



Course Catalog

Spring 2026
Sessions C and D



Assumption
University



Find out more at [assumptionwise.org](https://www.assumptionwise.org)

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How to Contact Us

The WISE office is located on the Assumption University campus in La Maison Française, Room 206. Our regular office hours are Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Please let us know if you have any questions or wish to discuss the program; we invite new ideas, and feedback at any time.

Find us at assumptionwise.org
or visit our Facebook page

Email: wise@assumption.edu
Phone: 508-767-7513

All About WISE

The Worcester Institute for Senior Education was founded in 1993 and is an affiliate organization of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies at Assumption University in Worcester, MA.

The WISE Mission

WISE is a member-driven organization providing lifelong learning opportunities for older adults.

Our vision is to be a learning community that offers adults intellectual stimulation, socialization, personal growth, and opportunities for service.

Through peer learning concepts, members share their knowledge and experiences with each other by creating, coordinating, and participating in courses.



Be WISE and Join Now

Join WISE and you become a member of a community of lifelong learners. WISE members enjoy a variety of interesting courses together with a schedule of engaging educational and social events.

Members can enjoy performances and sports events on campus at no cost. Discounts are available when visiting Assumption University's recreation center, snack bar and dining hall.

The WISE Classroom

Membership allows access to all courses and events. Each session, WISE offers classes both online via Zoom and in-person on the Assumption University campus. Zoom classes (and even some in-person classes) are recorded for members to access at a time that is convenient for them.

Unlimited Course Selection

A WISE membership provides adult learners with unlimited access to a compelling selection of courses. Most Fall and Spring courses consist of five 90-minute classes, in a wide variety of topics such as music, art, history, technology, culture, science, nature and more. Most courses do not overlap, allowing members to take as many classes as they choose.

Teach at WISE

Do you have a special interest or hobby? WISE is always interested in welcoming new instructors and new topics. In addition to becoming a student, consider being a WISE instructor. For more information on teaching at WISE visit our website here: <https://assumptionwise.org/teaching>

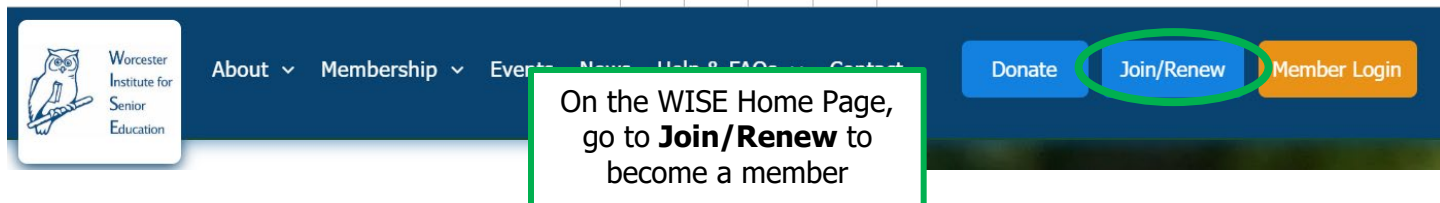
Ready to Join WISE?

Visit the WISE website at assumptionwise.org to sign up and purchase a full- or half-year membership online.

Membership Fees for the current academic year:

Half-Year (Fall 2025 **or** Spring 2026) \$185.00

Full-Year (Fall 2025 **and** Spring 2026) \$365.00



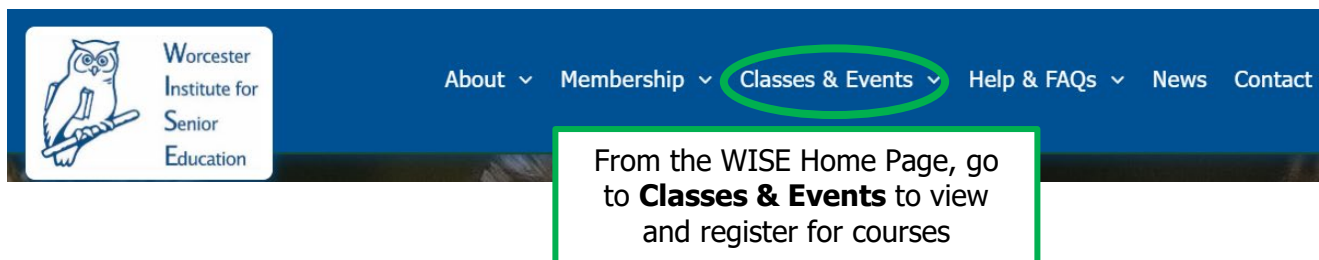
Complete the membership form, which will prompt you to pay online with your credit card. If you prefer to pay by check, send your payment to:

WISE at Assumption University, 500 Salisbury Street, Worcester, MA 01609

You can also contact the WISE office directly to start your membership. We are here to assist you with logging onto our site, setting up your WISE profile, and/or registering for classes. Send us an email at wise@assumption.edu or call 508-767-7513. We are happy to help.

How to Register for Classes

Once you are a WISE member, you can register for upcoming classes via the WISE website. Sign up for one class or all of them! You will receive a confirmation email for each course you select.



