

Course Offerings **FALL 2025**

**ALFA**

**Adult Learning  
IN THE Fitchburg Area**



**FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY**



Registration  
opens:  
**August 5  
9 AM**

**Love of Learning Lasts a Lifetime!**

[fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA](https://fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA)



# What is ALFA?

ALFA (Adult Learning in the Fitchburg Area) is a life-long learning program within the school of Graduate, Online and Continuing Education at Fitchburg State University. ALFA serves older adults in Fitchburg and the surrounding communities.

► **Mission**

ALFA provides an opportunity for lifelong learners to meet and share interests in an informal setting and pursue learning for enrichment and personal growth.

► **Teach with ALFA!**

Have a specialty that you think others would be interested in? We're always looking for new instructors and new subject areas to offer our ALFA's. Contact us at [alfa@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:alfa@fitchburgstate.edu) for details about becoming an ALFA instructor.

► **Have a question?**

Call the ALFA Office at **978-665-3706** or email us at [alfa@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:alfa@fitchburgstate.edu).



## Contents

**Instructor Bios** ..... 1-3

**Fall 2025 (SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER)**

**At-A-Glance Schedule**..... 12-13

**Course Descriptions**..... 4-11; 14-17

**Registration Information**..... 18-20

**Registration Forms** ..... 21-22

## Easy online registration



Know **INSTANTLY** if you got into a course!

**Registration opens August 5th**

[marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA](https://marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA)



Scan this code with your mobile device to visit our registration page.

## Instructor & Facilitator Biographies | FALL 2025



**Jean Borgatti** has been consulting curator of African and Oceanic art at the Fitchburg Art Museum since 2010. She has faculty status at Clark University where she taught from 1984-2004 in the Visual and Performing Arts Department. She received her B.A. in Art History (Modern Art) from Wellesley College (1966) and her M.A. (1971) and Ph.D. (1976) in Art History (Non-Western Art) from UCLA. She has carried out extensive research in Nigeria initially between 1971-1974 (doctoral research) and more recently in 2002-2004 as well as 2014-2016 as a Fulbright Scholar. Her most recently opened exhibition at FAM is *Festival – A Celebration of African Art* (April 2025-March 2026). In this exhibition, terracotta from the first millennium BCE and contemporary work by transnational Nigerian artists, bookend works that are best described as “traditional” or “iconic” that date from the 19th and 20th centuries, but reflect much older practices.



**Eric Budd** is a professor of political science at Fitchburg State University, where he has taught since 1994. Dr. Budd is the former Chair of the Economics, History, and Political Science Department. He received his doctorate in Political Science from the University of Chicago in 1993. He is the author of *Democratization, Development, and the Patrimonial State in the Age of Globalization* and *Conflicted are the Peacemakers: Israeli and Palestinian Moderates and the Death of Oslo*. He is now finalizing his manuscript *Reimagining the Post-Conflict State*.



**Joe Choiniere** is a retired naturalist with over four decades of experience teaching courses in all aspects of nature study, including mammals, birds, snakes, frogs, trees, shrubs, ferns, lichens, mosses and, for this course, mushrooms. He is especially interested in helping beginners to learn the most common species of plants, animals, and fungi in their own backyards. His unique approach using hand drawn handouts blends art and science.



**Paula Cookson Luria** is a retired ESL & bilingual teacher of kindergarten through graduate-level students. She loves to travel and frequently uses her Spanish skills while exploring the world. Her recent passions include gardening and decluttering.



**Sally Cragin** is an award-winning journalist (*Boston Phoenix*, *Boston Globe*) and the author of *The Astrological Elements*, and *Astrology on the Cusp* (Llewellyn Worldwide). Both books have been translated and sold in many countries including India, Russia, Canada, British Virgin Islands, the Czech Republic and Estonia. She is also the director/founder of Be PAWSitive Therapy Pets and Community Education

an award-winning organization based in north-central Massachusetts which helps develop, mentor, and insure therapy pet teams.



**Martha Crawford** is a retired consultant focusing on customer development in the banking and nonprofit arts in the US and Europe. She has a background in political science and philosophy, and a long-term appreciation of art, culture and making connections.



**Samantha deManbey** has worked for over eight years as a documentary filmmaker and theater artist. In June 2023, she completed her M.F.A. in Documentary Media at Toronto Metropolitan University. From 2018 to 2021 she helped run The Forge Theater Lab, a company dedicated to developing and producing new plays. Her short documentary, *One World is Writing*, about author Shirley Jackson, has screened at IFFBoston and NYC Indie Theatre Film Festival. It won Best Experimental Short at the Shawna Shea Film Festival and Best Documentary at the Reading Film Festival. Learn more about her work at [www.herrepublicfilms.com](http://www.herrepublicfilms.com).



**Teresa Fava Thomas** is a professor of history at Fitchburg State University and holds a doctorate in history from Clark University. She teaches courses in Modern Italian History and Italian Immigration; and has written *The Allied Bombing of Central Italy: The Restoration of the Nile Mosaic and Sanctuary of Fortuna at Palestrina*, as well as *The Reluctant Migrants: Migration From the Italian Veneto*; and written two articles for the online *World History Encyclopedia*: *Doge's Palace in Venice – Article* and *Sanctuary of Fortuna Primigenia at Palestrina* - both available at [www.worldhistory.org](http://www.worldhistory.org)



**Tom Gaskill** is an award winning retired high school physics and earth sciences teacher with 32 years of experience. He holds a degree in applied physics concentrating in earth sciences, and a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction in Science and is a lifelong learner who isn't finished sharing his love of science with others. His specialty is taking difficult material and turning it into an accessible, inclusive, and digestible learning experience, a necessity in his extensive career working with students who are not served by traditional learning strategies.



**Catherine Hunter** was a 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 in the Department of Textiles at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Since 2019, Hunter has developed and taught courses for adult learning communities. Her courses reflect a lifelong interest in the intersection of art, art history, science, and culture. Hunter is a member of the New Bedford Whaling Museum and the International Congress of Maritime Museums.



**Ann-marie LaBollita** is an artist and teacher who believes in the transformational power of art and yoga. She has a B.F.A. in painting and an M.F.A. in studio teaching. Ann-marie is also a Certified Yoga Instructor and a Let Your Yoga Dance instructor. She happily spends her time teaching, in her studio and on her yoga mat.



**Nick Langhart** holds an M.A. in Historic Preservation from Cornell University. He recently retired as director of the Forbush Library in Westminster. He has been an instructor for the Evolution of New England Architecture and for the History of Worcester's Architecture at Clark University and Worcester State University. He is also vice president and treasurer of the Steamship Historical Society of America, Inc. Formerly he was Property Manager for the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, now Historic New England.



**Tina Lelli** is a retired elementary school teacher with over 35 years of experience in education. A proud alumna of Fitchburg State University and a lifelong resident of the area, she remains deeply connected to the field of teaching. Currently, she serves as a program supervisor for Fitchburg State University's Education Department, where she mentors and supports teacher candidates. In this role, she provides valuable guidance and feedback, helping future educators develop their skills, implement best practices, and meet university program requirements on their path to success. Beyond her professional work, Tina enjoys reading, attending concerts and theater performances, traveling, hiking, biking, and walking with her dog.



**Sarah Lewis** (she/her) holds a Master's in creative writing from Emerson College and a Bachelor's in English from the University of Vermont. Her passion for storytelling led her to study under renowned nonfiction writers such as Greg Bottoms, Jabari Asim, and Jerald Walker, shaping her approach to the craft of personal narrative and literary journalism. With a background in academic success tutoring, writing

center support, and 1:1 student mentoring, Sarah brings a student-centered approach to teaching creative nonfiction. She is committed to helping writers refine their voice, structure compelling narratives, and explore the intersection of memory and meaning in their work.



**Paul Luria** has been performing and teaching as a musician on guitar, banjo, mandolin, ukulele, and harmonica for fifty years. He is a retired public school teacher and administrator.



**Joe Moser** is a former Fitchburg State University professor. He lives in Vermont with his wife and daughters. He writes occasional film reviews for the *Montpelier Bridge* newspaper.



**Richard Ndi** is from Cameroon where he received a Ph.D. in History from the University of Yaounde 1 in Cameroon. He has international training in peacebuilding and conflict management/resolution. Dr. Ndi's work in this area has taken him to Africa and Europe to mediate community conflicts, advocate for good governance, and promote human rights. He also assisted African and European countries to train on conflict management/resolution and mediation in conflicts. He has been honored internationally for this work. Dr. Ndi brings his devotion to community and culture to his work as a trustee of the Fitchburg Art Museum, as part of the Bong Abi New England (an association of local Cameroonians), and within other outreach and educational activities.



**Laurie Nehring** is a former science teacher and a former environmental science librarian. She now works part-time as an independent naturalist, who is passionate about getting people outside to become "naturally curious" about the world around them. She works with Mass Audubon, North County Land Trust, Nashua River Watershed Assoc., and The Trustees. In Dec. 2024, she retired from PACE (People of Ayer Concerned About the Environment), a local nonprofit environmental organization she has lead since 1997.



