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BE WISE



Become a member of 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.

Worcester Institute for Senior Education Spring 2023 Course Catalog

AND JOIN

website = assumptionwise.org

email = wise@assumption.edu

The WISE Mission

To promote lifelong learning opportunities by offering courses in a variety of topics, special interest groups for in-depth discussions, and activities to foster social engagement and a sense of community.



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

The WISE Classroom

Membership allows access to all courses and events. Classes can be enjoyed online with Zoom recordings made available for online class. And now, in-person classes are back and on campus!

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.



Join Our Community

Register now before Spring classes begin in February. Become a full or half-year member by registering online at assumptionwise.org.

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Membership Fees

Half-Year	\$165
Full-Year	\$330

Important Dates

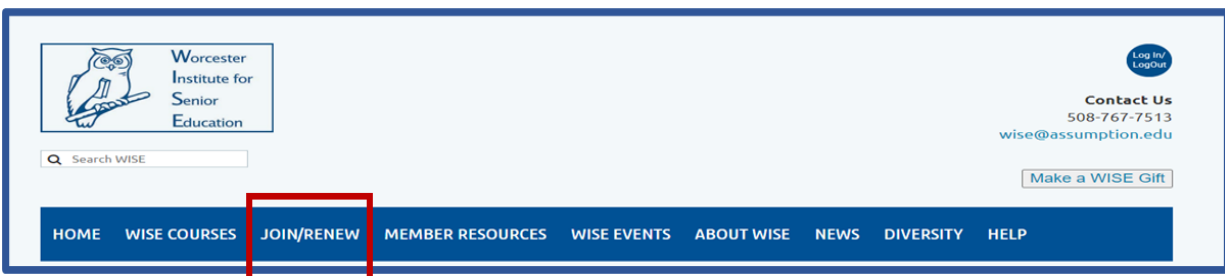
Spring Registration Begins 12:00 Noon: <ul style="list-style-type: none">January 20 for Session CMarch 13 for Session D	
Session C Begins	February 6
Session D Begins	March 27

WISE offers choices for online and in-person instruction.

Interested in becoming a member? Register online at assumptionwise.org or contact wise@assumption.edu. Questions? Give us a call at (508) 767-7513.

How to Register

You can register online to become a member and to sign up for spring classes. Once you have registered, WISE will send you a confirmation email, featuring the courses you have selected.



Registration Assistance

Following the registration instructions for membership will eventually bring you to a screen inviting you to pay online with PayPal. For assistance logging into assumptionwise.org, setting up a WISE profile, and/or registering, contact the WISE Office at wise@assumption.edu or give us a call at (508) 767-7513. We would be happy to help.

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 offered on Zoom, and many also have an in-person option at Assumption University. Courses do not overlap, allowing members to take as many courses as they would like during each session. A few classes are held at other sites in Worcester County. Starting on page 8, see [Course Descriptions](#) for details.

Stop by for a Visit

The WISE Office is located on campus in Room 206 in La Maison Francaise. Our office hours are posted on our website.

The WISE Zoom Office Hour

Every Monday at 1:30 p.m. the WISE Office conducts a meeting on Zoom to discuss the program, invite new ideas, and answer any questions members may have.

Wise Office Hours

Monday Zoom Office Hour at 1:30 p.m. by appointment

Tuesday 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Wednesday 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Friday By appointment only



Meet Our Instructors



Barbara Beall completed her PhD at Brown University. She is a Professor Emerita and former Chair of the Dept. of Art, Music & Theater at

Assumption University, President Emerita of the Worcester Chapter of the AIA - Archaeological Institute of America, and a Visiting Professor at Clark University teaching African and Islamic art and architecture.

C7. Intro to Sacred and Secular Islamic Manuscripts

D15. Understanding the Art Museum



Les Blatt is Professor Emeritus of Physics and Education at Clark University. His research interests include experimental nuclear physics and astrophysics, as well as modern approaches to learning and

teaching science. He has created and taught WISE courses in a variety of areas – some on accessible topics in physics and astronomy, and others on sometimes-unappreciated relationships between science and our daily lives. His presentations often include relevant art and music selections.

D2. Seeing Stars: Our Fascination with Patterns in the Sky



Paul Buono is a member of the music faculty at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Clark University, and Assumption University

where he is the director of the jazz ensemble. Paul holds a bachelor's and master's degree in jazz performance as well as a law degree. He has toured internationally as a pianist and musical director for various ensembles.

C1. Jazz History 4



Martha Chiarchiaro has brought art history to life for more than 30 years. She received her master's degree in the history of art from Williams College and has

taught a variety of classes at the Worcester Art Museum, Worcester State University, WISE, and other cultural organizations.

C3. Artists' Models

D7. American Revolutionary Painters



Joe Corn spent most of his professional career as an engineer. He has taught in the NYC school system, Springfield Technical Community College,

and Penn State University, and worked as a technical instructor for Moore Products Co. Since joining WISE in 2010, Joe has presented both music and technical courses and is also a past President of WISE.