Spring 2026 Overview

Session C dates: February 9 – March 13

Session D dates: March 23 – May 15

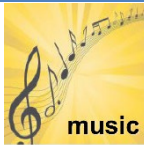

Zoom classes: These are held online via Zoom; links are made available upon registration


Category	No.	Title	Instructor
Music	C1	Lives and Times of Great Musicians	P. Buono
Science	C3	Ocean Quest	C. Hunter
Art History	C4	10 Women Painters over 5 Centuries	M. Chiarchiaro
Politics	C5	Flawed Democracies in the World	P. Macek
History	C8	Book of Kells	K. Fisher
Music	C9	Josephine Baker & Jazz in Paris	D. Radlauer
Art History	C10	Issues of Attribution & Provenance	B. Beall
Music	C13	The Great Protest Songs of the past 60 years	J. Corn
Religion	C14	Key Topics in Theology of Oscar Cullmann	G. Shahinian
Technology	D1	The Changing World of Work	K. Hakkarainen
Art History	D4	American Revolutionary Painters and Their Politics	M. Chiarchiaro
History	D10	Subject to Citizen: A Brief History of Very Big Idea.	S. Franz
History	D13	Leading with Hope: The Extraordinary Life of Jane Goodall	K. Fisher

In-Person classes: These are held on campus at Assumption University (unless otherwise noted)

Category	No.	Title	Instructor
History	C2	Intro to the American Antiquarian Society	N. Wolverton
Current Events	D2	Still More Controversies in Education	S. Starr
Literature	D3	<i>Gargantua and Pantagruel</i> by François Rabelais	L. Corti
History	D5	Women Reformers	J. Sifleet
Art History	D6	Michaelangelo, Living and Working in Florence	Fr. Lamoureux
Literature	D8	Dante's <i>Purgatorio</i>	J. Kee
Science	D9	Invisible World: Our Complex Relationships with Microbes	C. O'Connor
Art History	D11	American Storytellers in France: Cassatt & Ringgold	M. McKenna
Politics	D12	The Right to Bear Arms	J. Ross
Art History	D14	Survey of the Collections at Worcester Art Museum	P. Mahon
Economics	D15	Comparative Economic Systems	T. Gottschang

Session C Course Descriptions

<p>C1. The Life and Times of Great Musicians</p> <p>Mondays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. February 9, 16, 23, March 2, 9</p>	<p>ZOOM</p>	
<p>Each class will present a new 20th century musician including Keith Jarrett, Stevie Wonder, Duke Ellington, Branford Marsalis, and Louis Armstrong with a focus on jazz, although other musicians may be included. The classes will offer a historical overview, including a biography and human-interest angle, as well as the cultural backdrop of the times. Students will also be introduced to particular compositions and performances of each musician. There will be a focus on active listening - i.e., listening to music in order to identify specific traits, sections, and elements of music.</p>		
	<p>Instructor: Paul Buono is a pianist, educator, and attorney. He is a professor of music at Assumption University and directs the Assumption University Jazz Band. Paul has international touring experience as a keyboardist on the Maroon 5 “OverExposed” World Tour, as a sideman with “The Voice” Season 1 winner Javier Colon, and as a musical director for Princess Cruises. Paul teaches online through his private piano studio and performs regularly throughout New England as a pianist and musical director. Paul holds a bachelor’s and master’s degree in jazz performance as well as a law degree.</p>	

<p>C2. An Introduction to the American Antiquarian Society <i>(This class is limited to 30 students)</i></p> <p>Mondays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. February 9, 23, March 2, 9, 16</p>	<p>In Person AAS 185 Salisbury St Worcester</p>	
<p>The American Antiquarian Society has long welcomed scholars of American history and culture to its home on Salisbury Street in Worcester. This course will provide an overview of the library facilities and introduce participants to its impressive pre-1900 collections at AAS, including books, newspapers, graphic arts, manuscripts, and children’s literature.</p>		
<p>Instructors: Nan Wolverton, Vice President for Academic and Public Programs at the AAS, holds a PhD in American Studies from the University of Iowa. Before joining the AAS, Nan held positions at Old Sturbridge Village, Historic Northampton, and Smith College. Scott Casper became the 18th President of AAS in 2020. Long affiliated with the AAS, Scott began his career as a history professor. He has numerous publications in the field of American history, including his award-winning book, <i>Constructing American Lives: Biography and Culture in 19th-Century America</i>.</p>		

C3. Ocean Quest

Mondays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
February 9, 16, March 2, 9, 16

ZOOM



Seventy percent of the Earth's surface is ocean. This planet could be re-named "Ocean"; we are citizens of an ocean planet with islands the size of continents. The ocean is the most important resource on Earth because it controls weather, provides food, and creates 50% of the world's oxygen. Awesome life forms are constantly being discovered at all depths of the ocean. Remarkable life forms inhabit the deepest ocean where there is no light! As scientists pursue all types of marine research, they consistently advocate for caution because exploration and exploitation of the ocean's resources have a history of positive and negative consequences. One might say that the romantic ship-narrative has sailed, replaced with a heightened appreciation for the human impact on marine health and the human pressure on beings who live in or depend on the sea. Education is the key to understanding the ocean of the past, present, and future. This quest to learn more will highlight the following:

1. Maps: What You See and What You Don't See
2. Marine Specimens
3. Ocean Voyagers: Seafarers and Refugees
4. Innovative Marine Museums
5. Stories Told by Artists and Scientists

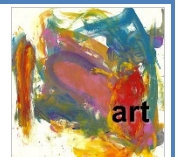


Instructor: Catherine Hunter was museum curator, educator, and consultant for over twenty years. She received her Bachelor of Arts in History of Art from Cornell University and began her career as a curator in the Department of Textiles at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Hunter has been developing and teaching zoom courses for adult learners since 2019. Her courses reflect a lifelong interest in the intersection of art, art history, science, and culture. Hunter is a sailor with a broad interest in all things nautical. She is a member of the New Bedford Whaling Museum and the International Congress of Maritime Museum (ICMM).