**Alison O'Hare** began birding in 1998. She is a graduate of Mass Audubon's Birder's Certificate Program, has taught programs on Introduction to Birdwatching, Sparrow Identification, and Bird Banding, and has led many bird walks. She enjoys working with participants at all levels of experience, especially new birders or those looking to develop their birding skills. Alison currently leads birding programs at Mass Audubon's Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary.



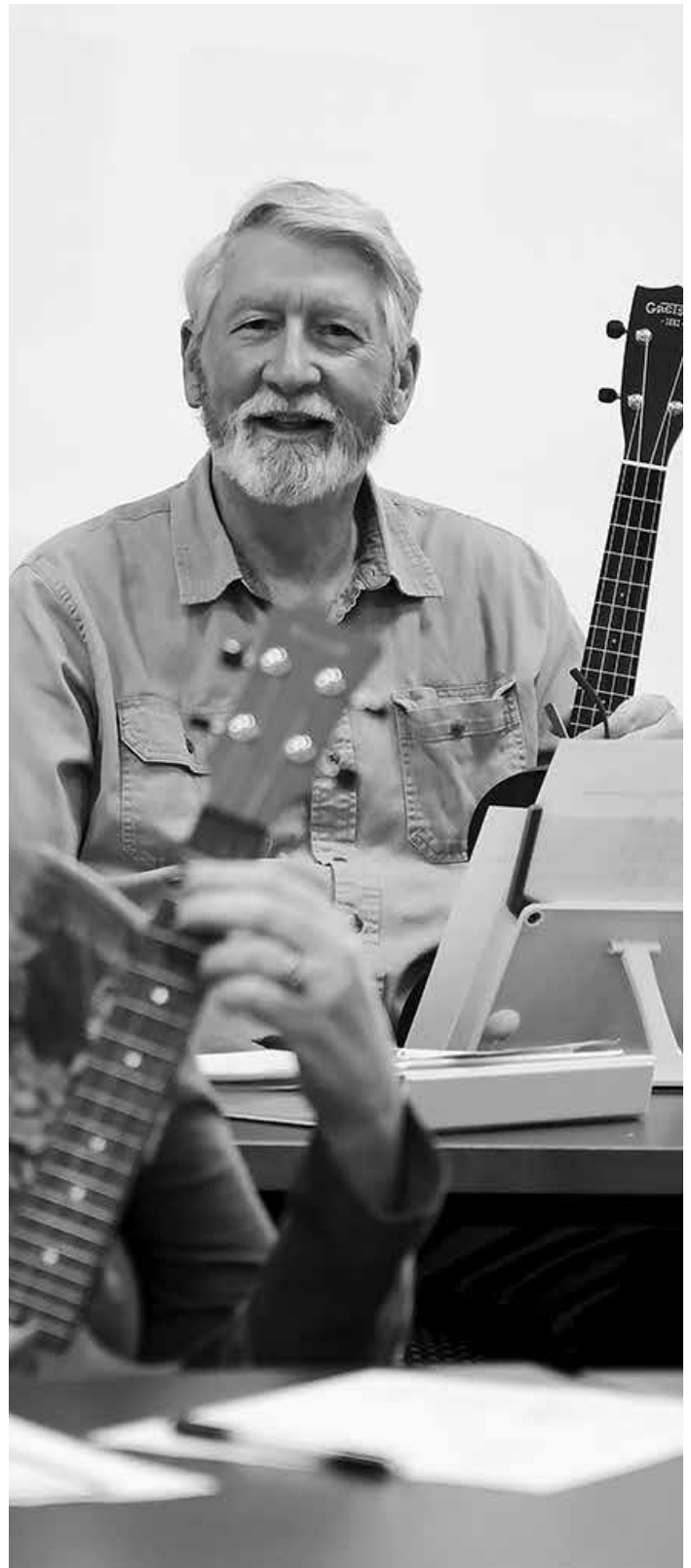
**Hildur Schilling**, Ph.D., professor of psychological science at Fitchburg State University. Hildur is a cognitive psychologist and author of the book *Memory Matters: Amnesia, Inattention and Eyewitness Memory*.



**J.J. Sylvia IV** is an associate professor of communications media at Fitchburg State University, where he has co-founded an undergraduate major in digital media innovation and a master's in applied communication, social media. He researches and teaches the philosophy and ethics of communication, focusing on big data, social media, and post-human media studies. He published two open education resource textbooks titled *The Data Renaissance: Analyzing the Disciplinary Effects of Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, and Beyond* (2024) and *Introduction to Communication and Media Studies* (2025). His forthcoming book is titled *LiveJournal and Russian Disinformation: The Rise of Epistemic Sabotage*. Sylvia's academic training includes an M.A. in philosophy and a Ph.D. in communication, rhetoric, and digital media.



**Paul Weizer** is a professor of political science at Fitchburg State University. During his more than twenty-five year tenure at the university, Dr. Weizer has taught courses in American government and politics and most of the university's law classes. In addition, he has coached the University's award winning moot court program. Dr. Weizer also served in a variety of leadership positions at the faculty and administrative level. Dr. Weizer served as president of the American Collegiate Moot Court Association and remains a member of its executive board. Dr. Weizer graduated from Temple University and holds a Master of Science degree in Public Administration and a Ph.D. in Political Science. He has published widely in the area of sexual harassment law, speech rights, and simulated legal education.



# Fall 2025 Course Descriptions | SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

## ► Fall Birding

Mondays: 8 – 9:30 AM  
5-Weeks: Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 20, 27; Nov. 3  
Alison O'Hare

Enrollment Limit: 15

In-Person | Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary

If you are one of the many people who have recently started bird-watching and you're now ready to take the next step, then this course is for you. You'll take part in a walk each week to learn about the birds that migrate out of New England in the fall and those that stay through the winter. The leader is an experienced birder who enjoys working with new birders and helping those at an intermediate level improve their skills. The walks will be slow paced, and time will be provided during each session for questions and discussion. At the end of this course, you should feel more confident in your ability to go out birding on your own or with others. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** Binoculars (loaners will be available). Participants should dress to be comfortable/dry for the weather on each day of class, and wear comfortable walking shoes or hiking.

**Format: Discussion** | Discussions and Q&A while walking outdoors on nature trails. May include an indoor lecture.

**Course Outline:** Discussions will be determined by participant interests, questions, birds seen.

## ► Invigorate Your Decluttering

Mondays: 9:30 – 11 AM  
5-Weeks: Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 20, 27; Nov. 3  
Paula Cookson Luria

Enrollment Limit: 25

ONLINE

Are you ready to refresh your space but feel overwhelmed by the decluttering process? Could you use some support and encouragement along the way? Have you taken a declutter class and need to be energized? Five groups of ALFA folks have learned to trash, treasure, or give away their belongings. The graduates of this class let go of hundreds of boxes and bags of items they no longer want. They have applied skills such as: a reason for everything, one in-one out, everything in its place, limit setting, and everyday maintenance to keep decluttered areas beautiful. One of the best aspects of this class is accountability. The group will be very supportive when you state your decluttering goal for the week and will be happy to celebrate your success. This is a fun class to join with a buddy to be your accountability partner. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** Please bring an old notebook and a pen. Do not buy anything new!

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion | Reflection | Weekly projects

### Course Outline:

Class 1: Assess the needs of the participants and Declutter Philosophy

Class 2: Paper

Class 3: Clothing and Textiles

Class 4: Horizontal Surfaces

Class 5: Emotional

## ► Fungi: Ecology and Identification

Mondays: 12:30 – 2 PM  
10-Weeks: Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24; Dec. 1, 8  
Joe Choiniere

Enrollment Limit: 20

ONLINE & Outdoors | Barre Falls Dam, Barre MA

**PLEASE NOTE:** This is not a course in edible fungi.

Fungi are a diverse kingdom of life and mushrooms, the fruiting structures of fungi are everywhere in the fall. Their colors, textures, shapes and abilities to pop up seemingly overnight spark a lot of attention from walkers, hikers, and backyard nature enthusiasts. Throughout the fall, a procession of fungi greet us day by day in forests and backyards. This course will cover the many groups of fungi including mushrooms but also less known fungi like coral mushrooms, shelf fungi, puffballs, and earth tongues. As scientists study the ecology of fungi they are becoming more and more aware of the crucial roles they play in the health of ecosystems. We will discuss all of this in both indoor and outdoor sessions. Again, this is not a course in edible fungi.