D3. "Greatest Popular Songs: 1960s to the Present"

Lillian Corti obtained her doctorate from the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and went on to teach Italian, French, World Literature, Comparative Drama and Women's Literature at various institutions including the Foreign Language Institute in New York, Tulsa University, the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and the Athens Center in Greece.

C13 & D14. The Way of All Flesh by Samuel Butler



Rabbi Aviva Fellman is the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Israel in Worcester. She has her master's in Talmud and

Jewish Law from Machon Schechter (Jerusalem) and was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary.

C10. Divine Intervention in Jewish Text & Traditions

Page 4



Susan Franz holds a master's degree from Clark University and has taught at several local colleges. Working with other local historians, she played a key role in gaining national park designations for Underground Railroad locations in the Blackstone River Valley. Recognized by the African American Trail, Susan designed a permanent exhibit on the Underground Railroad at the Blackstone Heritage Corridor's River Bend.

C14. Women and the Underground Railroad



Dr. Martha Gach is Education Manager for Mass Audubon's Central Region. She oversees habitat management and adult education. Trained as an ecologist and

evolutionary biologist, she is at heart a generalist who appreciates drawing connections between seemingly disparate parts of the natural world and strengthening the relationship humans have with the environment.

C9. Trees: Structure, Function, Ecology & Climate Change



Margery Gordon is an artist/educator who worked at Smithsonian's American Art Museum (SAAM) and National Museum of Natural History (NMNH). She taught at

Howard University, Corcoran, American University's Olli, and Assumption University's Wise Program. Margery was highlighted in Museum People, and written up in the Worcester Telegram and Gazette, Washington and Denver Posts, and Smithsonian publications. Her permanent artworks are in the National Cancer and Dayton Art Institutes.

D13. My Travels: A Global Discussion of Art & Culture



Karl Hakkarainen is a retired IT professional and longtime WISE instructor. He has taught courses on technology,

history, music, law, digital humanities, and other subjects. He is a graduate of Amherst College and Mount Wachusett Community College. His grandchildren still seek, and sometimes heed, his advice on computers, smartphones, and related gadgets.

C4. Heard But Not Seen: The Studio Musicians

D1. Wrongology: An Exploration of Being Wrong



Rick Hendra is a former community radio DJ and UMass instructor. He has taught histories of the blues and black gospel music for WISE and presented "The Rise of the Female Vocal Groups". He tells the stories of the music and its makers, but also

of the times, the technology, and the long struggle for social justice that has accompanied the evolution of the music industry in America.

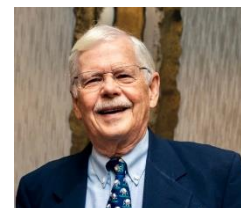
D4. NYC Music: From Minstrels to the Melting Pot



Paul Mahon is Professor Emeritus at Assumption University and a WAM docent and corporator. He collects Chinese and Japanese decorative arts and has had pieces from his

collection exhibited at WAM.

D8. Survey of the Worcester Art Museum Collections



Pete Murphy is a retired Assistant Professor of Management and taught Management in the Business Studies Dept. at Assumption University in

2011. He came to Assumption after a long career in the international energy industry.

C11. The Industrial Revolution in 19th Century New England



David Nevard grew up in suburban Boston and has always been fascinated by history – especially the postwar era. He attended UMass-Amherst and worked as an IT professional for over 30 years. Since retirement, David has been an instructor at WISE and other area lifelong learning programs.

C2 & D12. *Lost and Found: Displaced Persons after WWII*



Clare O'Connor is a cell biologist who received her Ph.D. from Purdue and did postdoctoral research at UCLA and Caltech. She moved to Shrewsbury in 1984 and led a lab at the former Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology before joining the Biology Department at Boston College in 1995. She taught both introductory and advanced courses in genetics and molecular cell biology before retiring from BC in 2017.

D5. *Genomes: Our DNA Blueprints*



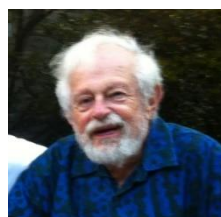
Ben Railton is Professor of English and American Studies at Fitchburg State University. He is the author of 7 books, most recently *Two Sandlots: Baseball, Bigotry, and the Battle for America*. He also writes the daily American Studies blog and contributes to the bimonthly “Considering History” column in the *Saturday Evening Post*.

D10. *Great American Short Stories, Past and Present*



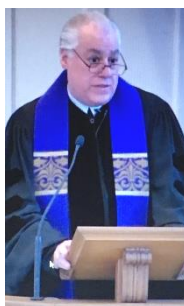
John S. Ross, III (Jack) holds degrees from Yale University and the University of Virginia School of Law. He served as Adjunct Professor of Law at Washington & Lee University and has taught numerous courses in the WISE program with a focus on constitutional law and the Supreme Court. Jack also facilitates the WISE Special Interest Group focused on discussing Supreme Court case decisions.

C8. *A Citizens Guide to the Supreme Court*
D9. *Democracy on the Brink*



Richard Schmitt has been teaching Philosophy for 68 years: 6 years as a Graduate Assistant and Instructor at Yale University; 42 years at Brown University; 12 at Worcester State University; and for a period of time at Becker. He has been teaching courses at Wise for about 25 years. He earned a BA and MA at the University of Chicago. He received his secondary education at the Eerde International Quakerschool, which Philadelphia Quakers maintained in the 1930s and 40s to allow German Jewish children to live and survive outside Nazi Germany.