C4. Ten Women Painters over Five Centuries

Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
February 10, 17, 24, March 3, 10

ZOOM



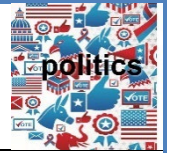
We will explore the changes in art over 5 centuries through the work of ten women painters. We'll begin in the 17th century with Artemesia Gentileschi in Italy and Judith Leyster in the Netherlands, both early women in their respective academies. Maria Sibylla Marian from Germany was both an artist and scientist with her work on the Metamorphosis of Caterpillars while Rachel Ruysch became internationally known for her Dutch floral paintings. Rosalba Carreira revolutionized the use of pastels as a medium in Rocco art. Elizabeth Vigee La Brun became embroiled in the French Revolution, painting more than 600 portraits, including those of Marie Antoinette. Rosa Bonheur, a French painter of livestock was the first woman artist to receive the French Legion of Honor award. Mary Cassatt was the only American to exhibit with the French Impressionists, Georgia O'Keeffe has been called "the Mother of American Modernism." Faith Ringgold represented the American Black experience, especially through her story quilts.



Instructor: Martha Chiarchiaro has brought history to life through the art of the times for more than 30 years. She received her Masters' degree in the History of Art from Williams College and provides a variety of art history presentations at the Worcester Art Museum, for WISE (the Worcester Institute for Senior Education), libraries, garden clubs, and other organizations. As noted on her *Seeing History* website, Martha's specialty presentations related to specific periods, artists, and activities provide an in-depth look at the life and times of people through their art.

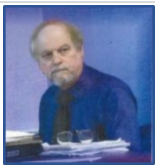
C5. Flawed Democracies of the World

ZOOM



Tuesdays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
February 10, 17, 24, March 3, 10

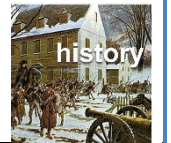
This course will explore several Flawed Democracies in the World, such as: France, Malta, United States, Chile, Slovenia, Israel, South Korea, Belgium, Botswana, Lithuania, Italy, Poland, Cyprus, India, and Slovakia. Some of the key characteristics of flawed democracies are the following: weak checks and balances and corruption in functioning of government, low confidence in political parties, polarization, voter apathy, media freedom infringement, and suppression of opposition. From geography to climate, to demographics, to history, to politics and government, to economy and culture, each country will be analyzed according to a variety of indexes. What makes each country a Flawed Democracy in the world will be discovered in the major categories of Electoral Process, Functioning of Government, Political Participation, Political Culture, and Civil Liberties. The instructor welcomes a diversity of political thought.



Instructor: Paul Macek has master's degrees in History and English. He has taught U.S. History for over twenty-five years. He has also worked as a proofreader, copyeditor, indexer, translator, writer, and publisher for over thirty years. Paul Macek is the author of seven books: one on education, two on literature (one of which was a translation), and four on American history.

C8. Book of Kells

ZOOM



Wednesdays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
February 11, 18, 25, March 4, 11

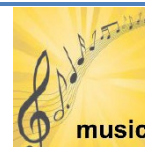
The Book of Kells is a medieval Gospel manuscript thought by many to have been created between the 7th and 9th centuries by Christian monks living on the Scottish island of Iona. This Irish cultural treasure is celebrated primarily for its incomparable artistry, but the manuscript is also steeped in a complex religious and political history, along with a bit of mystery. In this course, we'll combine art history with social history to follow the twists and turns of the Book's journey from a remote monastic Christian outpost to its tourist-attraction home at Trinity College, Dublin.



Instructor: Kathleen Fisher has taught at WISE since 2019, offering courses in religion and spirituality through a variety of poets, philosophers, religious figures, and historical texts. She holds a Ph.D. in Medieval History and Religion from Boston University where she focused on Irish history and medieval monasticism. During a long teaching career in Theology at Assumption University, she taught courses in World Religions and Christian Spirituality, among others. Kathleen now lives in Chapel Hill, NC.

C9. Josephine Baker and Jazz in Paris

Zoom



Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
February 11, 18, 25, March 4, 11

Josephine Baker had a colossal impact on French art, fashion and the emergence of jazz in Europe between the world wars when Paris was an outpost of the Harlem Renaissance for extraordinary African American entertainers. Other stunning Black divas of Paris were singer and dancer Adelaide Hall, the glamorous “Queen of the Trumpet” Valaida Snow and legendary singer and cabaret operator Ida “Bricktop” Smith. Numerous colorful but now forgotten African American expatriate instrumentalists central to early jazz in Europe are profiled.