**Format:** Lectures with Slides via Zoom | Outdoor Walks

### Course Outline:

Class 1: Zoom | Introduction to Fungi as Organisms and the Common Groups of Fungi

Class 2: Outdoor Walk | Fungi Finding and Identification (all outdoor walks have the same goal)

Class 3: Zoom | Typical Mushrooms, Structures and Identifying Features

Class 4: Outdoor Walk | Fungi Finding and Identification

Class 5: Zoom | The Weird Fungi and Participants Photos

Class 6: Outdoor Walk | Fungi Finding and Identification

Class 7: Zoom | Woody Fungi

Classes 8, 9, 10: Outdoor Walk | Fungi Finding and ID



► **A Review of the 2024 – 2025 Supreme Court Term**

Mondays: 12:30 – 2 PM  
 5-Weeks: Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 20, 27; Nov. 3  
 Paul Weizer  
 Enrollment Limit: 30  
 In-Person | CPS Classroom

This course will review the role of the Supreme Court in American Society and focus on the most significant decisions from its most recent term.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion

**Course Outline:** This course is based on the current Supreme Court term.

► **Memory: What We Remember and Why We Forget!**

Mondays: 2:30 – 3:30 PM  
 8-Weeks: Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24  
 Hildur Schilling  
 Enrollment Limit: 30  
 In-Person | McKay 163

The course serves as an introduction to the factors that affect how memories are stored and retrieved. It will help you understand how perceptual and attentional processes determine how you remember some information and why you forget details. Cases of individuals with unusual memories (e.g., amnesia, highly superior autobiographical memory) will be described to explain the role of particular brain structures important for memory. Additional topics include false memories, eyewitness testimony, and how lifestyle changes can improve one’s memory.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Factors that affect encoding and retrieval of sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory
- Class 2: What case studies of individuals with hippocampal damage tell us about implicit and explicit memory
- Class 3: Alzheimer’s disease, CTE and other conditions that cause difficulty retrieving memories
- Class 4: What cases of extraordinary memory tell us about memory
- Class 5: Perception, inattention blindness, change blindness
- Class 6: Divided attention, forgetting details
- Class 7: False memory, eyewitness memory
- Class 8: Lifestyle changes that can improve memory



► **Naturally Curious: Autumn Nature Hikes East of Fitchburg**

Tuesdays: (2 Hours) 9 – 11 AM  
 5-Weeks: Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28  
 Laurie Nehring  
 Enrollment Limit: 15  
 In-Person | Various Outdoor Locations

Put on your hiking boots and join us for refreshing morning walks along forested trails at different locations each week in Ayer, Groton, Harvard, Littleton, Lunenburg or Shirley. We will explore trails, looking for signs of FALL, as New England’s wildlife and plants prepare for winter. **PLEASE NOTE:** All hikes will include a moderate level of walking with some uneven terrain, rocks, roots and elevation. Distances will be about 2 miles each week. Participants should be in reasonable shape for hiking. We will meet at the trailheads each week; locations will be provided to all registrants by email. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** Hiking boots, warm clothes (dress in layers for the weather), hat, water, light snack. **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:** Book *Naturally Curious* by Mary Holland, camera or cell phone (consider loading apps for trails & wildlife/plant ID), hiking poles, ID books, binoculars, hand lens.

**Format:** Discussion | Demonstration | Show & Tell | Explore & Discover

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Introduction; Opening Circle & Trail Walk  
Topic: Signs of fall
- Class 2: Opening Circle & Trail Walk  
Topic: Mammals preparing for winter
- Class 3: Opening Circle & Trail Walk  
Topic: Hibernation to migration, and reptiles prepare for winter
- Class 4: Opening Circle & Trail Walk  
Topic: Evergreen plants & trees, pine cones, and diseases
- Class 5: Opening Circle & Trail Walk  
Topic: Deciduous trees, and animal food supply

► **The Art and Craft of Archives**

Tuesdays: 10:30 AM – 12 PM  
 5-Weeks: Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28  
 Sally Cragin  
 Enrollment Limit: 20

In-Person | CPS Classroom & Fitchburg Historical Society

If you love history, please join us this brand-new ALFA class! Four class sessions will take place in the archives at Fitchburg Historical Society. Select a topic from the Colonial era through the 20th century: arts and letters, military conflicts and wars, local history including children and women’s issues, disability issues, architecture, industry, emigration, the history of poverty or wealth, or a topic or individual of your choice. Fitchburg Historical Society, founded 1892, is a treasure house of “primary source” documents from Fitchburg and the region. Transport yourself into an earlier period, and help add to the historical record from your original research. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** Notebook, index cards, pencils, pens. **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:** laptop computer if desired.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Reflection

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Introductions & Overview
- Class 2: Welcome to the Past | First visit to Fitchburg Historical Society | Archive Tour | Topic Selection
- Class 3: Deeper? Wider? Note-taking leads to analysis
- Class 4: Mastery of Sources
- Class 5: Making the Past Make Sense to the Present



► **Exploring Ukulele Dimensions**

Tuesdays: 12:30 – 2 PM  
 5-Weeks: Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28  
 Paul Luria  
 Enrollment Limit: 25

In-Person | CPS Classroom

This course will further the knowledge and skills of ukulele players/learners. Open to all with a knowledge of basic ukulele chords. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** Ukulele. Soprano, concert or tenor. Not a baritone. **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:** Tuner or tuning fork or A440 tone on phone

**Format:** Lecture: Discussion | Demonstration | Participatory Performance

**Course Outline:** This course is flexible and guided by participant achievement and interest. Each week will, however, cover a new skill or genre.



► **Creative Writing in Nonfiction Workshop**

Tuesdays: 2:30 – 4 PM  
 5-Weeks: Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28  
 Sarah Lewis  
 Enrollment Limit: 20  
 In-Person | CPS Classroom

In this workshop, we’ll explore the art of telling true stories with the same literary techniques used in fiction—scene, voice, detail, and structure. Through close readings of masters like David Sedaris and Joan Didion, we’ll examine the diverse possibilities within the genre, from personal essays to literary journalism. Participants will develop their own creative nonfiction pieces through guided writing exercises and discussion. In the final two sessions, we’ll shift to a workshop format, where participants will share their work, receive constructive feedback, and collaborate to refine their storytelling. Whether you’re new to nonfiction or looking to sharpen your skills, this course will help you craft engaging, authentic narratives. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** Must have a way to write! Can be digital (laptop or iPad) or physical (notebook).

**Format:** Collaborative Workshop

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Introduction to Creative Nonfiction
- Class 2: How to Tell Your Story Effectively
- Class 3: “Show and Tell” Creative Nonfiction Examples
- Class 4: Facilitated Workshop #1
- Class 5: Facilitated Workshop #2





► **Venice: History of Ancient City**

Tuesdays: 2:30 – 4 PM  
 5-Weeks: Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28  
 Teresa Fava Thomas  
 Enrollment Limit: 20  
 In-Person | McKay 143

**Sponsored by the Center for Italian Culture**

This course surveys the history of Venice, known as the “Serene Republic” from its earliest settlement to its dominance of the Mediterranean spice trade to the present. Topics include Venice as a Maritime Republic, governing the Venetian State, Venice at war, ship-building in the Arsenal, gondolas and life on water, glass and the island of Murano, Venice incognito – Carnevale and masks, Venetian food, Vivaldi and music, women in the city, architecture and the risks of high water or aqua alta.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Intro to the course; Maps of the City and Timeline. Venice as the “Serene Republic” (La Serenissa); Governing Venice
- Class 2: Electing a new Venetian Doge; Architecture of Venice; Architecture: Mediterranean or Byzantine Style
- Class 3: Masks and Carnival; Prisons in Venice; Women of Venice, Marriage, and Dowry
- Class 4: Life on the Water: Constructing a Gondola; Arsenal: Ship Building Technology; Glassmaking on Murano
- Class 5: Music in Venice: Antonio Vivaldi and the Orphans; Gambling and the Casinos; War and Venice; The future: MOSE and Aqua Alta; The weight of tourism on Venice.

► **ALFA Salon: Continuing the Conversation**

**Wednesdays: 10:30 AM - 12 PM | Oct. 1, 15, 29; Nov. 12, 26; Dec. 3, 17**  
 Martha Crawford | Enrollment Limit: 30 | Online

ALFA Salon is held every other week throughout the ALFA session. Guest Lecturers lead engaging discussions on a variety of topics and issues. Salon is a collaborative effort. Participants may receive pre-readings and video viewing material for some sessions and/or be asked for their suggestions on works-in-progress for other sessions.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Role Playing/Simulation | Reflection

**Course Outline:** Sessions are unique presentations from each guest lecturer. 2025 Fall Salon will be hosting the following:



**Restorative Justice | OCTOBER 1**

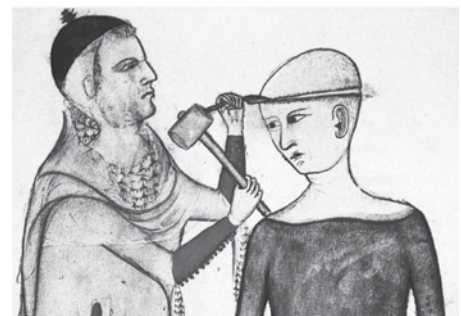
Restorative justice brings those harmed by crime or conflict and those responsible for the harm into communication, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward (Restorative Justice Council, 2025) . This presentation will include the background and definition of restorative justice, how it can be implemented within schools and criminal justice processes, and how it can be used to address bias and bring about a fair and equal justice system.

