even Irving Berlin!

**Class III: The Romantic 19<sup>th</sup> Century.** Liszt and Chopin, What could be better?

**Class IV: The Russians are Coming!!!** Sergei Rachmaninoff, Arthur Rubinstein, Vladimir Horowitz (but not Putin!)

**Course Format:** Lecture with recorded music

**Required reading for first class:** Read any internet bios on the composers to be presented. History and development of the piano helps.

#### **402 Current Events**

**Limited to 30**

**Thursday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leaders: **Anne Waymouth, Robert Hooker, David and Claire Helfman**

**March 5, 12, 19, 26; April 9, 16, 23, 30; May 7, 14, 21, 28**

In-person discussion of current events.

**Course Format:** Discussion

#### **403 Spanish Conversation**

**Limited to 10**

**Thursday 11:30 am-1 pm**

Class Leaders: **John and Judy Arnold**

**March 5, 12, 19, 26; April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; May 7, 14, 21, 28**

A conversation course for previously enrolled students with intermediate mastery of Spanish or with approval of presenters.

**Course Format:** Selected readings and sharing of life experiences.

**Required books or supplies:** All texts will be available online.

**Required reading for first class:** Review your week/month/recent experiences and prepare to share with others.

#### **404 China: A Parallel Universe**

**Limited to 25**

**Thursday 11:30 am-1:30 pm**

Class Leader: **Bob Hooker**

**March 5, 12, 19, 26; April 2**

From one of the world's poorest countries to an economic superpower in less than two generations, a look at the rise of China.

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## **405 Explorer's My Favorite Lecture Series 2026**

**Thursday 11:30 am-1:30 pm**

Class Leader: **Dr. Stephen Young**

**March, 5, 12, 26; April 2, 9, 16; May 7**

### **March 5**

**Tiffany Chenault** (Sociology Department) "Running as an act of joy and Resistance: Navigating through racialized spaces in 50 states."

### **March 12**

**Stephen Young** (geography and Sustainability Department) "Images of Earth from Space, and how we use them to tell us about planet Earth!"

### **March 26**

**Brian Vanden Hauvel** (Dean, College of Arts and Sciences) "Why Flowers look the Way They Do—Form, Function, and How We Use Them to Name Plants"

### **April 2**

**Avi Chomsky** (History Department) "Immigration in the USA: What's New and Why"

### **April 9**

**John McArdle** (Accounting and Finance Department) "Language, Colonialism, and Identity: Lessons from Ireland and Kosovo."

### **April 16**

**Marcos Luna** (Geography and Sustainability Department) "The Geography of Power: Understanding the changing landscape of energy in a time of political and climate change."

### **May 7**

**Keja Valens** (English Department) Recipes for Research, Research for Recipes: Scholarly Readings of Caribbean Cookbooks

## **406 Elections Have Consequences**

**Thursday 2-4 pm**

Class Leader: **Michael Goldman**

**March 5, 12, 19, 26; April 2, 9**

A historic overview, and an updated review of what Presidents promised, and what they delivered during their time in the White House.

**Course Format:** lecture

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## FRIDAY

### **501 A Populist Slide to Autocracy**

**ZOOM ONLY**

**Friday 9:30-11 am**

Class Leader: **Dean R. Wasserman, M.D.**

**April 17, 24; May 1, 8, 15**

In a series of seminars, we will discuss the populist revolt gripping the nation, its origins and its vulnerability to strongman rule that leads to autocracy, with past and present examples. Next, we will move from the general to concentrate on the United States, examining the psychology and tactics currently in play and their potential consequences. Themes of economics, culture, and politics will be a focus.

In our final session, we will solicit ideas that might reverse today's troubling trend.

**Required reading for first class:** None required. Will provide suggested material as attachments for each session.

### **502 Supreme Court**

**Limited to 40**

**Friday 9:30-11 am**

**ZOOM ONLY**

Class Leaders: **Tom Mela, Lee Bromberg**

**May 29; June 5, 12, 19, 26**

An ongoing discussion of the cases to be heard by the Supreme Court during the Court's October 2025 session (10/25-6/26), as well as any other developments affecting the Court which may arise. While the facilitators will provide historical background and context, the success of the course is wholly dependent on participation by the class.

**Course Format:** Remote (Zoom) discussion.

**Required books or supplies:** Relevant readings will be provided prior to each class.

## CANCELLATIONS

### **Cancellations:**

- **When Salem State University cancels classes, Explorers classes will also be cancelled.**
- **If SSU classes are delayed because of weather, Explorers classes will be cancelled.**

Tune in to the following for updates: **Boston and local channels.**

**There is also a recorded message on the Explorers telephone: 978-744-0804.**

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**Handicapped Information:** Our quarters at 10 Federal Street are handicapped accessible. Please use the side entrance near the parking lot.

**Explorers Center Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30 am – 4 pm**

**Telephone:** (978) 744-0804 **Email:** [explorers@verizon.net](mailto:explorers@verizon.net)

**Websites:** salemstate.edu/explorers

**(Complete catalogue online)** [explorerslli.org](http://explorerslli.org)

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## **CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

Gay Porter, Chair

Carol Damon

Claire Helfman

Sandra Lawson

Jonathan Leamon

Ted Novakowski

Linda Stark

Mary Jo Wagner

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## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Explorers provides programs which are challenging, thought-provoking, sometimes controversial and frequently interactive.

With this in mind we expect the following from our members and presenters:

- that they be considerate and respectful.
- that even in moments of disagreement they exercise good manners: keeping in mind that disagreement can be viewed as positive.
- that they take responsibility for their words and actions.

We join in active peer learning in order to share our knowledge and experience and in order to learn and grow together.

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## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

When necessary for the building to be evacuated, please leave the building immediately.

Without stopping for personal belongings.

If you are handicapped and unable to negotiate the steps to St. Peter Street, it is your responsibility to arrange with someone to assist your evacuation. You must exit via the

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Federal Street exit. Upon exit from building please notify emergency personnel of your safe exit.

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