Optional Reading: *Josephine Baker’s Secret War: The African American Star Who Fought for France and Freedom*, Hanna Diamond (Yale University Press, 2025); *Better Times Will Come Again: The Life of Arthur Briggs, Jazz Genius of Harlem, Paris and a Nazi Prison Camp*, Travis Atria (Chicago Review Press, 2020)

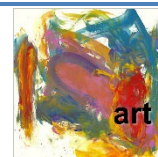


Instructor: Dave Radlauer has been recounting tales of early Jazz and Swing in print, online and on the radio for 40 years, garnering six broadcast awards. His chronicles of early Jazz and massive website offer fresh perspectives on Jazz and Swing at www.JAZZHOTBigstep.com. He taught Osher Institute zoom-format classes for UC Berkeley, Dominican University, San Francisco State University and UCLA, 2022-25. Other professional qualifications include authoring 200 articles, webpages and columns online and in print. For Stanford Libraries, he has written interpretive articles and donated a unique jazz collection.

He has published: The San Francisco Cricket, San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation (print & online), 1998-2014; The San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation, Charles M. Huggins Project, The Stanford Libraries, 2017 <https://exhibits.stanford.edu/sftjf/feature/the-east-bay-sound>; Dagogo (audio enthusiast online magazine), 2018-2020 <https://www.dagogo.com/category/the-columns/jazzed-up>; The Syncopated Times (online and print monthly), 2019-2024 <https://syncopatedtimes.com/the-legend-is-true>; Just Jazz Magazine (print-only British Jazz publication), 2020-2023

C10. Issues of Attribution and Provenance

ZOOM



Thursdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
February 12, 19, 26, March 5, 12

This course highlights several thorny contemporary issues impacting museums, scholars, collectors, auction houses, and the history of art and architecture. Concerns regarding provenance, attribution and authenticity had been within the private domain of those directly involved in the field of art and art history. However, topics such as who created the art, who owns the art and who should own the art have now entered the public domain and are often headline news. Discussions will include the Parthenon Marbles at the British Museum, the Benin Bronzes, the Rembrandt Research Project, and two paintings linked to Leonardo Da Vinci, the *Salvator Mundi* and Worcester Art Museum’s own predella panel, *A Miracle of Saint Donatus of Arezzo*.



Instructor: Dr. Barbara Beall is Professor Emerita and former Chair of the Department of Art, Music and Theater at Assumption University. She also served as the President of the Central Mass Chapter of the Archeological Institute of America for a decade. She has a specialty in Medieval Art & Architecture and as a Visiting Professor at Clark University, taught African as well as Islamic Art and Architecture. Dr. Beall completed her doctorate at Brown University in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture and her publications in Art History include articles, reviews and the book, *Understanding the Art Museum*.

C13. The Greatest Protest Songs of the Past 60 Years

ZOOM



Fridays 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
February 13, 20, 27, March 6, 13

Music is one of our great art forms, and songs are often much more than just written for pure pleasure and entertainment. Many are written to express human emotion or to make a strong statement. Protest songs can often get directly to the essence of an unjust situation with much more impact than a speech or a text and frequently have a more lasting impact. The subject of the protest song might be to rail against war, economic injustice, social ills or an environmental crisis.

The 1960's and 1970's saw many memorable songs written, but the genre is not simply limited to those decades. This course will highlight many of the notable songs that had something important to say and highlight the work of such featured artists as Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, Julie Gold, Billy Joel, Marvin Gaye, Jackson Browne, and Bruce Springsteen, among others.



Instructor: Joe Corn spent most of his professional career as a working electrical engineer. His teaching experience has included science and math in the NYC school system, technology instructor at Springfield Technical Community College (STCC), engineering course instructor at Penn State University, and technical instructor at Moore Products Co. Since joining WISE 15 years ago, he has taught courses in both technology and music. Joe is a past President of WISE. He and his wife Bobbi reside in Grafton.

C14. Key Topics in The Theology of Oscar Cullmann

Zoom



Fridays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
February 13, 20, 27, March 6, 13

Oscar Cullmann (1902-1999) was a prominent New Testament theologian and historian of early Christianity during the middle of the twentieth century in Europe. This course will explore three salient ideas found in his writings. The first is his monumental challenge of the belief in the immortality of the soul, which he compellingly argues is a pagan notion nowhere found in the Bible. The second is his groundbreaking view of Jesus Christ as the midpoint of history because his life, death, and resurrection are the central event in God's redemptive timeline. The third is his embarrassing thesis that the Roman Christian community was implicated in the deaths of the apostles Paul and Peter as suggested in the Letter of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians, more commonly known as 1 Clement, a book rejected for inclusion in the New Testament, possibly because of this troubling insinuation.

Optional Reading: *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead? The Witness of the New Testament* by Oscar Cullmann; Wipf and Stock Publishers, ISBN-10 1608994724, ISBN-13 978-1608994724

Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History, 3rd Edition by Oscar Cullmann; Wipf and Stock Publishers ISBN-10 9781532657016 ,ISBN-13 978-1532657016

Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr, 2nd Edition by Oscar Cullman, Baylor University Press, ISBN-10 1602584133, ISBN-13 978-1602584136



Instructor: Rev. Dr. Gary Shahinian is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. He earned a Ph.D. degree in Philosophy from the Free University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands. He wrote his doctoral dissertation on the problem of evil in the thought of Alfred North Whitehead, the father of Process Philosophy. He also has a Master of Arts degree in Theological Studies from Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan, concentrated on New Testament and Early Christianity. He taught philosophy and theology courses at Redeemer College in Ontario, Dordt College in Iowa, and Worcester State University.