**Guest Lecturer:** Edward Cronin, Retired Fitchburg Chief of Police, Author, Consultant, U.S. Department Senior Police Advisor

**The Epic Story of Medieval Mental Health | OCTOBER 15**

Contrary to popular misconceptions that tend to focus on an exclusively negative story, the mental health experiences of medieval people are far more complex and vary across circumstances, geographies, and time periods. We will explore communities of care, physical objects, literary representations, treatments, and other evidence from the global Middle Ages to give us a better picture of this aspect of medieval life and the connections to our modern world.

**Guest Lecturer:** Kisha G. Tracy, Professor, English Studies, Fitchburg State University



(ALFA Salon continued next page)



**When the Student is Ready, the Teacher Will Appear | OCTOBER 29**

Are you ready to learn something “new”? Reiki is an ancient, hands-on healing art originating in the Tibetan sutras, dating back 2500 years. This talk will also teach you how to do the Tibetan Rites. Both have been used to help recharge, realign, and rebalance energy in the body. The Rites are a fifteen-minute compatible exercise many people can do on their own that provides increased energy, calmness, mental clarity, greater spinal flexibility, better sleep, and healthier digestion. (A short video will be shown).

**Guest Lecturer:** Eric Goodhart, PFE, Reiki Master, Director of Programs for Education & Associates

**Autocrats Abound | NOVEMBER 12**

From Ankara to Beijing to Budapest to Moscow, wannabe sultans, emperors, tsars, and kings trample the vestiges of democracy in order to feed their addiction to power. This talk will explain the “autocracy playbook” used across the globe by Putin, Xi, Orban, Erdoğan, and others to solidify and extend their illiberal stranglehold on leadership. Furthermore, the presentation will address potential parallels in the worldwide surge in autocracy to political developments in the United States.

**Guest Lecturer:** Robert “Bob” Beck, Non-Resident Senior Fellow in the Eurasia Program, Foreign Policy Research Institute; Keene State College & Rivier University Lifelong Learning Programs



**Play Development from Performance to Post-Analysis | DECEMBER 3**

We will discuss how a new play is performed, adjusted during the showing, and analyze the experience from the audience and performers.

**Guest Lecturer:** Kelly Morgan: Professor, Theater Director, Communications Media, Fitchburg State University

**Guest Lecturer:** Peter Anderegg: Playwright

**Guest Lecturer:** Denise Alexander: Producer, Thisbe Theater Company, Inc.

**Small Things Like These | DECEMBER 17**

In this discussion-based session, we will focus on the 2021 novella *Small Things Like These* by the acclaimed contemporary Irish writer, Claire Keegan, as well as the 2024 film adaptation starring Oscar winner, Cillian Murphy. We will address the cultural and social context of the story, including the mother and baby homes and the Magdalen laundries that operated throughout Ireland during the twentieth century. *Small Things Like These* portrays one ordinary man’s crisis of conscience in a town and nation that have ignored the suffering of thousands of women and children for decades.

**Guest Lecturer:** Joe Moser, Editor and Film Critic, Montpelier, Vermont



**If you are interested in any of the topics being covered—sign up!  
You might be surprised by what you will learn about a topic you have not thought of.**



► **Festival: A Celebration of African Art**

Wednesdays: 12:30 – 2 PM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29  
 Jean Borgatti  
 Enrollment Limit: 25

In-Person | Leominster Public Library

**Sponsored by the Friends of Leominster Public Library**

This course provides an introduction to important aspects of African visual culture and art history. Festival draws upon universal themes of life, death, power, love, and celebration. Terracotta from the first millennium BCE and contemporary work by transnational Nigerian artists bookend works that are best described as “traditional” or “iconic.” These iconic works date from the 19th and 20th centuries but reflect much older practices. They are also the type of art that most people picture when they think of Africa. Many of the ideas and practices represented in the exhibition at the Fitchburg Art Museum are widely shared across the continent, but they take a range of forms and aesthetic visions across many cultures. Festival is an invitation for you to immerse yourself in this richness and develop a more nuanced understanding of the forms. **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:** For those who might want to look more deeply into something, books will be available within the exhibition, but I recommend Chris Spring’s *African Art in Detail* for its coverage of the continent during all time periods, great illustrations, accessible writing, and reasonable price. Published both by the British Museum and Harvard University. Another great source is Kathy Curnow’s open source book: *Bright Continent: African Art History*, accessible online at <https://staging.open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/1090>. A *History of African Art* by Monica Visona et al, is more encyclopedic, and although a good reference book, it is quite expensive.

**Format: Lecture:** Discussion | Video Clips as appropriate

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Introduction
- Class 2: Art from the African continent from the earliest known through 17th century
- Class 3: Multi-media art form of Masquerade across the cultures of west and central Africa
- Class 4: Art and politics featuring two case studies
- Class 5: Class Choice! Topic choices to be discussed in class

► **Geology**

Wednesdays: 12:30 – 2 PM  
 10-Weeks: Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Nov. 5, 12, 19; Dec. 3, 10  
 Tom Gaskill

Enrollment Limit: 30  
 In-Person | CPS Classroom

A tour of the dynamic forces that shape our Earth. We will discuss the formation of the Earth, plate tectonics, mountain building, volcanoes, earthquakes and the features they create. Then we will look at the features formed from weathering and erosion from rivers, glaciers, wind and waves. We will also discuss rock and mineral formation, natural resources, mining and extraction practices, some physical and biological history of the Earth, and cave and fossil formation. Rock, mineral, and fossil specimens, photos, diagrams, video clips, and stories of human achievement in solving the mysteries of the Earth will be discussed and presented with an emphasis on you being able to identify landscape features on your own adventures.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Formation of the earth, density layering, early earth, evidence for plate tectonics
- Class 2: Results of plate tectonics, continental drift, some physical earth history
- Class 3: Earthquakes, folds and faults, mountain building
- Class 4: Volcanoes and volcanic features, igneous and metamorphic rock formation, the rock cycle
- Class 5: Mineral formation, natural resources, mining and extraction
- Class 6: Weathering and erosion, soil formation, sedimentary rock formation
- Class 7: Erosion by gravity, wind, and waves, desert and shoreline topography
- Class 8: River systems, groundwater, caves and karst topography
- Class 9: Glaciers, ice ages, glacial and New England topography
- Class 10: Some biological earth history, fossil formation, and radiometric dating



► **Shirley Jackson: Master of the Uncanny**

Wednesdays: 2:30 – 4 PM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29  
 Samantha deManbey  
 Enrollment Limit: 20  
 In-Person | CPS Classroom



Author Shirley Jackson, author of *The Lottery* and *The Haunting of Hill House*, was known for transforming her daily fears and anxieties into literature full of menace and shadowy dread. This course gives an overview of Jackson’s short stories, novels, and letters. It will delve into the historical context of Jackson’s work and the impact it had when it was first published. *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, Jackson’s most well-regarded novel, will be read in its entirety. Shorter writings will be provided by the instructor. This course is part lecture and part discussion. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962) by Shirley Jackson.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Introduction to Shirley Jackson
- Class 2: Short Stories
- Class 3: Jackson’s Major Novels
- Class 4: *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*
- Class 5: Jackson’s Literary Legacy



► **Yoga for Strength**

Thursdays: 9 – 10:30 AM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30  
 Ann-marie LaBollita  
 Enrollment Limit: 15  
 In-Person | Hammond S08

This yoga class is geared toward individuals with some yoga experience. Class begins with

breath exercises and meditation to stimulate the nervous system and engage the relaxation response in the muscles and nervous system. Warm up stretches in a chair or on the floor, will be followed by yoga postures for flexibility, balance, relaxation and strength. Weight bearing poses and a long resistance band and small hand weights will be utilized to build upper body strength and toning. If you need extra knee support please consider buying yoga knee pads. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** Yoga mat, 2 yoga blocks, 1 long resistance band, small hand towel, 1, 2 or 3 pound hand weights. **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:** Water, knee pads and additional props for comfort and support.

**Format:** Demonstration

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Introduction to yoga class format, setting up the class room and discussing gear.
- Class 2: Using resistance band for strength and stretching
- Class 3: Weights for strength, toning and posture
- Class 4: Holding yoga poses to improve strength and focus
- Class 5: Wall postures for balance and stretching

► **The Irish Troubles**

Thursdays: 10:30 AM – 12 PM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30  
 Eric Budd  
 Enrollment Limit: 30  
 In-Person | CPS Classroom

While what is referred to as the Irish Troubles is generally dated back to the late 1960s, conflict in Ireland goes back centuries. We’ll discuss the origins of the conflict, the challenges that have been faced in attempting to resolve it, and the prospects for peace in the future. In addition to class lectures and discussions, we will explore the Irish Troubles in film (film to be determined as there are so many good ones); and a discussion of *Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland* (it’s long but reads like a murder mystery). We’ll also do a simulation of a meeting of the different communities in Northern Ireland over a proposed Loyalist march through a predominantly Catholic neighborhood, and more!