C5 & D11. *Ethics and the Environment*



Rev. Dr. Gary Shahinian earned a Ph.D. degree in Philosophy from the Free University of Amsterdam, Netherlands. He wrote his doctoral dissertation on the problem of evil in the thought of Alfred North Whitehead, the father of Process Philosophy. He has taught philosophy and theology courses at Redeemer College in Ontario, Dordt College in Iowa, and Worcester State University.

C12. *Process Theology: A New Way of Looking at God and the World*



Bill Shelley is a retired software engineer with a lifelong love of art and history. Since becoming a docent at the Worcester Art Museum, he has enjoyed sharing these interests with others on museum tours and classes.

Virginia (Ginny) Powell-Brasier was a high school teacher of English and German for 32 years. A big fan of the German Expressionists, she is currently a docent at the Worcester Art Museum.

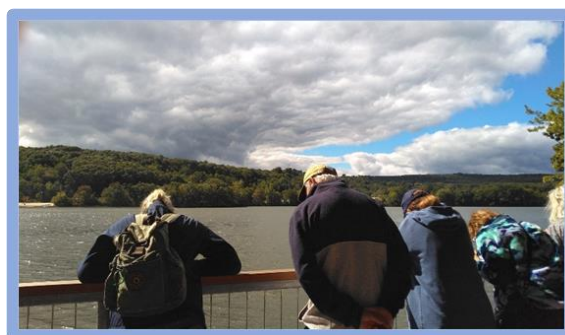
C6. How to Read Art



Jean Sifleet is a retired attorney and CPA. She worked in corporate management, consulting, and private practice. She has taught business and intellectual property law. In retirement, Jean served as an

Access to Justice Fellow and worked with the Mass Law Reform Institute on immigration policy and reform initiatives.

D6. Cults: Past, Present, and Future



Spring 2023 Session C ZOOM ONLY					
	Monday 2/6, 2/13, 2/20, 2/27, 3/6	Tuesday 2/7, 2/14, 2/21, 2/28, 3/7	Wednesday 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8	Thursday 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9	Friday 2/10, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10
10:00	C1. Jazz History 4	C3. Artists' Models Through the Centuries	C6. How to Read Art Worcester Art Museum [Arrive by 9:40] Class size limited to 20; WAM is closed 3/1. Make-up class on 3/15)	C9. Trees: Structure, Function, Ecology, and Climate Change	C12. Process Theology: A New Way of Looking at God and the World
1:00	C2. Lost & Found: Displaced Persons After WWII	C4. Heard But Not Seen: Studio Musicians	C7. Intro to Sacred & Secular Islamic Manuscripts	C10. Divine Intervention in Jewish Texts & Traditions	C13. The Way of All Flesh by Samuel Butler
3:00		C5. Ethics and the Environment	C8. A Citizen's Guide to the Supreme Court	C11. The Industrial Revolution in 19 th Century New England	C14. Women and the Underground Railroad

Session C: Course Descriptions

C1. Jazz History 4

Instructor: Paul Buono

- Mondays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- 2/6, 2/13, 2/20, 2/27, 3/6
- Zoom Only

This is a continuation of Jazz History 3. Jazz history is American history – the study of culture, politics, and economics of the 20thth century. Its characters are the geniuses, virtuosos, outcasts, pioneers, eccentrics, and revolutionaries of American history. Post-Civil War America presented tremendous division within the country, but this landscape gave rise to a form of music often referred to as America's only true art form. Using lecture, PowerPoint, video and audio examples, and live at-the-piano demonstrations, this course will examine the jazz compositions styles of some the most well-known jazz composers, as well as the music of two of the most influential musicians of all-time.

C2. The European Lost and Found: Displaced Persons After WWII (continues into Session D)

Instructor: David Nevard

- Mondays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 2/6, 2/13, 2/20, 2/27, 3/6
- Zoom Only

In the late 1940s, "DP" was a term to describe Europeans who didn't seem to belong anywhere. Thin, tired, wearing donated clothing, they waited in crowded "camps," mostly former army barracks, assigned by nationality. The DPs could not return to their home countries, but it seemed no nation was willing to take them. Eventually over 400,000 displaced persons came to the U.S. While their children and grandchildren have become part of American society, their struggles are largely forgotten. We will focus on many personal stories. We will also look at high-level policy and how powerful Americans like Truman, Eisenhower, and Eleanor Roosevelt worked to help the displaced. The new identities of the State of Israel and the Ukrainian republic both came out of these turbulent times.

Required Reading: *DPs Europe's Displaced Persons, 1945-1951* by Mark Wyman. Cornell University Press.

ISBN-13: 978-0801485428

Optional Reading: *The Wild Place*, by Kathryn Hulme. Little, Brown. ISBN: 0961469684

C3. Artists' Models Through the Centuries

Instructor: Martha Chiarchiaro

- Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- 2/7, 2/14, 2/21, 2/28, 3/7
- Zoom Only

Artists' models have inspired artistic creativity for centuries. We'll explore the wives who have served as models for artists such as Rubens, Rembrandt, Boucher, Picasso, and Katz. We'll also examine the lives of models famous in their time, such as Emma Hart, Joanna Hiffernan, and Kathleen Newton. Models who became artists themselves will be illustrated in the works of artists such as Elizabeth Siddal, model for Rossetti; Victorine-Louise Meurent, model for Manet; and Suzanne Valadon, model for Renoir.

Recommended Reading: *Dictionary of Artists' Models*, Edited by Jill Berk Jiminez. 2001: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, Chicago, IL. 9781579582333, 1579582338

C4. Heard But Not Seen: The Studio Musicians

Instructor: Karl Hakkarainen

- Tuesdays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 2/7, 2/14, 2/21, 2/28, 3/7
- Zoom Only

The bass line in Sonny and Cher's "The Beat Goes On" came from Carol Kaye of L.A.'s Wrecking Crew. Funk Brothers guitarist Robert White pulls us in to "My Girl" by The Temptations. Elvis Presley wanted Nashville's Boots Randolph's saxophone as the lead on "Return to Sender." Al Jackson, Jr.'s simple cross-stick drumming picks up the heartbeat of Otis Reddings's "Try a Little Tenderness." Another Redding tune, "Respect," was recorded at the Muscle Shoals studio, with Jimmy Johnson's instantly recognizable guitar hook. We'll listen to these and other musicians, and, in the process, we'll hear new layers of familiar tunes.

C5. Ethics and the Environment (continues into Session D)

Instructor: Richard Schmitt

- Tuesdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
- 2/7, 2/14, 2/21, 2/28, 3/7
- Zoom Only

Philosophy has a number of separate fields of which Ethics is one. Its topic is human behavior under the aspect of evaluating behavior. We regularly call human behavior "good" or "bad." But it is not easy to say what criteria we use to call behavior "good" or "bad." Added to the study of behavior is consideration of one's duty to perform—think of children's obligations toward their parents and obligations of parents toward their children. In our time of environmental crisis, questions arise as to what behavior with respect to the environment should be considered good or bad and whether we have any obligations with respect to environmental matters.

C6. How to Read Art

Instructors: Virginia (Ginny) Powell-Brasier and Bill Shelley

- Wednesdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. (please arrive early @ 9:30/9:40 a.m.)
- 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 3/8, 3/15
- Worcester Art Museum

Much of fine art is the art of storytelling. In this in-person class, we will view objects in the Worcester Art Museum's galleries and learn how to read visual stories narrated by artists across the last 5,000 years. Enter these storied worlds and deepen your appreciation of them. We will examine examples from various ancient cultures as well as European and American art from the Middle Ages through the 20th Century. This course will look at different objects than those in the 2021 and 2022 sessions.

C7. Introduction to Sacred and Secular Islamic Manuscripts

Instructor: Dr. Barbara Beall

- Wednesdays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8
- Zoom Only

This course introduces Islamic manuscripts from the 7th century continuing to ca. 1800 and their importance as texts and as artistic works combining the arts of calligraphy, illumination, illustration and book production. Study will focus on the *Qur'an* as well as secular manuscripts ranging from chronicles, universal histories, travelers' descriptions and on topics such as medicine, astronomy, medicine, geography, and collections of stories such as the *Maqamat*. We will also look at the establishment of major libraries indicating the tremendous value placed upon learning. Woven throughout the class will be discussion of the medium (materials and techniques), sequence of production, the establishment of *scriptoria*, types of script, decorative elements, workshop practice, patronage, and possible reasons for the late movement into printed text.

C8. A Citizen's Guide to the Supreme Court

Instructor: Jack Ross, Esquire

- Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
- 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8
- Zoom Only

This course will examine the Supreme Court as an institution. Topics will include the history and constitutional framework of the Court; jurisdictional issues; the role of the Court in the federal court system; the Court's procedures for selecting and deciding cases; the process of nominating and confirming justices; the influence of ideology and politics on the Court's decisions; the implications of the recent ideological shift of the Court; the increasing use of the "shadow docket"; and proposals for reforming the Court.

Required Reading: *The U.S. Supreme Court: A Very Short Introduction*, Linda Greenhouse (Oxford Univ Press, 2012) ISBN 978-0-19-975454-0

Recommended Reading: *The Supreme Court*, William H. Rehnquist (Vintage Books, 2001) ISBN 0-375-40943-2

C9. Trees: Structure, Function, Ecology, and Climate Change

Instructor: Dr. Martha Gach

- Thursdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9
- Zoom Only

Consider the world from a tree's perspective. From the start of life as a tiny seed, trees must assimilate water and nutrients from the surrounding air and soils. As sessile creatures, trees must not only adapt to their increasing height and mass, but also a variable environment that features temperature extremes, heavy precipitation, and drought. How do trees communicate and interact with their surroundings, including other inhabitants of the forest? How are trees faring under climate change and how can trees help with it? We will visit the challenges and successes of trees, the ecology of life from roots to canopy, and the important role of trees in our changing New England climate.

C10. Divine Intervention in Jewish Texts and Traditions

Instructor: Rabbi Aviva Fellman

- Thursdays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9
- Zoom Only

What is the role of miracles and God in Jewish tradition and lore? Come and journey with us through the realms of hope, miraculous tales, and even the absurd as we look at texts that delve into the roles and existence of prophets, talking animals, speech impediments, Divine voice, angels, Rabbinic theology, moving trees and rivers, and more.

C11. The Industrial Revolution in 19th Century New England

Instructor: Pete Murphy

- Thursdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
- 2/9, 2/16, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9
- Zoom Only

These classes will look at the 19th century development of the textile industry in New England: the transfer of technology from the UK, the mill systems of New England, the immigrant labor to run them, and the ultimate decline and departure of the industry. We will discuss how New England was changed through the rise and fall of this industry, and the impact on our modern lives.

C12. Process Theology: A New Way of Looking at God and the World

- Instructor: Gary Shahinian
- Fridays: 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- 2/10, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10
- Zoom Only

Process theology offers a new way of looking at God and the world, rejecting traditional categories and concepts. Based on the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, one of the most original thinkers of the twentieth century, it emphasizes process (or becoming) as the basic reality rather than substance or being. Not just momentary actualities, but even God is part of this ongoing process of creativity that characterizes the concrete world. Process theology rejects traditional views of divine omnipotence, omniscience, and impassibility, as well as images of God as Cosmic Moralizer, Controlling Power, and Sanctioner of the Status Quo. As such, it presents a view of God that many find more appealing than the classical view of God.

Recommended Reading: *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition*, John B. Cobb, Jr. and David Ray Griffin. Westminster Press (1976); ISBN-10 : 0664247431; ISBN-13 : 978-0664247430

C13. The Way of All Flesh by Samuel Butler (continues into Session D)

Instructor: Lillian Corti

- Fridays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 2/10, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10
- Zoom Only

We will read Samuel Butler's, *The Way of All Flesh*, an iconoclastic and hilarious novel that George Bernard Shaw described as "one of the summits of human achievement." The survivor of a notably unhappy childhood, Butler distinguished himself as a student of classics at Cambridge, and this semi-autobiographical novel displays the psychological acuity of one who has dealt with his own share of adversity. It also reflects ancient classical patterns in that it presents the life of Ernest Pontifex on a journey obstructed by latter-day Poseidons and Cyclopes, enlivened by Calypsos, and ultimately salvaged by a benevolent Athena. In short, the story of Butler's young protagonist may seem to recall the world of Homer while anticipating the achievement of James Joyce.


Required Reading: Samuel Butler, *The Way of All Flesh*. New York: Modern Library, 1998. ISBN: 0-375-75249-8.

C14. Women and the Underground Railroad

Instructor: Susan Franz

- Fridays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
- 2/10, 2/17, 2/24, 3/3, 3/10
- Zoom Only

We take a look at the women who were the public and private faces of the Underground Railroad and abolition movements and who became teachers, journalists, fighters, as well as UGRR conductors and station keepers. We see many of the same women opening the way to change the lives of American women, allowing entrance into the public sphere, and establishing the road to suffrage and political enfranchisement. We will meet Charlotte Forten, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Sarah M. Douglass, Mary Ann Shadd Cary, Rebecca Buffum, Abby Kelley Foster, Elizabeth Buffum Chase, Frederick Douglass, Charles Lenox Remond, and Wendell Phillips, among others.

Spring 2023 Session D					
	Monday 3/27, 4/3, 4/10, 4/17, 4/24	Tuesday 3/28, 4/4/, 4/11, 4/18, 4/25	Wednesday 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26	Thursday 3/30, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4	Friday 3/31, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, 5/5
10:00	D1. Wrongology: An Explanation of Being Wrong Zoom	D4. NYC Music: From Minstrels to the Melting Pot ?? (Class size limited to 15 registrants)	D7. American Revolutionary War Painters and Their Politics Zoom	D10. Great American Short Stories: Past and Present; Class begins 9:15 a.m. Zoom	D13. My Travels: Global Discoveries of Art and Culture Zoom
1:00	D2. Seeing Stars: Exploring Our Fascination With Patterns in the Sky Kennedy 119	D5. Genomes: Our DNA Blueprints Kennedy 119	D8. A Survey of Collections at the WAM Worcester Art Museum (Class size limited to 22 registrants)	D11. Ethics and the Environment Zoom	D14. The Way of All Flesh by Samuel Butler Kennedy 119
3:00	D3. "The Greatest Popular Songs": 1960s to the Present Kennedy 119	D6. Cults: Past, Present, and Future 4/11, 4/18, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9 Kennedy 119	D9. Democracy on the Brink (No class on 4/5; class will be made up on 5/3) Kennedy 119	D12. The European Lost & Found: Displaced Persons After WWII Kennedy 119	D15. Understanding the Museum Worcester Art Museum (Class size limited to 22 registrants)

Session D: Course Descriptions

D1. Wrongology: An Explanation of Being Wrong

Instructor: Karl Hakkarainen

- Mondays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- 3/27, 4/3, 4/10, 4/17, 4/24
- Zoom Only

Augustine of Hippo wrote, "Fallor ergo sum." ("I err, there for I am.") Being wrong isn't necessarily a moral failing; it's deeply baked into who we are. This course will let us explore the ways in which we have been, are, and will be wrong about science, politics, economics, religion, and ourselves. We'll look at stories of wrongness, some comical, some tragic, some that maybe, just maybe, will convince us that we've been wrong. It's there, in that chaotic chasm, that learning can become fun.

Recommended Reading:

- Schulz, Kathryn. *Being Wrong: Adventures in the Margin of Error*. Harper Collins, 2011.
- Klosterman, Chuck. *But What If We're Wrong?: Thinking About the Present As If It Were the Past*. Penguin, 2017.
- Taleb, Nassim Nicholas. *The Black Swan: Second Edition: The Impact of the Highly Improbable: With a New Section: "On Robustness and Fragility."* Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2010.

D2. Seeing Stars: Exploring Our Fascination With Patterns in the Sky

Instructor: Les Blatt

- Mondays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 3/27, 4/3, 4/10, 4/17, 4/24
- Kennedy 119

Cave paintings in southern France, created some 18,000 years ago, show hunting scenes and other images of our prehistoric ancestors' activities and interests. They also include maps of stars still visible in the skies today. The stars and planets have long guided us in seasonal activities like planting and harvesting; we have associated deities with them; studying them has taught us about the universe at large. We will discuss some significant findings in Astronomy, ancient and modern, and look, briefly, at its mystical counterpart, Astrology. We'll talk about calendars, clocks, and other ways we have enhanced our understanding of and enchantment with those "diamonds in the sky."

Recommended Reading: *The Sky Atlas: The Greatest Maps, Myths, and Discoveries of the Universe*, by Edward Brooke-Hitching. Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 2020. ISBN 978-1-7972-0118-4

D3. "The Greatest Popular Songs": 1960s to the Present

Instructor: Joe Corn

- Mondays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
- 3/27, 4/3, 4/10, 4/17, 4/24
- Kennedy 119

If you were to place ten people in a room and ask each to come up with a list of their 50 favorite popular songs over the past 60 years, you would almost certainly come up with ten very different lists. I've put together a collection of my own 50-60 favorite and most memorable songs recorded by a wide variety of very talented songwriters and artists recorded since the 1960s (my high school and college days) but also with some much more recent recordings. Please join me for a trip down memory lane as we recall some of these great songs. I hope I've captured many of your favorite songs too – which will help bring back some great memories! (Singing along is also encouraged, if you're so moved.)

D4. NYC Music: From Minstrels to the Melting Pot

Instructor: Rick Hendra

- Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- 3/28, 4/4, 4/11, 4/18, 4/25
- Class size is limited to 15 registrants

For most of the 20th century, New York City was the music capital of the world. Music publishing and recordings were centered there, from which talent expanded across the U.S. and into Europe. NYC became known as a melting pot, a place where the races and ethnicities mixed and managed, mostly in parallel, sometimes in conflict as in most of America, but often in creative collaboration. It's surprising how much of America's music started here, from minstrelsy to bebop. The growing sense of common cause within New York's creative community threatened various vested interests, and so NYC became the epicenter of reactionary FBI and Congressional investigations in the 1940s and 1950s. This is the story of the evolution of American popular music in its evolving social and historical context. **This course is offered as a seminar rather than a lecture.** Rick will lead the discussion with slides and music, but those who attend in person will be expected to watch and respond to one of five Zoom documentaries Rick has prepared. Those who attend via Zoom are welcome to add their questions to the discussion and will not be expected to watch a Zoom documentary.

D5. Genomes: Our DNA Blueprints

Instructor: Clare O'Connor

- Tuesdays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 3/28, 4/4/, 4/11, 4/18, 4/25
- Kennedy 119

Each of us possesses a unique genome with the DNA code that allows us to function. Although a draft human genome sequence was released in 2003, the complete sequence only became available recently, due to powerful new sequencing technologies. Today, individual genome sequences can be determined at a moderate cost. In this course, we'll discuss how this "genome revolution" is providing new insights into human diversity, evolution and population changes over time. We'll also discuss how genome information is being used in medicine and recent developments in gene therapy.

D6. Cults: Past, Present, and Future

Instructor: Jean Sifleet

- Tuesdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
- 4/11, 4/18, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9
- Kennedy 119

From ancient to modern times, charismatic cult leaders have attracted devoted followers. Learn from the stories of some infamous cults including doomsday cults (e.g., Jim Jones), political cults (e.g., QAnon), racist cults (e.g., KKK), terrorist cults (e.g., al-Qaeda). Learn why people join cults and how cult leaders gain power and use mind control techniques to manipulate people and control their behavior.

D7. American Revolutionary War Painters and Their Politics

Instructor: Martha Chiarchiaro

- Wednesdays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26
- Zoom Only

This course will explore five of the most prominent American artists during our Revolutionary War and 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*.

Recommended Reading: *Of Arms and Artists*, Paul Staiti. Bloomsbury Press, 2016.

ISBN # HB:978-1-63286-465-9

D8. A Survey of Collections at the Worcester Art Museum

Instructor: Paul Mahon

- Wednesdays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 3/29, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26
- Class size limited to 22 registrants
- Worcester Art Museum

This course will consist of a series of gallery talks covering most of the collections at the Worcester Art Museum. The course is designed for members who want a broad introduction to the museum through a survey of collections. Due to gallery limits at WAM, this class is limited to 22 participants.

D9. Democracy on the Brink

Instructor: Jack Ross

- Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
- 3/29, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3
- Kennedy 119

This course will explore the current state of democracy in the United States and examine a number of concerns that have emerged in recent years. How is the republic created by the Framers of the Constitution holding up under current political strains? What are the potential threats to our democracy? What safeguards are available? Topics will include the political phenomenon of Trumpism; the Big Lie, the scheme to overturn the 2020 election and the January 6th insurrection; flaws in the Electoral College and reform of the Electoral Count Act; dysfunctions in the election system (voter suppression, gerrymandering, trends in state laws and politics since the 2020 election); the Elections Clause and the role of federal and state courts in resolving electoral disputes; the influence of white supremacist groups and Christian nationalism; parallels to fascism; the antidemocratic effect of the Senate filibuster; and the political and ideological alignment of the Supreme Court.

D10. Great American Short Stories: Past and Present

Instructor: Ben Railton

- Thursdays 9:15 – 10:45 a.m.
- 3/30, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4
- Zoom Only

Let's read some great short stories! In this course we'll pair contemporary stories from the *Best American Short Stories 2022* anthology with great stories from throughout American history, talking about the stories individually, in conversation with each other, and as lenses through which to analyze many different literary, cultural, and historical contexts.

Required Reading: *Best American Stories 2022*. Mariner Books. ISBN: 0358664713**D10**.

D11. Ethics and the Environment (continued from Session C)

Instructor: Richard Schmitt

- Thursdays 1:00 – 2:30 pm.
- 3/30, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4
- Zoom Only

Philosophy has a number of separate fields of which Ethics is one – the evaluation of human behavior. We regularly call human behavior “good” or “bad.” But it is not easy to say what criteria we use to call behavior good or bad. Think of children’s obligations toward their parents and obligations of parents toward their children. In our time of environmental crisis, questions arise as to what behavior with respect to the environment should be considered good or bad and whether we have any obligations with respect to environmental matters.

D 12. The European Lost and Found: Displaced Persons After WWII (continued from Session C)

Instructor: David Nevard

- Thursdays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
- 3/30, 4/13, 4/20, 4/27, 5/4
- Kennedy 119

In the late 1940s, “DP” was a term to describe Europeans who didn’t seem to belong anywhere. Thin, tired, wearing donated clothing, they waited in crowded “camps,” mostly former army barracks, assigned by nationality. The DPs could not return to their home countries, but it seemed no nation was willing to take them. Eventually over 400,000 displaced persons came to the US. We will focus on their personal stories. We will also look at high-level policy and how powerful Americans like Truman, Eisenhower, and Eleanor Roosevelt worked to help the displaced.

Required Reading: *DPs Europe’s Displaced Persons, 1945-1951* by Mark Wyman. Cornell University Press.

ISBN-13: 978-0801485428

Optional Reading: *The Wild Place*, by Kathryn Hulme. Little, Brown. ISBN: 0961469684

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D 13. My Travels: Global Discoveries of Art and Culture

Instructor: Margery Gordon

- Fridays 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- 3/31, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, 5/5
- Zoom Only

This course will present great art, architecture, history, food, and culture as they relate to the instructor's travels. This course will review her trips to Europe, Israel, and Latin and South America; each session will feature a different country. There will be a focus on Rembrandt, Vermeer, Van Gogh, Gaudi, Picasso, Giacometti, Miro, Matisse, Monet, Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, and carnival masks. Also featured will be presentations of the Dead sea scrolls, baths, and ancient Greek, Minoan and Roman art. The course will include insights into art, architecture, and culture, along with humor and memories of Margery's youth.

D14. The Way of All Flesh by Samuel Butler (continued from C Session)

Instructor: Lillian Corti

- Fridays 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
- 3/31, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, 5/5
- Kennedy 119

We will read Samuel Butler's, *The Way of All Flesh*, an iconoclastic and hilarious novel that George Bernard Shaw described as "one of the summits of human achievement." The survivor of a notably unhappy childhood, Butler distinguished himself as a student of classics at Cambridge, and this semi-autobiographical novel displays the psychological acuity of one who has dealt with his own share of adversity. It also reflects ancient classical patterns in that it presents the life of Ernest Pontifex on a journey obstructed by latter-day Poseidons and Cyclopes, enlivened by Calypsos and ultimately salvaged by a benevolent Athena. In short, the story of Butler's young protagonist may seem to recall the world of Homer while anticipating the achievement of James Joyce.

Required Reading: Samuel Butler, *The Way of All Flesh*. New York: Modern Library, 1998. ISBN: 0-375-75249-8.