Spring 2026 Session C Schedule

	Monday 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9	Tuesday 2/10, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10	Wednesday 2/11, 2/18, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11	Thursday 2/12, 2/19, 2/26, 3/5, 3/12	Friday 2/13, 2/20, 2/27, 3/6, 3/13
10:00 am	C1. Lives and Times of Great Musicians Paul Buono Zoom	C4. 10 Women Painters over Five Centuries Martha Chiarchiaro Zoom	C7. unavailable	C10. Issues of Attribution & Provenance Dr. Barbara Beall Zoom	C13. The Greatest Protest Songs of the Past 60 Years Joe Corn Zoom
1:00 pm	C2. Introduction to the American Antiquarian Society <i>Limit 30 students</i> <i>No class on 2/16; last class is 3/16</i> Nan Wolverton & Scott Casper <i>In person at AAS</i>	C5. Flawed Democracies in the World Paul Macek Zoom	C8. Book of Kells Kathleen Fisher Zoom	C11. open	C14. The Theology of Oscar Cullmann Gary Shahinian Zoom
3:00 pm	C3. Ocean Quest <i>No class on 2/23; last class is 3/16</i> Catherine Hunter Zoom	C6. open	C9. Josephine Baker and Jazz in Paris Dave Radlauer Zoom	C12. open	C15. open



Lifelong Learning is WISE

Session D Course Descriptions

D1. The Changing World of Work

ZOOM



Mondays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
March 23, 30, April 13, 20, 27

A decade ago, a human recruiter spent 6 seconds with each résumé. Today, an AI system handles more than 10,000 résumés per minute, AI-generated résumés submitted by desperate job applicants and their bots. There are humans in there someplace, and the hiring manager must find them.

The big disruptor is artificial intelligence, but it's not the only one. National and international politics turn business plans into crumpled paper rather than beautiful origami.

We will explore what this changing world of work is like, what happens as people search for jobs, do the work, lose the jobs, rinse and repeat until a retirement that may never come.

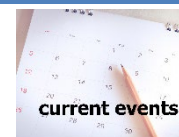
Optional Reading: *From Strength to Strength* by Arthur Brooks, ISBN 9780593191484



Instructor: Karl Hakkarainen is a long-time WISE instructor with an academic background in American studies and career in information technology. He has taught courses on social networks, American history, education, music, intellectual property law, and artificial intelligence. He is chair of the WISE AI SIG.

D2. Still More Controversies in Education

In Person
AU Campus
Kennedy 119



Mondays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
March 23, 30, April 13, 20, 27

Striving for a diversity of ideas and opinions, we will discuss a variety of controversial topics, including:

- Colleges VS the Federal Government
- The Value of International Students on Campus
- AI in High Schools and Colleges
- The Status of Vocational Education Today
- Returning to Teaching Civics in HS



Instructor: Susan Starr started professional life teaching elementary school. Unexpectedly, she was recruited by Clark University to teach undergrad and grad students to become elementary school teachers, a job she loved for 20 years. From 1994-2014, Susan worked with a team of physicians and educators at UMass Medical School in a program that taught educational strategies to doctors who teach med students and residents. Since retirement, she has been helping high achieving/low income (HALI) international students navigate the process of applying to college and succeeding once enrolled.

D3. *Gargantua and Pantagruel* by François Rabelais

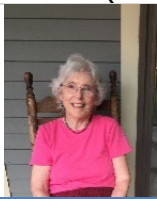
Mondays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
March 23, 30, April 13, 20, 27

In Person
AU Campus
Kennedy
119



Among the giants of World Literature whose names have assumed adjectival form—for example, Homeric, Shakespearean and Joycean—the case of Rabelais is worth noting. Although he entered religious orders at an early age, he is best known as the author of such exuberantly irreverent works as *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua*. Celebrated for his embrace of the physical, earthy and carnivalesque, he ranks alongside his famous Italian predecessor, Giovanni Boccaccio, as one of the world’s great humorists and satirists, so that the word “Rabelaisian” regularly refers to the particular style of revelry for which he is famous. We will read the second of his books on the adventures of *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua*.

Required Reading: Rabelais, Francois. *Gargantua and Pantagruel*. Translated by M.A. Screech, Penguin Classic (New York, 2006).

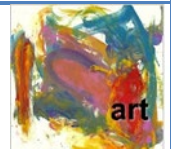


Instructor: Lillian Corti majored in Italian and French as an undergraduate at Brooklyn College and earned a doctorate in Comparative Literature at the City University of New York in 1984. She taught French language and literature at Tulsa University and World Literature in translation at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

D4. American Revolutionary Painters and Their Politics

Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
March 24, 31, April 7, 14, 21

ZOOM



This course will explore five of the most prominent American artists during our Revolutionary War; their artistic contributions, as well as their involvement with the war. Although Benjamin West spent the period of the war in London, he trained and inspired three generations of American artists. While John Singleton Copley tried to take a bipartisan approach during the war, Charles Wilson Peale was an exemplary patriot and served under George Washington. Gilbert Stuart, a Loyalist, spent the war in Great Britain, yet with his return in 1793, his paintings of George Washington became icons of the Revolutionary War. We’ll complete our study with John Trumbull, personal aide to Washington, who has been referred to as *The Painter of the Revolution*.