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion | Roleplay

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: History of the Conflict
- Class 2: History of the Conflict (continued)
- Class 3: Barriers to Conflict Resolution: Simulation of meeting discussing proposed Loyalist march through a predominantly Catholic neighborhood.
- Class 4: Challenges of Reconciliation: Discussion of the film *Some Mother’s Son*
- Class 5: Discussion of *Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland* and conclusions



► **Hootenanny**

Thursdays: 12:30 – 2 PM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30  
 Paul Luria  
 Enrollment Limit: 30  
 In-Person | CPS Classroom

This is a participatory singing course with a little background provided about the songs. The class will sing melodies and harmonies of familiar songs. Guitar and/or banjo accompaniment will be provided by the instructor. **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:** Rise Up Singing: The Group Singing Songbook, Edited by Peter Blood and Annie Patterson. This book contains the lyrics to 1200 songs.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Participation  
**Course Outline:** Each week will explore different folk song topics such as politics, murder ballads, workshops, etc. Topics will be mutually agreed upon by teacher and class.

► **Technologies of Truth: Russian History from Cyrillic to Cyberwar**

Thursdays: 12:30 – 2 PM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30  
 J.J. Sylvia IV  
 Enrollment Limit: 30  
 ONLINE

This course explores the entangled histories of media and political power in Russia, from the invention of the Cyrillic alphabet to contemporary digital warfare. Participants will examine how successive media forms—alphabetic writing, print, telegraphy, television, and the internet—have functioned as “technologies of truth” that shape public discourse, state authority, and political subjectivity. Drawing on media theory, historical case studies, and contemporary digital culture, the course foregrounds the role of infrastructure in the making and unmaking of democratic possibility. Each week includes a suggested film that complements the themes of the session.



**Format:** Lecture | Discussion

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Scripts of Power: From Alphabet to Empire
- Class 2: Impressed Subjects: The Printing Press and the State
- Class 3: Signals and Silences: Telegraphy, Objectivity, and Soviet Glasnost
- Class 4: Spectral Screens: Television and the Crisis of Post-Soviet Democracy
- Class 5: The Red Web: From Dissident Bloggers to Troll Factories



► **American Architecture at the Crossroads: 1870-1910**

Thursdays: 2:30 – 4 PM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30  
 Nick Langhart  
 Enrollment Limit: 30  
 In-person | CPS Classroom



American architecture in the last decades of the 19th century was characterized by new and larger building types, emerging technologies and important stylistic contradictions. Through illustrations, we’ll explore these issues focusing on the contributions of Henry Hobson Richardson (1839-1884) and his followers to the changing urban scene. We will identify the roots of modern architecture, as well as the rise of academic classicism that followed his work.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: American architecture after the Civil War: the “Battle of the Styles.”
- Class 2: Henry Hobson Richardson (1839-1884): His Training, Travel in France & Early Work
- Class 3: HHR’s Great Innovations in Stone
- Class 4: HHR’s Work in MA with the Norcross Brothers: Impact, Imitators, & Legacy
- Class 5: Evaluation: Last of the Historicists or First Modernist?



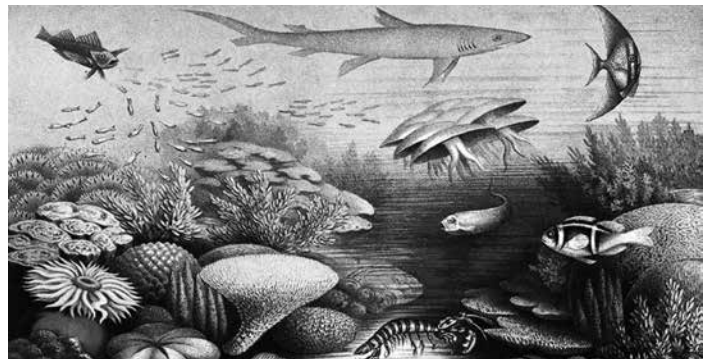
## Fall 2025: At-a-Glance Schedule | SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

Times	MONDAY Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24 Dec. 1, 8	TUESDAY Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28 Nov. 4, 18, 25 Dec. 2, 9	WEDNESDAY Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Nov. 5, 12, 19 Dec. 3, 10	THURSDAY Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Nov. 6, 13, 20 Dec. 4, 11	FRIDAY Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Nov. 7, 14, 21 Dec. 5, 12	SATURDAY Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25; Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22 Dec. 6, 13		
8 - 8:30 AM	<b>Fall Birding</b> Alison O'Hare In-Person: WWS 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>Naturally Curious: Autumn Nature Hikes East of Fitchburg</b> Laurie Nehring In-Person 5 weeks   2 hours Cost: \$60	<b>Yoga for Strength</b> Ann-marie LaBollita In-Person: Hammond Hall, Rm. S08 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>5-Part Series: Global South</b> Richard Ndi ONLINE 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>Still Life Drawing for Everyone</b> Ann-marie LaBollita In-Person: CPS Classroom 5 weeks   1.5 hours			
8:30 - 9 AM								
9 - 9:30 AM								
9:30 - 10 AM	<b>Invigorate Your Decluttering</b> Paula Cookson Luria ONLINE 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>The Art and Craft of Archives</b> Sally Cragin In-Person: FHS & CPS 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>ALFA Salon: Continuing the Conversion</b> Martha Crawford ONLINE   FREE   1.5 hours Oct. 1, 15, 29; Nov. 12, 26; Dec. 3, 17	<b>The Irish Troubles</b> Eric Budd In-Person: CPS Classroom 5 weeks   1.5 hours				
10 - 10:30 AM								
10:30 - 11 AM								
11 - 11:30 AM								
11:30 AM - 12 PM								
12:30 - 2 PM	<b>Fungi: Ecology &amp; Identification</b> Joe Choiniere Hybrid: ONLINE & outdoor meetings 10 weeks   1.5 hours Cost: \$90	<b>A Review of the 2024-2025 Supreme Court Term</b> Paul Weizer In-Person: CPS Classroom 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>Exploring Ukulele Dimensions</b> Paul Luria In-Person: CPS Classroom 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>Festival: A Celebration of African Art</b> Jean Borgatti In-Person: LPL 5 weeks   1.5 hours FREE	<b>Geology</b> Tom Gaskill In-Person: CPS Classroom 10 weeks   1.5 hours Cost: \$90	<b>Hootenanny</b> Paul Luria In-Person: CPS Classroom 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>Technologies of Truth: Russian History from Cyrillic to Cyberwar</b> J.J. Sylvia ONLINE 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>No Screens Needed: Popular Children's Literature from the Boomer Childhood!</b> Tina Lelli In-Person: CPS Classroom 5 weeks   1.5 hours
2:30 - 4:00 PM	<b>Memory: What We Remember and Why We Forget!</b> Hildy Schilling In-Person: McKay 163 8 weeks   1 hour	<b>Creative Writing in Nonfiction Workshop</b> Sarah Lewis In-Person: CPS Classroom 5 weeks 1.5 hours	<b>Venice: History of Ancient City</b> Theresa Fava Thomas In-Person 5 weeks   1.5 hours FREE Sponsored by the CIC	<b>Shirley Jackson: Master of the Uncanny</b> Samantha deManbey In-Person: CPS Classroom 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>American Architecture at the Crossroads: 1870-1910</b> Nick Langhart In-Person: CPS Classroom 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>Ocean Quest</b> Catherine Hunter ONLINE 5 weeks   1.5 hours	<b>Classic and Contemporary Screwball Comedies</b> Joe Moser ONLINE 8 weeks   1 hour: 1-2 PM	

► **Ocean Quest**

Thursdays: 2:30-4 PM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30  
 Catherine Hunter  
 Enrollment Limit: 30  
 ONLINE

The ocean is the most important resource on Earth; however, very few people ever refer to the ocean in this way or give it the attention it deserves. A common terrestrial perspective of Earth is a bias that reflects a lack of understanding of ocean science. In the Anthropocene, one might say that the romantic ship-narrative has sailed, replaced with a clearer understanding of the human impact on marine health and the human pressure on beings who live in or depend on the sea. In this course we will examine a variety of topics including the history of oceanography, the structure of the ocean, maps, human and marine voyagers, innovative maritime museums, and the wonder of marine life.



**Format:** Lecture | Discussion

**Course Outline:**

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



Rhodes Colossus by Edward Linley Sambourne, 1892.

► **5-Part Series: Global South**

Fridays: 10-11:30 AM | 5-Weeks: Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31  
 Richard Ndi | Enrollment Limit: 30 | ONLINE

This 5-part series on the Global South will help participants to understand the Global South appreciate its challenges, diversity as well as its contribution to the world's geopolitical landscape. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** Must have a computer or other smart device to connect with via Zoom.

**Format:** Lecture | Discussion | Reflection | Experience sharing | Q&A.

**OCTOBER 3: Spotlighting the Global South | 1952-Present**

Countries of the Global South have been characterized as poor in comparison to countries of the Global North. In order to find their place in global politics and shake off the stigma of being labeled as poor, these countries, though very diverse, have taken upon themselves the challenge to form trade, technology and economic partnerships that align with their own strategic priorities for development.