D15. Understanding the Museum

Instructor: Barbara Beall

- Fridays 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
- 3/31, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28, 5/5
- Class size limited to 22 registrants
- Worcester Art Museum

This course is designed to assist in making your visit to an art museum a more meaningful experience. It is based on the premise that the best experience is an interactive one, and this interaction has three major components - you, the art, and the museum. This course provides basic information, the terminology and the "tools" to help you look more closely, interpret the art and understand the multiple roles and messages of the art and the museum as well as some of the challenges facing art museums today. Meetings will be held in the galleries of the Worcester Art Museum.

Spring 2023 Overview

Spring classes this year are offered in person and on Zoom.

All C Session courses are presented on Zoom, except for one course, *How to Read Art*, which will be conducted at the Worcester Art Museum.

Please review the list below of D Session courses since they are featured in a variety of ways: on Zoom; in person; and on site. Regarding in-person classes, a Zoom option will NOT be provided; Zoom recordings will not be available.

D Session Courses Offered In Person Only; join us on campus in Kennedy 119:

- D2. Seeing Stars: Exploring Our Fascination With Patterns in the Sky
- D3. “The Greatest Popular Songs”: 1960s to the Present
- D4. NYC: From Minstrels to the Melting Pot
- D5. Genomes: Our DNA Blueprints
- D6. Cults: Past, Present, and Future
- D9. Democracy on the Brink

*D12. The European Lost and Found – Displaced Persons After WWII

*D14. Samuel Butler’s *The Way of All Flesh*

**These courses begin on Zoom in Session C and resume in person in Session D*

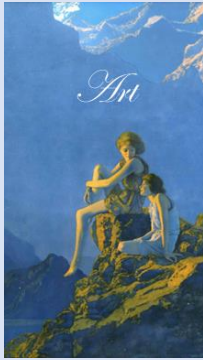
D Session Courses Offered on Zoom Only:

- D1. Wrongology: An Exploration of Being Wrong
- D7. American Revolutionary War Painters and Their Politics
- D10. Great American Short Stories: Past and Present
- D11. Ethics and the Environment
- D13. My Travels: Global Discoveries of Art and Culture

C and D Session Courses at the Worcester Art Museum

- C6. How to Read Art
- D8. Survey of WAM Collections
- D15. Understanding the Museum

Courses by Categories:



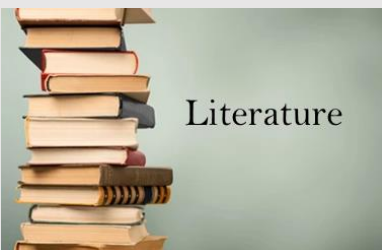
C3. Artists' Models Through the Centuries
C6. How to Read Art
C7. Intro to Sacred and Secular Islamic Manuscripts
D7. American Revolutionary War Painters and Their Politics
D8. Survey of Worcester Art Museum Collections
D13. My Travels: Global Discoveries of Art and Culture
D15. Understanding the Museum



C8. A Citizen's Guide to the Supreme Court
D9. Democracy on the Brink



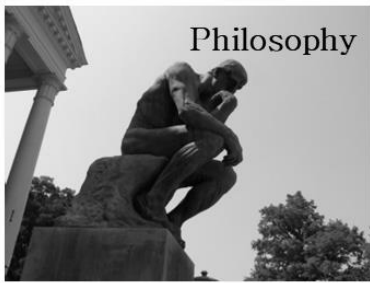
C1. Jazz History 4
C2 & D12. The European Lost & Found: Displaced Persons After WWII
C3. Artists' Models Through the Centuries
C4. Heard But Not Seen: The Studio Musicians
C7. Intro to Sacred and Secular Islamic Manuscripts
C8. A Citizen's Guide to the Supreme Court
C11. The Industrial Revolution in 19th Century New England
C14. Women and the Underground Railroad
D3. "The Greatest Popular Songs": 1960s to the Present
D4. NYC Music: From Minstrels to the Melting Pot
D6. Cults: Past, Present, and Future
D7. American Revolutionary War Painters and Their Politics



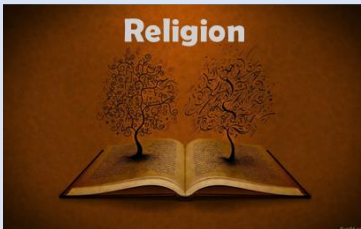
C13 & D14. They Way of All Flesh by Samuel Butler
D15. Great American Short Stories: Past and Present



C1. Jazz History 4
 C5. Heard But Not Seen: The Studio Musicians
 D3. "The Greatest Popular Songs": 1960s to the Present
 D4. NYC Music: From Minstrels to the Melting Pot



C5 & D11. Ethics and the Environment
 D1. Wrongology: An Explanation of Being Wrong



C7. Intro to Sacred and Secular Islamic Manuscripts
 C10. Divine Intervention in Jewish Texts and Traditions
 C12. Process Theology: A New Way of Looking at God and the World



C9. Trees: Structure, Function, Ecology, and Climate Change
 D2. Seeing Stars: Our Fascination With Patterns in the Sky
 D5. Genomes: Our DNA Blueprints



D6: Cults: Past, Present, and Future



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