Optional Reading: *Of Arms and Artists*, Paul Staiti, Bloomsbury Press, 2016, ISBN#HB:978-1-63286–465-9



Instructor: Martha Chiarchiaro has brought history to life through the art of the times for more than 30 years. She received her Masters’ degree in the History of Art from Williams College and teaches a variety of art history courses at the Worcester Art Museum and other local cultural organizations. Her specialty courses related to specific periods, artists, and activities provide a more in-depth look at the life and times of the people who are part of the exploration. Martha is fascinated by American history and the role of American artists in portraying the Revolutionary War.

D5. Women Reformers

Tuesday 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
March 31, April 7, 14, 21, May 12

In Person
AU Campus
Kennedy 119



Throughout history, women have played pivotal roles in social and legal change. Many of their contributions have been overshadowed by male leaders in our history books. In this class, we'll learn about women's contributions to reforms in Civil Rights, Education, Labor, Healthcare and Political Rights. We'll explore how they used grassroots efforts, organized protests, and outmaneuvered their opponents. Some names you will recognize: Rosa Parks, Eleanor Roosevelt, Florence Nightingale, Francis Perkins, Susan B. Anthony. There are many other names that are unfamiliar. Here are a few: Civil Rights: Ella Baker; Education: Emma Willard; Healthcare: Elizabeth Blackwell, Dorothea Dix; Labor: Clara Lemlich, Dolores Huerta; Political rights: Jeannette Rankin.



Instructor: Jean Sifleet is a retired business attorney and CPA. Jean has taught numerous courses for WISE and welcomes participant discussion of the issues.

D6. Michaelangelo: Living and Working in Florence

Tuesdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
March 24, 31, April 7, 14, 21

In Person
AU Campus
Kennedy 119



A brief course on the work of Michelangelo. Since the course is brief, it will focus only on those works produced by the artist for Florence while he was there, and exceptionally on some works by him that are in Florence museums today.

Michelangelo loved his native city and, like Dante, was proud of being "*fiorentino*." The course will show how a number of his works reflect that civic pride. That being said, he spent the last thirty years of his life in Rome and died there. No one city ever became the central focus of his art. As Florentine (or as "expatriate" in Rome) as he was, he was a man for all times and places and people.

The course, therefore, will not focus on his life or his beloved Florence (though it will include historical information on both), but on his work and its significance for us.

Optional Reading: *Michelangelo—The Artist, the Man, and his Times*, William Wallace (N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

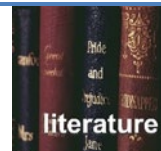


Instructor: Fr. Richard Lamoureux is a retired Assumption University faculty member from the Department of Art & Music. He holds a Ph.D. in Art History from New York University, with a focus on 15th century Italian Renaissance Art and on architectural history. He is currently immersed in Michelangelo studies.

D8. Dante's *Purgatorio*

Wednesday 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
March 25, April 15, 22, 29, May 6

In Person
AU Campus
Kennedy 119



Dante's *Purgatorio* is situated in the middle of his *Commedia*. As such, it explores an in-between realm, much like the realm we experience on our journey between birth and death. Compared to conventional descriptions of Purgatory, Dante's realm is richly imagined, marked by a profound hope. The basis for this hope is Dante's faith in a grace that refines us, not a fire that punishes us. This grace forms our human nature to its fullest degree so that we are prepared for our transformation in Paradise. The poem's 33 cantos can be divided into five units that provide good foci for a five-class course.

There are many English translations of *Purgatorio*, but I recommend Allen Mandelbaum's. It is an excellent verse translation freed from any attempt to make English measure up to Italian's capacity for rhymes. It also contains just enough endnotes to provide the reader with essential background information without overwhelming the poem itself.

Required reading: Dante's *Purgatorio*, translated by Allen Mandelbaum; Bantam Classics ISBN 978-0553213447



Instructor: James Kee was a member of the English Department at Holy Cross from 1981 to 2016. He regularly taught courses on medieval literature as well as ones on tragedy, literary theory, the Bible and literature, and poetry and philosophy. Among his published essays are ones on Dante, Langland, Milton, Wordsworth, Keats, and the relationship between religion and intellectual life.

D9. Invisible World: Complex Relationships with Microbes

Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
March 25, April 15, 22, 29 (4-week class)

In Person
AU campus
Kennedy 119



Although we cannot see them with the naked eye, microorganisms are all around, as well as in us. This class will begin with a basic introduction to microorganisms, including some viruses, bacteria and yeast. We'll then examine some of our complex relationships with microorganisms in more detail. Topics will include our microbiome, antibiotics/antibiotic resistance, and fermentation. We'll also discuss how microbial genes have provided the foundation for modern biotechnology.



Instructor: Clare O'Connor received her Ph.D. from Purdue and did postdoctoral research at UCLA and Caltech. She was a senior scientist at the Worcester Foundation from 1984-1995. She then joined the Biology Department at Boston College, where she taught courses in genetics and molecular cell biology before retiring in 2018.

D10. Subject to Citizen: A brief history of a very big idea

ZOOM



Thursdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
March 26, April 16, 23, 30, May 7

Early New England colonial life was organized, as it had been for generations, by a largely unquestioned network of master/servant relationships. These relationships shaped daily life between spouses, parents and children, pastors and the faithful, and employers and those (free or otherwise) who labored on their behalf. All were subjects of the King. The King answered only to the divine. As the nation recalls the events of 1776, we explore the historical moments and ideas that led people, born as subjects, to consider and embrace radical ideas including citizenship, self-governance, equal justice under law, the public good, education for all, natural and civil rights, and due process. Join us as we explore how the great American experiment, filled with uncertainties, setbacks, and successes, seeks to transform subjects into citizens.



Instructor: Susan Franz holds a master's degree from Clark University and has taught at several local colleges. She played a key role in gaining National Park Service recognition for Underground Railroad locations in the Blackstone River Valley and designed an exhibit on the Underground Railroad for state parks in Massachusetts. She has served on the Uxbridge Select Board, Finance Committee, and the Historical Commission.

D11. American Storytellers in France: Mary Cassatt/Faith Ringgold

In Person
AU Campus
Kennedy 119



Thursdays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
March 26, April 16, 30, May 7, 14

Mary Cassatt and Faith Ringgold are American artists who created in France, exactly one hundred years apart, visual stories of women in Paris that were revolutionary in their subject matter, material and technique. Cassatt in her color prints, *The Ten*, and Ringgold in her story quilts, *The French Collection*, created stories of women living and working in Paris that captured in new ways the lives of women. Cassatt created in her elegant prints women and mothers who were carrying out everyday tasks such as bathing, letter writing, and riding the omnibus in 1890s Paris, subject matter not found in prints of her time. A century later in the 1990s, Ringgold would imagine a fictitious young African American woman artist living and working among the leading artists and literacy figures of 1920s Paris in her story quilts, stories impossible in the early 20th century. Cassatt and Ringgold created works that transformed the arts of printmaking and painting that continue to excite audiences today for their stories, their beauty and their technical mastery.

Optional Reading: *Mary Cassatt: A Life*, Nancy Mowll Mathews, Yale University Press, New Haven 1998 #13 978-0-300-07754-4; *Mary Cassatt: The Color Prints*, Nancy Mowll Mathew & Barbara Stern Shapiro, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., New York, 1989 #0-913697-06-0; *We flew over the bridge: the memoirs of Faith Ringgold*, Faith Ringgold, Duke University Press, Durham & London, 2005 #0-8223-3564-6; *Dancing at the Louvre: Faith Ringgold's Collection and Other Story Quilts*, Dan Cameron, University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1998 #0-520- 21430-7; *The Greater Journey: Americans in Paris*, David McCullough, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2011 #978-1-4165-7176-6 Optional



Instructor: Martha McKenna is University Professor Emerita at Lesley University where she taught courses in the arts, creativity and aesthetic education. While a visiting scholar at the American University of Paris she pursued research on American artists in Paris, including Mary Cassatt and Faith Ringgold. An article in the *Journal of Aesthetic Education* captures this research, entitled "Narrative Inquiry as an Approach to Aesthetic Experience: Life Stories in Perceiving and Responding to Works of Art." Dr. McKenna holds a doctorate in Music, the Arts, and Humanities from Teachers College, Columbia University.

D12. The Right to Bear Arms: The Evolving Scope of the 2nd Amendment

Thursdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
March 26, April 16, 23, 30, May 7

In person
AU campus
Kennedy 119



This course will address the evolving interpretation of the Second Amendment in the wake of recent Supreme Court decisions, and the implications for various gun control initiatives at the state and federal levels. The Second Amendment establishes “a right to bear arms,” but in the context of safeguarding “well regulated militias.” In *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008), the Supreme Court ruled that the Second Amendment was not limited to protecting militias but establishes a broad individual right to own guns. For over a decade, lower federal courts applied a balancing test which weighed the interest of the government in preserving public safety against the individual core Second Amendment right. However, in 2022, the Court adopted a rigid originalist and historical approach to the Second Amendment which has created uncertainty and threatened many longstanding gun control provisions. In 2024, the Court applied its originalist approach more flexibly in upholding a federal law restricting gun ownership in the context of domestic violence restraining orders, and will decide two major Second Amendment cases this term. This course will review the controversial topic of gun control, but the major focus will be on how evolving interpretations of the Second Amendment have shaped, and will continue to shape, the debate.

Recommended Reading: *The Second Amendment: A Biography* by Michael Waldman (Simon & Schuster 2014) 2nd Ed
Optional Reading: *The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to Know* by Phillip J. Cook and Kristin A. Goss (Oxford University Press 2014)



Instructor: John S. Ross, III (Jack) earned an A.B. degree (History) from Yale University, a J.D. degree from the University of Virginia School of Law, and an LL.M. degree (Taxation) from New York University School of Law. He practiced law in Washington D.C. for twenty years and served as an Adjunct Professor of Law at Washington and Lee University School of Law. Jack has taught numerous courses in the WISE program focused on constitutional law and the Supreme Court, and facilitates the WISE Supreme Court SIG.

D13. Extraordinary Life of Jane Goodall

Fridays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
March 27, April 10, 17, May 1, 8

Zoom



On October 1, 2025, Dr. Jane Goodall, renowned ethologist and conservationist, died while on a speaking tour in Los Angeles. From her childhood in Bournemouth, England until her death at 91, Dr. Goodall possessed an irrepressible energy and curiosity about the world. Her studies of chimpanzees in East Africa have been called “one of the Western world’s great scientific achievements.” Groundbreaking in its methods, the research redefined the uniqueness of human beings and our place in the natural world. Goodall translated that data into stories of nature’s resilience, beauty, and spiritual awe and shared them with millions as a message of hope. In this course we’ll examine the legacy of her life as a pioneering scientist, an environmental advocate, a moral optimist, a tireless humanitarian, and a spiritual visionary – a steady, quiet voice of hope in troubling times.

Recommended Reading: *The Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times*, Celadon Books, 2021
Available in multiple formats on Amazon



Instructor: Kathleen Fisher Kathleen has taught in WISE since 2019, offering courses in religion and spirituality through a variety of poets, philosophers, religious figures, and historical texts. She holds a Ph.D. in Medieval History and Religion from Boston University. She first included Jane Goodall in the “WISE Elders” course and is pleased now to offer a full course on her life and legacy. After a long teaching career in Theology at Assumption University, Kathleen now lives in Chapel Hill, NC.

D14. Survey of the Collections at WAM

(This class is limited to 22 students)

Fridays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

March 27, April 10, 17, 24, May 1

In person
Worcester
Art Museum



We will have five 90-minute tours of the museum, covering aspects of the entire collection. This year is especially exciting because of the opening of the Arms and Armor galleries, the reopening of the completely revised early American galleries after almost two years, and the reopening of about a half-dozen other refurbished galleries closed during the massive construction projects at the museum. The timing of the works we will see is tentative; we will see them all, but perhaps not in the order listed.



Instructor: Paul Mahon Paul Mahon is Professor Emeritus at Assumption where he taught full-time for 36 years. He has been a Docent at WAM for the past 18 years. He started collecting Asian art about 50 years ago, specializing in Japanese cloisonne and Chinese snuff bottles. He has donated several pieces to WAM, the latest of which is a Mughal jade dish on long-term exhibit in the newly refurbished SE Asia gallery off the Renaissance Court.

D15. Comparative Economic Systems

Fridays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

March 27, April 10, 17, 24, May 1

In person
AU campus
Kennedy 119



This course will explore the different ways countries have organized their economies. We will review the main theoretical models used by capitalist and socialist countries, examine the actual experiences of some of the world's most important economies, and end by investigating two enduring problems for the US economy, rising income inequality, and health care costs and coverage. Each class session will include time for questions and discussion of relevant current events.

Suggested Readings: *Comparative Economic Systems: Capitalism and Socialism in the 21st Century. An ECI Teaching Module on Social and Economic Issues*, Global Development Policy Center, Boston University.
<http://www.bu.edu/eci/education-materials/teaching-modules>.



Instructor: Tom Gottschang is Professor Emeritus of Economics at the College of the Holy Cross, where he taught economics, including Comparative Economic Systems, for over 40 years. He earned his Ph.D. in economics and history at the University of Michigan.

Spring 2026 Session D Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	3/23, 3/30, 4/13,4/20, 4/27 <i>No classes</i> 4/6	3/24, 3/31, 4/7, 4/14, 4/21	3/25, 4/15, 4/22, 4/29, 5/6 <i>No classes</i> 4/1 or 4/8	3/26, 4/16, 4/23, 4/30, 5/7 <i>No classes</i> 4/2 or 4/9	3/27, 4/10, 4/17, 4/24, 5/1 <i>No classes</i> 4/3
10:00 am	D1. The Changing World of Work Karl Hakkarainen Zoom	D4. American Revolutionary Painters and their Politics Martha Chiarichiaro Zoom	D7. Unavailable	D10. Subject to Citizen: A brief history of a very big idea Susan Franz Zoom	D13. Extraordinary Life of Jane Goodall <i>No class 4/24; last class is 5/8</i> Kathleen Fisher Zoom
1:00 pm	D2. Still More Controversies in Education Susan Starr In Person AU Kennedy 119	D5. Women Reformers <i>No class on 3/24, 4/28 or 5/5; last class is 5/12</i> Jean Sifleet In Person AU Kennedy 119	D8. Dante's <i>Purgatorio</i> James Kee In Person AU Kennedy 119	D11. US Storytellers in France: Mary Cassatt and Faith Ringgold <i>No class 4/23; last class is 5/14</i> Martha McKenna In Person AU Kennedy 119	D14. Survey of the Collections at WAM Limit 22 students Paul Mahon In Person Worcester Art Museum
3:00 pm	D3. <i>Gargantua and Pantagruel</i> by François Rabelais Lilian Corti In Person AU Kennedy 119	D6. Michaelangelo: Living and Working in Florence Fr. Richard Lamoureaux In Person AU Kennedy 119	D9. Invisible World: Our complex relationships with microbes 4-week class only <i>(no class 5/6)</i> Clare O'Connor In Person AU Kennedy 119	D12. The Right to Bear Arms: The Evolving Scope of the 2nd Amendment Jack Ross In person AU Kennedy 119	D15. Comparative Economic Systems Tom Gottschang In Person AU Kennedy 119



Lifelong Learning is WISE