**Guest Lecturer: Richard Ndi | PhD in History**

Richard Ndi is from Cameroon where he received a PhD in History from the University of Yaounde 1-Cameroon. He has international training in Peacebuilding and Conflict Management/Resolution.

**OCTOBER 10: The Shadows of Slave Trade and Colonialism in the Global South: A Collective Memory of Trauma | 1865 to 1945**

The transatlantic slave trade and colonialism had a profound and lasting impact on the Global South, leaving deep-seated trauma that has been passed down through generations. Today, historical sites like slave castles and colonial relics serve as painful reminders of these experiences, influencing perceptions of Western legacies and sparking questions about their intentions towards communities in the Global South.

**Guest Lecturer: Reymond Njingti Budi | PhD in History** Reymond is part of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), as well as a sponsored guest scholar (Gastwissenschaftler) and postdoctoral candidate at the University of Kassel in Germany. In his academic pursuits, Dr. Budi has portrayed a knack for identity issues, colonialism, resistance, indigenous agency, collective memory as well as collective trauma in the colonial contexts.

(5-Part Series continued next page)

**OCTOBER 17: A Brief Narrative of Africa-Brazil Relations | 1600 – Present**

Major historical events have conditioned Africa-Brazil relations since the sixteenth century. Using data retrieved from Ambassador Rubens Ricupero (2024), as well as Gerard & Paulo Visentini’s research on the topic (2019), we will cover the significance shared history and sociological components of Afro-Descendants in both regions ranging from its beginnings in slavery, then colonization, and now the present Global South.

**Guest Lecturer: Willam Cortezia | Associate Professor, Education, Fitchburg State University**

Dr. Cortezia has extensive experience beyond the classroom including finance, and government military service. He is fluent in three languages and shares his love of learning in all of them.



Slavery in Brazil by Jean-Baptiste Debret (1768–1848)



Ripping the White From the Flag by Madsen Mompremier (1952–Present)

**OCTOBER 24: The Haitian Revolution: Black Sovereignty & the Spirit of Liberation 1791 – Present**

We will explore how the ideals of liberty, anti-colonialism, Black sovereignty, and pan-African solidarity are not only woven into Haitian history and identity, but continue to ignite global movements for justice today.

**Guest Lecturer: Beth Robbins | Founder of Kindness Leads**

As a local leader in our community, Beth Robbins brings over 25 years of nonprofit work and is deeply committed to advancing equity and empowering marginalized communities, including the local Haitian community, across North Central Massachusetts. Beth is also the Co-founder/Program Manager of the Childcare Entrepreneur Training Program, dedicated to equipping non-native speakers from historically marginalized populations with the skills and resources needed to start culturally responsive childcare businesses.

**OCTOBER 31: The Last British Colony 1965 – Present**

In November 1965, Britain established its last colony. The British Indian Ocean Territory including the Chagos Archipelago and its island of Diego Garcia turned into a military fortress for both the UK and USA. The inhabitants were expelled and forbidden to return, but we will discover how they fought back and are still fighting back; 2000 people who refuse to be ignored.

**Guest Lecturer: Joyce Hinckley, PhD | Counseling Psychology**  
Joyce has a lifetime of study in art, culture, history, and religion across the world. She is passionate about making connections across disciplines and empowering others to do the same.



Demonstrators at the sovereignty dispute between the UK and Mauritius. Photo by Getty Images.





### ► Still Life Drawing for Everyone

Fridays: 10-11:30 AM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31  
 Ann-marie LaBollita  
 Enrollment Limit: 20  
 In-Person | CPS Classroom

Developing your drawing skills whether you're a beginner or have experience. We will do fun exercises to deepen observational skills and explore mark making, shading and composition. Learning will be cumulative building on the prior class. Everyone will take home a completed still life drawing. This class will have homework to practice skills explored during class time.  
**REQUIRED MATERIALS:** 11 x 14" spiral bound sketchbook 50-60 lb., HB and 2B pencil, white eraser and pencil sharpener.

**Format:** Demonstration | Participation

#### Course Outline:

- Class 1: Drawing wooden blocks from imagination and from observation to understand form with straight lines; Homework: draw a tea cup or mug at home
- Class 2: Contour line drawings of small still life of simple objects; Homework: value scale
- Class 3: Look at images of still life drawings/begin small sketches of final still life; Homework: research still life drawings and paintings
- Class 4: Start final drawing and begin shading; Homework: practice shading an object
- Class 5: Finish work and group critique

### ► No Screens Needed: Popular Children's Literature from the Boomer Childhood!

Fridays: 12:30-2 PM  
 5-Weeks: Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31  
 Tina Lelli  
 Enrollment Limit: 25  
 In-person | CPS Classroom

If you were a child growing up in the Baby Boomer days, chances are your bookshelf was packed with unforgettable classics. These stories weren't just books—they were portals to adventure, mystery, and imagination! Let's transport ourselves back in time and rediscover the magic and wonder of childhood. Hit pause on the daily grind and join us as we journey to magical lands, secret hideaways, and far-off adventures—where reality fades and imagination takes over. Whether you need a cozy escape or a grand adventure, these fictional places are the perfect getaway to relax, recharge, and lose yourself in a great story. Ready to relive the joy? Let's turn the page and explore together! **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White; notebook; pen or pencil **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:** (optional) please bring your favorite children's literature books.

**Format:** Discussion

#### Course Outline:

- Class 1: Recapturing the Childhood Magic
- Class 2: Common Themes in Children's Literature
- Class 3: Lessons Learned from the Classics
- Class 4: Literary and Cultural Impacts
- Class 5: Bridging the Generations



Charlotte's Web illustration by Garth Williams

► **Classic and Contemporary  
Screwball Comedies**

Saturdays: 1-2 PM  
 8-Weeks: Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25; Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22  
 Joe Moser  
 Enrollment Limit: 25  
 ONLINE

What is a screwball comedy? It's typically a romantic comedy with an irreverent attitude toward social norms and the upper class. This genre, which peaked in the late 1930s and early '40s, is probably the most fun and insightful kind of cinema that Hollywood has ever produced. In this course, we'll view and discuss films that established the genre, films from its peak period, and films from the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries that carry on the screwball tradition. In the process, we'll get to know some of the phenomenal stars and filmmakers that contributed to the zany greatness of the genre. **REQUIRED MATERIALS:** Access to assigned films via online streaming rentals or DVDs.



**Format:** Discussion

**Course Outline:**

- Class 1: Screwball Prototypes and the Depression Era
- Class 2: Great Screwball Stars and Peak Screwball Comedies
- Class 3: Great Screwball Stars and Peak Screwball Comedies
- Class 4: Ernst Lubitsch Films
- Class 5: Preston Sturges Films
- Class 6: Billy Wilder Films
- Class 7: Neo-Screwball Films of the Late Twentieth Century
- Class 8: Neo-Screwball Films of the Twenty-First Century



# Registration Information | FALL 2025

**REGISTRATION OPENS AUGUST 5, 2025 AT 9:00 AM**

All courses are \$45 a course unless otherwise indicated. 10-Week courses are typically \$90.

## REGISTRATION DEADLINE

Please submit your registration by **Sept. 19, 2025**. Our online registration store will close at 9AM on this date. If you need assistance, call the ALFA office at 978-665-3076. All registrations **MUST** be completed and received **BEFORE** a course begins. Registrations **AFTER** a course has begun will **NOT** be accepted.

## WAYS TO REGISTER

**ONLINE (PREFERRED):** You can register for ALFA courses online by going to [marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/alfa](https://marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/alfa).

- Make sure to **complete your registration** by hitting the final SUBMIT button. You will receive a confirmation email immediately following.
- **IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE A CONFIRMATION EMAIL**, please contact the ALFA office to ensure you are registered.

### Need help with online registration?

Visit [fitchburgstate.edu/alfa](https://fitchburgstate.edu/alfa) for a complete step-by-step tutorial.

**BY MAIL:** We will continue to accept paper registrations. However, we are **strongly encouraging** everyone who can, to use the online course registration system.

- Please complete a separate registration form for each person taking classes. DO NOT try to register two or more people on the same form. We will not be able to complete your registration. If you need additional registration forms, please visit our website to download and print one at: [www.fitchburgstate.edu/alfa](https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/alfa).
- Registrations may be mailed or returned in-person to the Center for Professional Studies.
- Any incomplete component may delay the processing of the registration form.
- All registrations are processed in the order in which they are received.
- Please make a copy of the completed registration form for personal records.

## PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

- **We accept credit/debit cards (PREFERRED) and E-Checks/ACH Debit payments.** Please pay by debit or credit card if you can. It makes both processing and refunding easier for all involved, including you.
- **If you choose to pay by E-Check**, all check payments (both online and paper) are processed electronically and will appear as "ACH DEBIT" on your checking account statement. Checks that are returned for insufficient funds or incorrect banking information will cause a \$30 fee to be assessed to the participant.

- **Refunds** are only issued if a course is canceled or when you register by paper and the course is full when we receive your registration.

- **For Credit/Debit Payments:** Refunds are issued right away and you should see that money back in your account in a few days. If a course is full and you registered by paper, we simply won't register you for that course and will put you on the waiting list.

- **E-Check Payments:** If a course is canceled, we will contact you to fill out an I-9 tax form in order to process the refund.

**Paper Registrations paid with an E-Check:** If a portion of the courses you are registering for are full, we must process the full amount written on the paper check. We will then issue a refund for the amount of the full courses. To be issued a refund, you will be asked to submit an I-9 tax form.

- **If you are sending in registration forms for multiple people**, please pay by credit/debit or submit a separate check for each person you are registering. If you combine payment for two separate registration in one check, we will not be able to process your payment or registration and will either shred it or return it to you in the mail.
- **Payment** is due upon submission of registration.
- **Course payments are not refundable or transferable unless canceled.**

**Please note:** Some classes have additional expenses including required materials you will need to purchase prior to the course starting, recommended materials, and sometimes a required materials fee (cash only) that is due to the instructor at the first class. These additional materials and fees are indicated in the course description.

## GENERAL INFORMATION & POLICIES

**ENROLLMENT:** Prompt return of forms will facilitate early processing and improve the chances of getting preferred classes. Due to space limitations and instructor requests, class size varies. It is important to list alternatives in the event that your first choices are not available. **If no alternatives are listed it will be assumed that none are desired.**

**CONFIRMATION:** **If you register online**, you will receive an order number when you complete your registration. Please make sure to write down this order number. If you have an order number, you have successfully registered, Congratulations! You should also receive a confirmation email within a few minutes of registering. If you do not remember seeing an order number and you don't receive a confirmation email, please reach out to the office to make sure your registration was completed successfully. **If you register by paper**, you will receive a confirmation by email if you provided an email address, or by mail, if you did not.

**LOCATION OF COURSES:** ALFA classes will be held in-person on-campus in the CPS classroom, in-person in an outdoor location in the surrounding community, or online, unless otherwise noted.

**PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION:** Parking rules and permits may be different depending on where you are taking courses. The information below will help you obtain the correct parking permit for the on-campus courses you are registered for. For all parking passes, please make sure to put the parking pass on your driver's side dashboard to avoid being ticketed.

• **Center for Professional Studies (CPS) Classroom:** Please fill out your car information on your registration form. The Center for Professional Studies is located at 150B Main Street in Fitchburg (we are located directly across from Dunkin' Donuts, in the Intermodal Station).

- Your parking pass will be emailed to you about a week before class starts. Please print and display on your dashboard.
- Please only park, where it is designated for Fitchburg State University or on the 3rd floor (or as directed if the 3rd floor is still under construction). If you park in other places in the parking garage, you could get a ticket.

• **Other ON-CAMPUS Courses:** Please make sure to fill out your car information on your registration form. Our office will notify you when your campus visitor parking permit is ready for pick up.

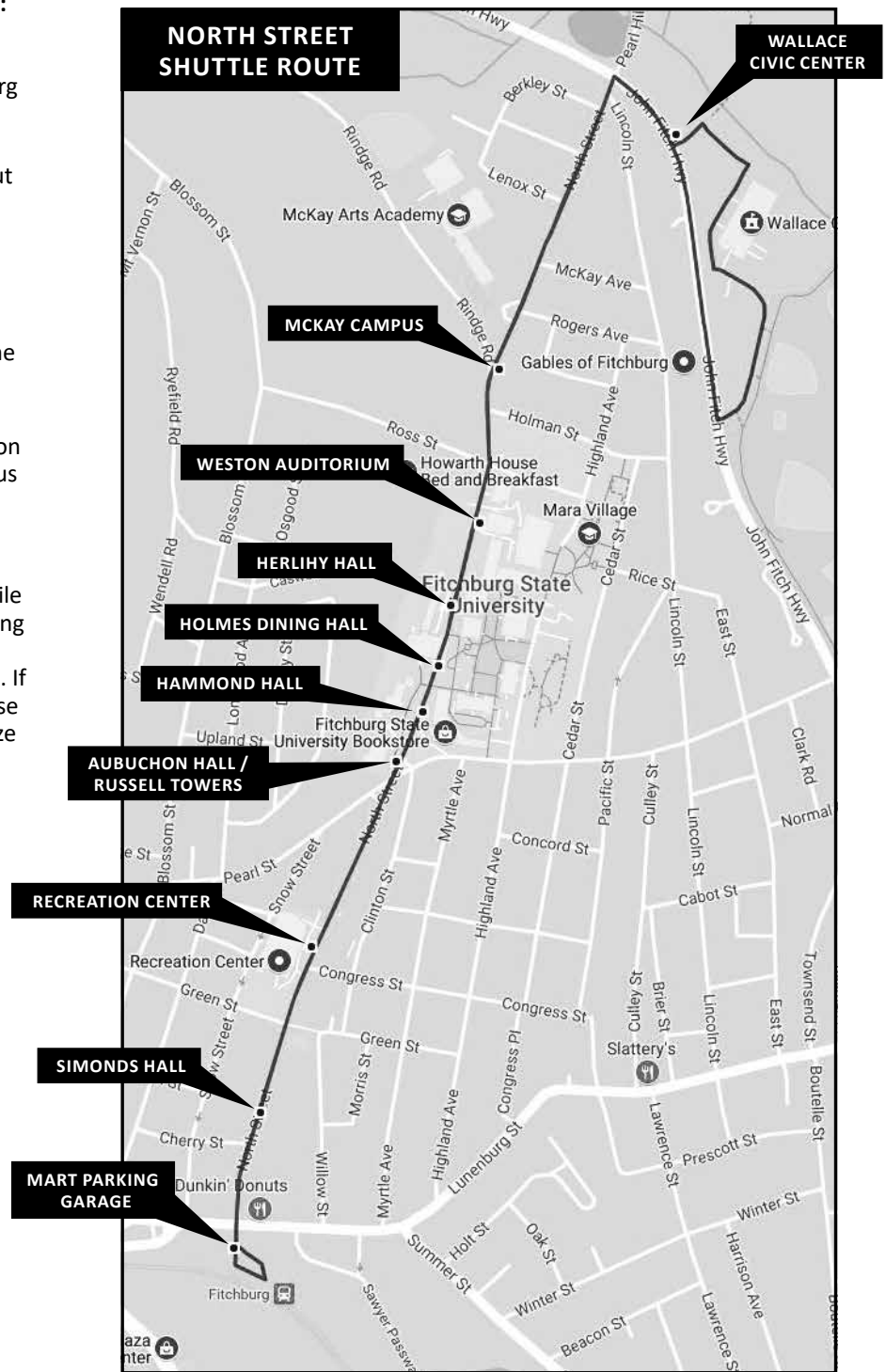
- Please make sure you are parking in the commuter parking lots. These are the lots marked in red on the Parking Lot Map (PDF) file found here: [fitchburgstate.edu/parking](http://fitchburgstate.edu/parking). Parking in any other lots, or in places that are not parking spaces will result in a parking citation. If parking in Commuter lots is unavailable, please park your vehicle at the Civic Center and utilize the free shuttle to get to campus.

• **Shuttle Service:** Parking on campus can be quite difficult, but there is always ample, free parking at the Civic Center. Fitchburg State provides free campus shuttle transportation, serviced by MART. It is easy to use and gets you from your car to your destination without much walking. Two shuttles run on a continuous loop which usually means there is one every 10 minutes.

- **ROUTE:** Civic Center along North Street to Main Street, Fitchburg Intermodal Center and return to Civic Center. The shuttle runs continuously during posted hours.
- **HOW TO RIDE:** Wait at a designated shuttle stop (there will be a sign) OR flag the shuttle to stop at any safe location along the route. Signal the driver by raising your arm as the shuttle approaches. Once on board, let the driver know where you are going on campus.

• **MART Transportation**

- Do you need a ride to class? All seniors who live in Fitchburg can call the Fitchburg Senior Center to register for MART Transportation Services 978-829-1790.
- Once registered, the Senior Center calls in the information to MART. You can then call the MART to schedule transportation.
- Go to the MART website: [mrta.us/services/coa-services](http://mrta.us/services/coa-services) for information and about service to other communities beyond Fitchburg.



**ALFA ONLINE:** Currently, most online courses will be held via Zoom. Please check your course confirmation to see if your course is being held via Zoom or Google Meet.

**Zoom Courses:** Please make sure to download the most recent version of Zoom. Then click the link in the email you receive about a week before classes begin

**Google Meet Courses:** Just click the link in the email you receive about a week before classes begin. If you don't have a Gmail account, no worries! It will just prompt you to enter your name before joining.

**Equipment and Tech Requirements:** You will need some basic equipment to participate. To fully participate in the video based online classroom, you will need:

- Computer (Laptop or Desktop), Tablet, or Smartphone.
- Microphone, Speakers, and webcam. Most laptops, tablets and smartphones have these features already built in.
- If you are using a desktop computer, please make sure you have all of these elements.
- Internet/Wifi access

**Please note:** You may also participate with a landline phone (unless indicated otherwise) but you will only be able to hear the audio and will not be able to gain the full benefits of the course.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY:** ALFA follows Fitchburg State University's severe weather policy regarding canceling classes due to weather.

**The ALFA program will close if Fitchburg State is closed, and no on-site or online ALFA classes will be held.**

In the rare event that ALFA cancels classes due to weather (or any other extenuating circumstance) and Fitchburg State is open, we will send an email ASAP before the class starts to all participants who will be affected. In either situation, our office will work with the instructors to schedule a makeup class and notify members of that date.

**PICTURES:** Please note that the University photographer and/or instructor may be taking photos for use for marketing purposes in newsletters, brochures, etc. If you do not want photos taken of you, please tell the photographer.

**REFUND POLICY:** Courses, trips, and special events are NOT refundable or transferable (to another course OR another person) unless they are canceled.



**Are you 90 or over?** Then your ALFA classes are FREE!  
Please email the ALFA office so that we can get you registered free of charge!  
[alfa@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:alfa@fitchburgstate.edu)



## Registration Form | FALL 2025

Try our online registration option at:  
[marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/alfa](https://marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/alfa)

OR SCAN THIS CODE WITH YOUR PHONE ▶



Please complete **ONE** registration form for **EACH** person. All courses are \$45 unless otherwise indicated.

Please **HIGHLIGHT** in color, or **CIRCLE** the courses below for which you would like to register.

### COURSE OFFERINGS

#### MONDAY

- Fall Birding
- Invigorate your Decluttering **ONLINE**
- Fungi: Ecology and Identification **HYBRID 10-Weeks: \$90**
- A Review of the 2024–2025 Supreme Court Term
- Memory: What We Remember and Why We Forget!

#### TUESDAY

- Naturally Curious: Autumn Nature Hikes East of Fitchburg **2-Hours: \$60**
- The Art and Craft of Archives
- Exploring Ukulele Dimensions
- Creative Writing in Nonfiction Workshop
- Venice: History of Ancient City **FREE Sponsored by Center for Italian Culture**

#### WEDNESDAY

- ALFA Salon: Continuing the Conversion **ONLINE FREE**
- Festival: A Celebration of African Art **FREE Sponsored by Leominster Public Library**
- Geology **10-Weeks: \$90**
- Shirley Jackson: Master of the Uncanny

#### THURSDAY

- Yoga for Strength
- The Irish Troubles
- Hootenanny
- Technologies of Truth: Russian History from Cyrillic to Cyberwar **ONLINE**
- American Architecture at the Crossroads: 1870-1910
- Ocean Quest **ONLINE**

#### FRIDAY

- 5-Part Series:** Global South **ONLINE**
- Still Life Drawing for Everyone
- No Screens Needed: Popular Children’s Literature from the Boomer Childhood!

#### SATURDAY

- Classic and Contemporary Screwball Comedies **ONLINE**

**Please see reverse side for payment information**

**Registration Opens August 5, 2025 at 9:00 AM – please register ONLINE, if possible!**

Paper registration forms & payment must be **MAILED** to: **ALFA Office, Fitchburg State University, 160 Pearl Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

I am **NEW!** This is my first ever ALFA class.  I am an **Alum** of Fitchburg State

**CAR INFORMATION FOR PARKING PERMIT (This is REQUIRED for On-Campus and CPS Courses)**

Make/Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Plate #: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

WANT TO KNOW INSTANTLY IF YOU GOT INTO A COURSE? REGISTER ONLINE AT: [marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/alfa](https://marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/alfa)

**I AM SENDING PAYMENT FOR:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **5-Week/1.5 Hours AND 8-Week/1 Hour ALFA Course(s) @ \$45/Course** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(All courses unless otherwise indicated; for example: FREE, 10-week courses, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ **5-Week/2 Hours Courses @ \$60/Course** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Naturally Curious )

\_\_\_\_\_ **10-Week/1.5 Hours ALFA Course(s) @ \$90/Course** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Fungi: Ecology and Identification AND Geology )

\_\_\_\_\_ **ALFA Salon: Continuing the Conversation** = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Venice: History of Ancient City** (Sponsored by the Center for Italian Culture) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Festival: A Celebration of African Art** (Sponsored by Leominster Public Library) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL = \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**PAYMENT INFORMATION:**

**CREDIT CARD (PREFERRED):**  MasterCard  Visa  Discover

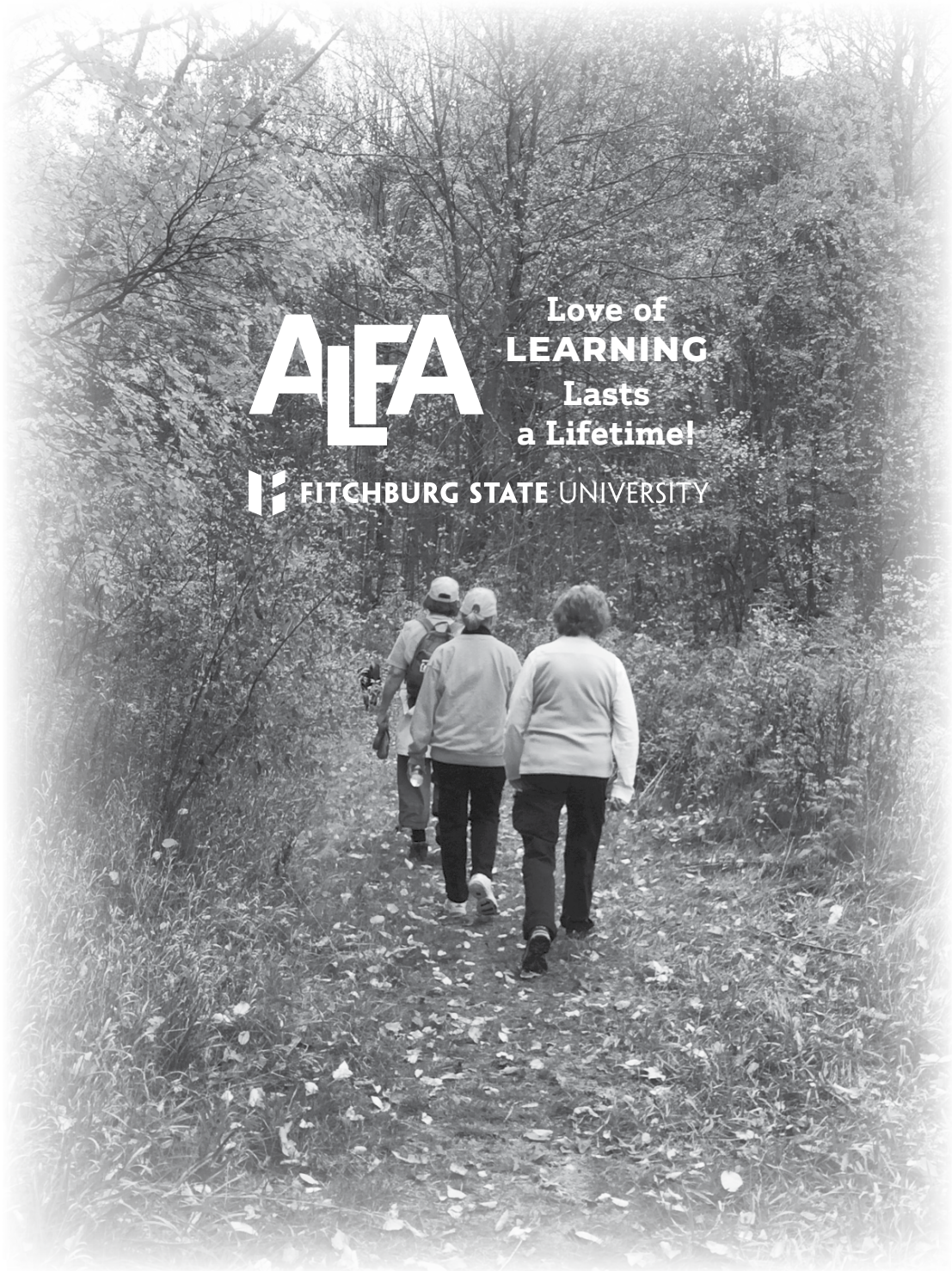
Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVC (3 digit code): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**ACH DEBIT** (use a check made payable to Fitchburg State) amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note** that we **DO NOT deposit paper checks**. We use your account and routing number to debit the charge from your account. It will show up as an **ACH debit** on your statement. Please see "Payment Instructions" on what we do if the amount on your check does not match the order total (for example: A class is full, etc.). **Please note that if you need a refund** using this option, you will be asked to fill out an I-9 which asks for your social security number. **We HIGHLY recommend paying by credit or debit card above.**

Shirley Pick Scholarship Program (contact the ALFA Office for details: [alfa@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:alfa@fitchburgstate.edu) or **978-665-3706**)



**ALFA**

Love of  
**LEARNING**  
Lasts  
a Lifetime!

 **FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY**





Love of  
**LEARNING**  
Lasts  
a Lifetime!



REGISTER  
ONLINE ▶

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY!

[marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA](https://marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA)