Course Offerings **FALL 2026**

ALFA

Adult Learning IN THE Fitchburg Area

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

Registration opens:
August 11
9 AM



Love of Learning Lasts a Lifetime!

fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA

From the President



When Shirley Pick first imagined a lifelong learning program here in Fitchburg, she believed our university could be a place where curiosity never had to retire. She was right. What began with just a handful of courses in 2004 has become a community of thousands, built on conversation, discovery, and the joy of learning.

As we reintroduce the ALFA course catalog, we do so with gratitude for the generations of faculty, librarians, instructors, and students who have made this program flourish—and with renewed energy for the future. ALFA is more than a set of classes. It is living proof that education has no age limit, that engagement brings vitality, and that Fitchburg State is at its best when it is open and connected to the community around it.

This year marks a moment of renewal, not only for ALFA but for our university. Across Fitchburg State, we are leaning into our mission: expanding access, deepening partnerships, and building momentum for the years ahead. ALFA belongs at the heart of that vision, reminding us that education is not a transaction but a lifelong invitation.

So, whether you are returning for another course or joining us for the first time, welcome. Thank you for choosing to learn with us, and for reminding us, every semester, what it means to live with curiosity and purpose.

Onward!

Donna Hodge

Donna Hodge, Ph.D.
President





What is ALFA?

ALFA (Adult Learning in the Fitchburg Area) is a lifelong 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** for details about becoming an ALFA instructor.

▸ Have a question?

Call us at **978-665-3706**
or email us at **alfa@fitchburgstate.edu**.

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Easy online registration



Registration opens August 11

marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA

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

Instructor & Facilitator Biographies | FALL 2026



Brianna Babineau is a lab, simulation, and clinical instructor for the Nursing Department at Fitchburg State University. She is working on obtaining her Ph.D. in Nursing Education to continue to educate the future nurses of our community. Brianna is a Fitchburg State nursing alum herself and has a decade of healthcare experience, with a specialty in pediatric critical care, that she brings into her work with students. Brianna is passionate about providing the students with the highest level of education and strongly believes in the positive effects of increasing the realism in simulations through the use of standardized patients. She is looking forward to working with the community to shape the next generation of nurses.



Danielle Beaudette, the proprietor of The Cozy Tea Cart, has spent over two decades exploring and sharing the world of tea. In her ongoing pursuit of knowledge, she has devoted herself to researching the history, traditions and ceremonies that make tea such a meaningful experience. She continues to study and explore the evolving world of tea, staying current by gaining invaluable knowledge about industry trends, the latest research on tea's health benefits, and effective tea business management.



Laurie Bebick grew up in Fitchburg. She is an artist, naturalist, and educator. She primarily works in colored pencil as the slow process, and rhythm of laying down layer after layer of color is symbolic of the peace she finds in nature, while the control over the medium appeals to her training as a natural science illustrator. In recent years, she has turned into a total plant geek, especially native plants. She enjoys passing on her knowledge of the fascinating world of plants through her art and botanical illustration classes.



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*. His book *Reimagining the Post-Conflict State* was published in May 2026.



Sara E. Campbell is a professional genealogist. She is an educator, author, and editor of genealogical publications. She has offered a variety of courses through ALFA, as well as adult education classes at Greenfield Community College and Holyoke Community College She has been researching her own family for over 30 years, and specializes in New England and New York research. She has recently relocated to North Carolina, and looks forward to broadening her historical knowledge in her new home. She brings her civil engineering background to problem solving.



Peter Capodagli is a retired middle school science teacher who enjoyed 35 years in the Shirley school system. He is currently the owner of the Boulder Art Gallery located in Fitchburg's historic Upper Common. Peter is the originator, facilitator, and driving force behind Fitchburg's "Rock Walk" trail, and is also a local historian who has presented programs on topics of historical interest throughout the community.



Sally Cragin is an award-winning journalist whose short plays have been produced in New York City, Provincetown, and area theatre. She is the Chair of Stratton Players, the oldest community theatre in our region, which celebrates 100 years in 2025. She was a professional child actor in New Hampshire, appearing in dinner theatre and summer stock from age 12. From age 16 through the early oughts she was a theatre critic for area newspapers including the *Boston Globe, St. Louis Riverfront Times*, and *Boston Phoenix* newspaper chain. In addition to Sally's theatre experience, she also produces Poetry Podcast with Paula and Sally for FATV, serves as a councilor-at-large for the City of Fitchburg, and is the author of *The Astrological Elements*, and *Astrology on the Cusp*. She is 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 U.S. and Europe. She has a background in political science and philosophy, and a long-term appreciation of art, culture, and making connections.



Ellen Daoust has over a decade of experience working at the intersection of media production, community engagement, and education. She currently serves as director of community media at Fitchburg Access Television. Prior to this role, she was associate director of

education at Cambridge Community Television, where she led multiple cohorts of community members in developing and producing their own podcasts. Her work focuses on expanding access to media-making and digital skills, supporting lifelong learners, and empowering individuals to tell their own stories through digital media. She brings extensive hands-on teaching experience and a passion for helping beginners build confidence in creative technology.



Adem Yavuz Elveren is a professor of economics at Fitchburg State University. He earned his Ph.D. in Economics at the University of Utah in 2008. He studies military economics and feminist economics. He is the author of *Heterodox Economics of Military Spending* (2025), *The Economics of Military Spending A Marxist Perspective* (2019), *Brain Drain and Gender Inequality in Turkey* (2018), the editor of *Routledge Handbook of Defense Economics* (forthcoming in 2026), and the co-editor of *Gender and Society in Turkey: The Impact of Neo-Liberal Policies, Political Islam and EU Accession* (2012).



Lena Ficco is an associate professor of psychological science at Fitchburg State University. She teaches research methods and statistics, introductory and advanced level courses in biological and developmental psychology, as well as cognitive neuroscience courses. Dr. Ficco earned her master's and doctoral degrees from UMass Amherst, where she studied developmental cognitive effects of hormone treatments, such as birth control pills and hormone replacement treatment. Dr. Ficco enjoys teaching students of all educational backgrounds and makes "frightfully science–y" topics accessible and fun to learn.



Barbara Friedman holds a Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Wisconsin. Her career in librarianship continues as a consultant for library building projects and strategic planning most recently working with the libraries in Clinton, Montague, Littleton and Foster, Rhode Island. She was the director of the Erving Public Library, the Westminster Public Library, and assistant director of the Lunenburg Public Library. Early in her career, she was a reference librarian at the Fitchburg Public Library, and at the libraries at Hofstra University and Marquette University. She is past president of the ALFA Board, taught courses in technology and libraries as an ALFA instructor, and currently serves as the president of the Massachusetts Library Aid Association.



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 Master's 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.



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.



Sarah Lewis 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.

INSTRUCTOR & FACILITATOR BIOGRAPHIES



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



Ian Murray is the simulation laboratory director at Fitchburg State University. Born and raised in Fitchburg, Ian brings 25 years of experience in higher education to his work. Through his service on the Fitchburg Board of Health and as a patient himself, he has seen firsthand the growing challenges of accessing quality healthcare in Central Massachusetts. Ian is passionate about the Standardized Patient Program because he believes the local community and the University can work together to improve the quality of care in our region. By training local residents to help educate the next generation of nurses, he aims to ensure that Fitchburg's healthcare future is shaped by the very people it serves.



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.



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.



Reid Parsons is a professor in the Environmental, Geographic, & Public Health Science Department at Fitchburg State who specializes in planetary geology. He grew up in northwest Colorado where he was inspired by the outdoors and the story that rocks can tell of Earth's history. Following an undergraduate degree in Earth Systems Science, Reid went on to study the recent climate history of Mars for his Ph.D. at U.C. Santa Cruz and subsequently worked for NASA as a temporary research fellow before coming to Fitchburg State. Reid has continued to conduct NASA-funded Mars research and has involved several undergraduates in his work.



Ben Railton is professor of English studies, coordinator of American studies, and chair of graduate English studies at Fitchburg State University. He's the author of six books, most recently *Of Thee I Sing: The Contested History of American Patriotism* (2021); the creator of the narrative history podcast *Baseball, Bigotry, and the Battle for America*, now in its second season; and the co-creator of the public scholarly website *Black & White & Read All Over*, where his daily *AmericanStudier* blog now publishes. He also writes the bimonthly *Considering History* column for the *Saturday Evening Post*.



J.J. Sylvia IV is an associate professor of communications media at Fitchburg State University, where his research and teaching explore the philosophy and ethics of communication from social media and algorithms to AI and big data. His most recent book is *LiveJournal and Russian Disinformation: The Rise of Epistemic Sabotage* (2025), and he has published two open-access textbooks on media and communication. He regularly leads students on study abroad trips to Greece as a way to bring ancient debates about truth and democracy vividly to life. When he's not in the classroom or at his desk, you'll find him hiking, pedaling, or paddling his way through New England with his wife and two daughters.



Carolyn Todd holds a B.F.A. and M.A. in the Fine Arts and Art Education. As an experienced art instructor and artist, she has taught middle, high school, college, and adult students. Her academic discipline has focused on painting (all media), drawing, design, color theory, creativity, and art history. She truly enjoys designing art learning opportunities that will encourage student interests, awareness, skill building, and exploration of creativity.



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 2026 Course Descriptions | SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

COURSE OUTLINES are tentative and subject to change. DATES may change due to unexpected circumstances or weather-related closures. In those cases, a make-up course will be scheduled. EOW = Every Other Week

▸ Fall Birding

(5-Weeks) Mondays: 8 - 9:30 AM
Sept. 28; Oct. 5, 19, 26; Nov. 2
Instructor: Alison O'Hare | Enrollment Limit: 15
Location: Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary | Cost: $45

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 and field guide to birds of eastern North America. Loaner binoculars and field guides will be available. This will be an outdoor program. Participants should be prepared to be comfortable while outside and while walking over sometimes uneven terrain.

Format: Lecture | Discussion | Outdoors

Course Outline: For each day, discussions will depend on what birds are being seen and on what questions participants may have.

▸ Build-A-Podcast at FATV

(5-Weeks / EOW) Mondays: 10 - 11:30 AM
Sept. 28; Oct. 19; Nov. 2, 16, 30
Instructor: Ellen Daoust | Enrollment Limit: 10
Location: FATV | Cost: $45

Have you ever wanted to create your own podcast but did not know where to start? This hands-on course introduces participants to the fundamentals of podcasting, from idea development to recording and sharing a finished episode. Students will learn how to use the Fitchburg Access Television podcast studio, explore storytelling techniques, and gain basic audio editing and graphic design skills. By the end of the course, participants will have created and shared their own short podcast project. Students will have the option to share their work on FATV's public channel.

Required Materials: All equipment provided by FATV. Basic computer familiarity is required.

Format: Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Hands-on Training

Course Outline:

Class 1: Introduction to Podcasting
Class 2: Studio Training and Practice
Class 3: Recording Your Podcast
Class 4: Editing and Visuals
Class 5: Sharing and Reflection

▸ Tea Experience Series: Taste, Tradition, and Wellness

(5-Weeks) Mondays: 10:30 AM - 12 PM
Sept. 28; Oct. 5, 19, 26; Nov. 2
Instructor: Danielle Beaudette | Enrollment Limit: 20
Location: TBD | Cost: $45

Whether you're just beginning your journey with whole-leaf tea or looking to deepen your appreciation, this series is designed to educate, inspire, and delight. Through guided tastings and interactive sessions, you'll explore new flavors, uncover tea's rich traditions, and connect with fellow tea enthusiasts. With a focus on hands-on learning and a spirit of fun, you'll experience tea in a whole new way—one cup at a time. **NOTE:** Please let the instructor know ahead of time of any food allergies.

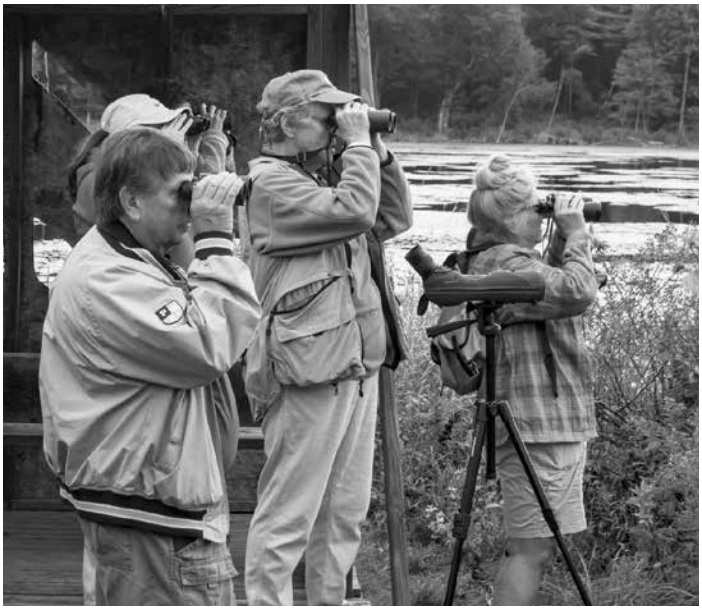
Recommended Materials: Notebook and pen

Required Fee: $10 due in cash to the instructor on the first day of class for materials for tea and cheese pairing.

Format: Lecture | Included is a tea and cheese tasting of five different teas and cheeses.

Course Outline:

Class 1: Tea 101 From Leaf to Cup
A Fall/Winter Tea Tasting
Class 2: Infused with Health
Exploring the Power of Whole-Leaf Tea
Class 3: A Symphony of Flavor
Tea and Cheese Tasting
Class 4: The Power of Tea
The Social Impact of Tea in Our History
Class 5: A Victorian Christmas Tea
Tradition, Elegance, and Holiday Cheer



▸ A Review of the 2025-26 Supreme Court Term

(5-Weeks) Mondays: 12:30 - 2 PM
Sept. 28; Oct. 5, 19, 26; Nov. 2
Instructor: Paul Weizer | Enrollment Limit: 30
Location: McKay, Room 215 | Cost: $45

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 and will dynamically change as the term unfolds.

▸ Political & Social Issues Book Group

(5-Weeks) Mondays: 2:30 - 4 PM
Sept. 28; Oct. 5, 19, 26; Nov. 2
Instructor: Eric Budd | Enrollment Limit: 30
Location: McKay, Room 215 | Cost: $45

We will read excerpts from different books on a wide range of political and social issues. The topics we will discuss include the following: the impact of social media/cell phones on children today, residential segregation, the impact of regulation on policy-making, threats to democracy at home and abroad, and the future. Each class will start with a brief lecture followed by class discussion.

Format: Lecture | Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: The Anxious Generation
Class 2: Excluded - How Snob Zoning, NIMBYism, and Class Bias Build the Walls Walls We Don't See
Class 3: Abundance
Class 4: Ill Winds - Saving Democracy from Russia Rage, Chinese Ambition and American Complacency
Class 5: Humankind - A Hopeful History



▸ Acting for Impact: Help Train the Next Generation of Nurses

(5-Weeks) Mondays: 2:30 - 4 PM | Sept. 28; Oct. 5, 19, 26; Nov. 2
Instructors: Ian Murray & Brianna Babineau | Enrollment Limit: 8
Location: Hammond, Room G11 (& Sim Lab) | Cost: FREE

Interested in acting for a good cause? Does working with our Fitchburg State nursing students sound like fun? This unique experience might be for you! This course prepares lifelong learners to serve as Standardized Patients (SPs) for undergraduate nursing simulations. Participants will learn how to accurately and consistently portray specific patient scenarios, provide valuable, constructive feedback to students from the 'patient's perspective', and contribute to the safety and realism of the clinical learning environment. No prior acting experience is required; the curriculum is specifically designed to help non-actors use their own life experiences to create authentic patient portrayals for our students.

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

Course Outline:

Class 1: Foundations and Introductions to Medical Terminology and Equipment
Class 2: Case Analysis & Character Development
Class 3: Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication
Class 4: The Art of Feedback
Class 5: Mock Simulation

▸ Intermediate Botanical Illustration: Watercolor

(10-Weeks) Tuesdays: 9:30 - 11:30 AM | Sept. 29; Oct. 13, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24; Dec. 1, 8
Instructor: Laurie Bebick | Enrollment Limit: 15 | Location: McKay, Room 154 | Cost: $120

This course will cover the fundamentals of using watercolors in botanical illustration. Students will also be introduced to botany, through painting various native plant subjects. Basic drawing ability is a prerequisite.

Required Materials: Artist quality watercolor tube paints in: Lemon yellow, permanent alizarin crimson, ultramarine blue, hansa yellow deep, cadmium red, and cerulean blue, various sizes of watercolor brushes, water containers, palette, masking fluid, paper towels, watercolor paper. Other: pencils, erasers, and micron pens. For questions about materials, please contact the instructor at: **lauriebebick@gmail.com**

Format: Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Practice

Course Outline:

Class 1: Intro to materials, methods, and mixing colors
Class 2: Wet wash technique
Class 3: Dry brush technique
Class 4: Using masking fluid
Class 5: Painting ferns
Class 6: Painting pines
Class 7: Painting magnolias
Class 8: Painting simple flowers
Class 9: Painting composite flowers
Class 10: Painting specialized flowers

When Parts Meet: Relating to Ourselves and Others

(8-Weeks) Tuesdays: 10 - 11 AM
Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17
Instructor: Lena Ficco | Enrollment Limit: 20
Location: McKay, Room 145 | Cost: $45

This course explores how developmental experiences, particularly attachment with caregivers and peers, can support and hinder our development of Self and how we relate with Self and others. We'll discuss the basics of cognitive and socioemotional development, nervous system functioning, and contemporary therapeutic theories that support secure attachment to and relating with ourselves and others.

Required Materials: *You Are The One You've Been Waiting For: Applying Internal Family Systems to Relationships* by Dr. Richard Schwartz (2023). Internet access required for recorded slide show.

Recommended Materials: Access to a printer, if paper copies of scientific articles is preferred.

Format: Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: Attachment theory basics
Class 2: Societal barriers in interpersonal relating
Class 3: Cultural and family system effects on attachment
Class 4: Relational burdening and disintegration of self
Class 5–8: Reintegration of self: self–attunement and embodiment (Internal Family Systems Theory)

The schedule will vary based on student backgrounds, engagement, and interest with the bulk of the course focusing on the Development of Self and Internal Family Systems (IFS) Theories.

Exploring Nature Through Journaling and Drawing

(5-Weeks) Tuesdays: 12 - 2 PM | Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27
Instructor: Laurie Bebick | Enrollment Limit: 15
Location: McKay, Room 154 | Cost: $60

Nature journaling can be an excellent way to learn about the natural world while enhancing your observational and drawing skills. Using prompts and drawing techniques, we will explore the wonderful world around us.

Required Materials: Sketchbook with 65 lb. or greater paper, mix of graphite pencils, micron pens.

Recommended Materials: *The Laws Guide to Nature Drawing and Journaling* by John Muir Laws (2016)

Format: Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Practice

Course Outline:

Class 1: Intro to materials/ observational skills practice
Class 2: Sharpen your drawing skills/ draw animals
Class 3: Draw wildflowers/ add text, frames, etc.
Class 4: Draw birds
Class 5: Draw landscapes

Exploring Musical Theatre

(5-Weeks) Tuesdays: 2:30 - 4 PM
Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27
Instructor: Sally Cragin | Enrollment Limit: 25
Location: McKay, Room 145 | Cost: $45

The grand tradition of Broadway musicals emerged from the European and British traditions of Operetta, but it soon evolved into a uniquely American language of theatre that pushed boundaries far beyond its origins. In this course, we will immerse ourselves in the groundbreaking works that redefined what a musical could be and what it could say. Our journey begins with the high-society wit of *Anything Goes*, a hallmark of the 1930s that perfected the art of the "show tune" and comedic spectacle. We then transition into the "Golden Age" with *South Pacific*, examining how Rodgers and Hammerstein used the stage to confront racial prejudice and the complexities of wartime humanity. As the 1960s approached, *Fiddler on the Roof* introduced a new level of emotional depth as well as highlighting marginalized communities. The British Invasion ushered forward a new era of the "Rock Musical." Finally, we arrive at *Hamilton*, the modern phenomenon that re-emphasized Broadway's ability to ensure the musical remains a powerful tool for social reflection. Students will have their observation and critical skills sharpened by discussion, observation, and analysis of these immortal examples of theatrical brilliance.

Required Materials: Notebook and pen are helpful.

Format: Lecture | Discussion | Reviewing scenes

Course Outline:

Class 1: Before the beginning – vaudeville, Gilbert & Sullivan, Operettas, and the Dawn of Broadway.
Class 2: The Golden Age
Class 3: The Golden Age continue into rock musicals
Class 4: The 1980s into the present
Class 5: How the present resembles the past

Inequality

(5-Weeks) Tuesdays: 2:30 - 4 PM | Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27
Instructor: Adem Elveren | Enrollment Limit: 30
Location: McKay, Room 143 | Cost: $45

The deteriorated income distribution in the United States and many countries across the world in the last four decades is an important economic issue. Economic inequality has significant implications for individual and social welfare. Therefore, this course aims at answering a basic question about economic inequality: What are the causes and consequences of increasing inequality in the United States and the world?

Format: Lecture | Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: What is inequality, and why inequality matters
Class 2: Major concepts of distribution and how to measure inequality
Class 3 & 4: Causes of changing inequality in the U.S.
Class 5: Causes of changing inequality in the world

ALFA Salon: Continuing the Conversation

Wednesdays: 10:30 AM - 12 PM | EOW | Oct. 7, 21; Nov. 4, 18; Dec. 9
Martha Crawford | Enrollment Limit: 30 | Online | Cost: FREE

ALFA Salon is held every other week throughout the ALFA session. Guest lectures from Fitchburg State University and throughout the country lead engaging discussions on a variety of topics and issues. Salon is a collaborative effort. Participants may receive pre-reading and video viewing material for some sessions and/or be asked for their suggestions on work-in-progress for other sessions.

Format: Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Role Playing & Simulation | Reflection

Course Outline: Sessions are unique presentations from each guest lecturer. This Salon will be hosting the following topics:

A Fate Worse Than Hell | OCTOBER 7

Guest Lecturer: W. Fitzhugh Brundage
William Umstead Distinguished Professor,
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC

Estimates suggest that roughly 750,000 soldiers perished in the Civil War, yet the catastrophe of captivity remains far less familiar. Some 400,000 Union and Confederate troops passed through prison camps whose names became synonymous with hunger, disease, exposure, and despair. In the worst of these enclosures, more than 30,000 men were compressed into spaces no larger than ten city blocks, turning imprisonment into a grim theater of slow death. These camps were not a marginal horror but a central feature of America's bloodiest conflict, one that exposed the war's capacity for organized dehumanization. Drawing on prisoner testimony, photographs, and wartime journalism, learn how the prison question shaped negotiations, fueled retaliation, and became an ever more dangerous political burden for both the Union and the Confederacy.

Documentary Trends | OCTOBER 21

Guest Lecturer: Samantha deManbey
Documentary Filmmaker (Her Republic Films)
Writer (The Subjective Observer)

In this discussion, we'll examine two current competing trends in documentary filmmaking. Independent documentaries are showing innovative and artistic techniques as more people gain access to filmmaking equipment and methods to share their work. But at the same time, large companies like Netflix are churning out documentaries for the sole purpose of entertainment and profit. Some questions we will discuss are:

- What happens when documentaries are primarily profit motivated?
- What makes a documentary or filmmaker trustworthy?
- What are our ethical and research expectations for documentaries?

The Epic Story of Prosthetics | NOVEMBER 4

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

From ancient Egyptians to medieval knights to modern Paralympic athletes, humans have been innovating ways to manage disabilities for centuries. Through archaeological, literary, and medical evidence, both local and global, learn about the epic story of prosthetics!

Prepare to Discuss: America & the World NOVEMBER 18

Guest Lecturer: J.J. Sylvia IV, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Communications Media,
Coordinator, Digital Media Innovation
Fitchburg State University

Guest Lecturer: Wafa Unus, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, English Studies,
Fitchburg State University, and Journalist

Guest Lecturer: Nicholas Langhart
Retired Director, Forbush Memorial Library

With the 2026 elections over; what do we think are the most critical issues facing America today—here and in the World? And importantly, what we can do to move forward to solutions in our divided world. During our session we hope to facilitate a dialog from which participants can take away their personal priorities. A list of suggested issues and articles and videos about them will be sent to everyone.

Special thanks to the panel support and planning team that made this session possible:

M. Sawkat Anwer, Ph.D., DMVH; Dist. Professor Emeritus, Tufts
Ursula Anwer; Retired Associate Professor of Neurology
Barbara Edsall, Retired Registrar, Higgins Armory Museum
Matt Grizich, Retired Maintenance Manager, Laddawn, Inc.
Maxine Pincott, Ret. Public High School & Elementary Teacher
Steven Pincott, Retired Industrial Engineer
Carol Smith, Retired Professional Personal Recruiter
Kevin Smith, Retired Worldwide Specifications Manager, Siemens

The Cognitive Science of Music | DECEMBER 9

Guest Lecturer: L. Robert Slevc, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, University of California, San Diego

Music is ubiquitous in human societies, but why? What good is all this sound anyway? We'll talk about music from the perspective of cognitive science/neuroscience to consider why we like music so much, what happens in our minds/brains when we hear or make music, and whether birdsong is actually music from the bird's point of view.

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

The Planet Mars

(5-Weeks) Wednesdays: 9 - 10:30 AM
Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28
Instructor: Reid Parsons | Enrollment Limit: 20
Location: Antonucci Science Complex, Room 124 | Cost: $45

Mars exploration and the possibility of life have ignited the popular imagination for more than 100 years. In this class, we will discuss the history of Mars exploration and highlight what we've learned about the Red Planet through geologic investigation and inference. Students will have the opportunity to look at data collected from spacecraft and investigate some of their own questions about Mars. Topics will include the role of impact craters, volcanism, water, ice, and wind in shaping the planet's surface and how those processes waxed or waned over time. The potential for life on Mars and human exploration will also be discussed.

Required Materials: Laptop computer (if in-person)

Format: Lecture | Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: History of Mars exploration and Mars geography
Class 2: Prominent features and their formation
Class 3: Interpreting Mars' geologic past
Class 4: Spacecraft data and analysis
Class 5: Recent events and future of Mars exploration

Ukulele for All

(5-Weeks) Wednesdays: 12:30 - 2 PM
Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28
Instructor: Paul Luria | Enrollment Limit: 20
Location: TBD | Cost: $45

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 ukulele.

Recommended Materials: Electric clip-on tuner or tuning fork, or A440 tone on phone app.

Format: Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Active Participation

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



What's New in Genealogy?

(5-Weeks) Wednesdays: 2:30 - 4 PM
Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28
Instructor: Sara Campbell | Enrollment Limit: 20
Online | Cost: $45

Our world is changing rapidly, and genealogy is no exception. New information is made available every day in the world of online genealogy. What are the latest technological developments? How do records help us understand the experiences of average people during the Revolutionary War? Should we be working with AI and its potential hallucinations? Is Family Search developing new tools? Should you be on Wikitree? Participants will share the status of their own research.

Format: Lecture | Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: Defining research questions and making a research plan
Class 2: Revolution 250 research: How did our ancestors live during the Revolutionary War
Class 3: New innovations from the Roots Tech conference
Class 4: Full-text search opens up a world of unindexed records through Family Search
Class 5: AI's place in genealogy

Yoga for Strength

(5-Weeks) Thursdays: 9 - 10:30 AM
Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Instructor: Ann-marie LaBollita | Enrollment Limit: 15
Location: Hammond, Room S08 | Cost: $45

This program is for individuals with some yoga experience. Class begins with breathing exercises and a short meditation. Warm up stretches in a chair or on the floor will be followed by yoga postures for flexibility, balance, strength and relaxation. Weight bearing poses and a long resistance band will be used to build upper and lower body strength and toning. Bring yoga knee pads if you require extra knee support and comfort.

Required Materials: Yoga mat, 2 yoga blocks, long resistance band, and small thick towel

Format: Demonstration

Course Outline:

Class 1: Introductions and setting up class room, and gear and yoga stretches and postures
Class 2: Using resistance bands for stretching and strength
Class 3: Holding poses for strength and to relieve tension
Class 4: Wall postures for balance and support
Class 5: Flow sequences and props for support

Fall 2026: At-a-Glance Schedule | SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

TIMES	MONDAY Sept. 28; Oct. 5, 19, 26; Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Dec. 7	TUESDAY Sept. 29; Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27; Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24; Dec. 1	WEDNESDAY Sept. 30; Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28 Nov. 4, 18; Dec. 2, 9, 16	THURSDAY Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Nov. 5, 12, 19; Dec. 3, 10	FRIDAY Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13, 20; Dec. 4, 11	SATURDAY Oct. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; Nov. 7, 14, 21; Dec. 5, 12
8 – 8:30 AM						
8:30 – 9 AM	**Fall Birding** Instructor: Alison O'Hare **Location: Wachusett Wildlife Sanctuary** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS | Cost: $45**					
9 – 9:30 AM			**The Planet Mars** Instructor: Reid Parsons **Location: Antonucci Science Complex, Room 124** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**	**Yoga for Strength** Instructor: Ann-Marie LaBollita **Location: Hammond, Room S08** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**	**5-Part Series:** **Migration in the Global South and Implications on Global North** Instructor: Richard Ndi & Guest Lecturers **ONLINE** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**	
9:30 – 10 AM		**Intermediate Botanical Illustration: Watercolor** Instructor: Laurie Bebick **Location: McKay, Room 154** **10-Weeks | 2 HRS (9:30 - 11:30 AM)** **Cost: $120**				
10 – 10:30 AM	**Build-A-Podcast at FATV** Instructor: Ellen Daoust **Location: FATV** **5-Weeks (EOW)** **1.5 HRS | Cost $45**	**When Parts Meet: Relating to Ourselves & Others** Instructor: Lena Ficco **Location: McKay, Room 145** **8-Weeks | 1 HR (10-11 AM)** **Cost: $45**				**Rollstone Hill "Rock Walk"** Instructor: Peter Capodagli **Location: Fitchburg Boulder** **October 3** **Cost: FREE**
10:30 – 11 AM	**Tea Experience Series: Taste, Tradition & Wellness** Instructor: Danielle Beaudette **Location: TBD** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**		**ALFA Salon** Instructor: Martha Crawford **ONLINE** **5-Weeks (EOW) | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: FREE**	**Painting with Gouache** Instructor: Carolyn Todd **ONLINE** **5-Weeks | 2 HRS** **Cost: $60**	**Baseball at Manzanar, and Other Models of Resistance in Dark Times** Instructor: Benjamin Railton **ONLINE** **5-Week | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**	
11 – 11:30 AM						
11:30 AM – 12 PM						
12:30 – 2 PM	**A Review of the 25-26 Supreme Court Term** Instructor: Paul Weizer **Location: McKay, Room 215** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**	**Exploring Nature Through Journaling and Drawing** Instructor: Laurie Bebick **Location: McKay, Room 154** **5-Weeks | 2 HRS (12-2 PM)** **Cost: $60**	**Ukulele For All** Instructor: Paul Luria **Location: TBD** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**	**Concepts of Physics: Waves, Sound, Light, Electromagnetism** Instructor: Tom Gaskill **Location: McKay, Room 144** **10-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $90**	**Palaces of the People: Massachusetts Library Architecture and Change** Instructors: Barbara Friedman & Nicholas Langhart **Location: Leominster Public Library** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: FREE**	**Fascism and Resistance in Film** Instructor: Joseph Moser **ONLINE** **5-Weeks (EOW) | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**
2:30 – 4 PM	**Political and Social Issues Book Group** Eric Budd **McKay, Room 215** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**	**Inequality** Instructor: Adem Elveren **Location: McKay, Room 143** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**	**What's New in Genealogy?** Instructor: Sara Campbell **ONLINE** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**	**The Dangerous Alphabet: Rhetoric, Power, and the Students Who Broke Athens** Instructor: J.J. Sylvia **ONLINE** **5-Weeks | 1.5 HRS** **Cost: $45**		

Acting for Impact: Help Train the Next Generation of Nurses
Ian Murray
& Brianna Babineau
Hammond, Room G11 & Sim Lab
5-Wks \| 1.5 HRS \| FREE

Exploring Musical Theatre
Instructor: Sally Cragin
Location: McKay, Room 145
5-Weeks \| 1.5 HRS
Cost: $45

Writing the Personal Essay
Instructor: Sarah Lewis
Location: McKay, Room 144
5-Weeks (EOW)
1.5 HRS \| Cost: $45

▸ Painting with Gouache

(5-Weeks) Thursdays: 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Instructor: Carolyn Todd | Enrollment Limit: 15
Online | Cost: $60

Gouache is a water-based painting and the opaque cousin to traditional watercolor painting. Where watercolors are used for transparency, gouache, with its higher pigment concentration, is used for its opaque/solid, vibrant colors that provide crisp edges. Students will investigate this opaque painting style and provide (home) still-life painting for each class.

Students can choose traditional gouache paint or acrylic gouache paint, which is often found less expensive than the Traditional gouache paint. The acrylic gouache paint has the quick surface "fast-drying nature" of acrylic paints. Both are easily found online on Amazon and Dick Blick websites and stores.

Required Materials:

- Plastic gloves to protect paper from contamination
- Paper: 9"x12" Hot Press 140 lb. paper pad
- Drawing Pencils: (1) 4H or 6H and/or (1) B pencils for drawing compositions
- Hot pressed watercolor paper 140 lb. or thicker as preferred, 9"x12" or larger
- Drawing boards 13"x17" or 23"x26" depending on preference
- Masking tape size of preference for attaching paper to boards
- Brushes: hair not bristle, rounds #4, #5, #6 (depending on preference) for exercises and finished paintings
- Small spray bottles, hair dryer, 2-3 small water jars to rinse brushes, The Master's Brush Cleaner and Preserver 1oz. or other soaps/materials to clean brushes
- Plastic round palette, 10 wells, 6.69"L x 6.57"
- Paint (10 tube set) from Amazon or Dick Blick is a choice; it is recommended to add the color tube; lemon yellow due to the fact that it has less of a color bias as compared to the yellow colors included in the set: process yellow and cadmium yellow deep hue
- Holbein acrylic gouache or Winsor & Newton designer's gouache provide gouache paint including lemon yellow
- Apron
- Pencil and paper for taking notes

Students are advised to cover the working area at home to prevent gouache paint stains and to have extra bottles of clean water as needed for painting.



Format: Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Printed Exercises

Course Outline:

Class 1: Discussion and demonstrations will include brush painting with acrylic or traditional gouache. Exercises (provided via email) will include information about gouache painting and hand positions for brush stroke techniques to build skills in gouache painting.

A choice of simple still life arrangements for all five classes will be provided by students for each class #1-5 as indicated for each class.

Class 2: Exercises continue with a value study, a color wheel exercise, and a single still-life object painting. Color bias will also be discussed.

Class 3: A discussion of artists in art history and their techniques will be presented. Exercises provided through email will include color saturation exercises and a still life painting of three objects.

Class 4: Due to the opaque nature of gouache, students will complete a color theory of making cool and warm neutrals, including a color harmony exercise for mixing blacks in gouache painting applied to a selected still life painting of 2-3 objects.

Class 5: Color theory in gouache painting will complete a selection of 1-2 color theory combination painting exercises by choosing a monochromatic, analogous, diad, complementary, split complementary, triad, or tetrad color groups for the completion of a still life painting of 2-4 or more objects.

Concepts of Physics: Waves, Sound, Light, and Electromagnetism

(10-Weeks) Thursdays: 12:30 - 2 PM
Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29; Nov. 5, 12, 19; Dec. 3, 10
Instructor: Tom Gaskill | Enrollment Limit: 30
Location: McKay, Room 144 | Cost: $90

Our everyday experience is enriched and dependent on technology that is made possible by the application of physical principles. Explore these concepts of physics and see examples of how it makes our technology work. Many demonstrations of wave, sound, light, and electromagnetic behavior will be presented as "proof of concept" and to help build a better understanding of how these physical phenomena make our modern technology possible.

Format: Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration

Course Outline:

Class 1: Types of waves, general wave behavior, common wave properties and energy transfer
Class 2: Sound phenomena, qualities of sound, production of sound in musical instruments, resonance and its impact on engineering, the Doppler effect and its multitude of applications
Class 3: Light phenomena and its interaction with the eye, the electromagnetic spectrum and its interaction with materials, polarization, color and spectra
Class 4: Reflection, refraction, and applications to optical technologies from magnifying glasses and telescopes to fiber optic cables and satellite dishes.
Class 5: Diffraction, interference, and their application to technology from lasers to headphones
Class 6: Static electricity, electric fields, voltage, capacitance
Class 7: Current, resistance, simple electric circuits, circuit components, natural and artificial magnetism
Class 8: Electromagnetism and devices like meters, motors, speakers, CRT television
Class 9: Electromagnetic induction and AC/DC electric power generation, transformers
Class 10: Electromagnetic wave production and radio

The Dangerous Alphabet: Rhetoric, Power, and the Students Who Broke Athens

(5-Weeks) Thursdays: 2:30 - 4 PM | Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Instructor: J.J. Sylvia IV| Enrollment Limit: 30
Online | Cost: $45

When the Greeks adapted the Phoenician alphabet and added vowels, they created something far more powerful than a record-keeping tool: a technology that changed how human beings think. Before writing, wisdom lived in memorized verse; after it, ideas could be examined, challenged, and argued over. That shift made Athenian democracy possible and immediately raised a question that has never been fully resolved: is the goal of persuasion to find truth, or to win? The Sophists answered pragmatically: teach citizens to persuade, and democracy will flourish. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle answered differently—and each taught a brilliant student who became a catastrophe for the very democracies their teachers had spent their lives arguing about: Alcibiades, Dion, and Alexander the Great. What do we do when the most educated people in the room are the most dangerous? Genius is no guarantee of virtue. In this discussion-based course, we will re-trace this explosive history through Ancient Greece, drawing on the texts of the period to examine how the shift from oral tradition to written philosophy shaped the ancient world. Find out what happens when the word becomes a weapon.

Format: Lecture | Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: From Memory to Meaning: The Technology of Writing
Class 2: Democracy and the Sophists: Who Gets to Speak?
Class 3: Socrates and Alcibiades: The Limits of the Examined Life
Class 4: Plato, Aristotle, and Their Anti-Democratic Students
Class 5: Truth, Opinion, and the Argument That Never Ended



▸ Writing the Personal Essay

(5-Weeks / EOW) Thursdays: 2:30 - 4 PM
Oct. 1, 15, 29; Nov. 12; Dec. 3
Instructor: Sarah Lewis | Enrollment Limit: 15
Location: McKay, Room 144 | Cost: $45

This course will introduce students to the craft of shaping lived experiences into compelling personal essays. Through a combination of lecture, guided writing exercises, and close reading, you will explore what defines the personal essay and how it differs from other forms of nonfiction. The course will also engage with important questions surrounding the form, including the role of memory, the ethics of writing about real people, and the complexities of representing truth on the page. Readings from influential essayists such as James Baldwin, David Sedaris, Sloane Crosley, and others will serve as models and inspiration as students draft, workshop, and revise their own personal essays.

Required Materials: Something to write with. This can either be a laptop or a notebook and pen.

Format: Lecture | Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: Introduction to the personal essay
Class 2: Personal essay writing techniques
Class 3: Writing about memory, truth, and loved ones
Class 4: Student Workshop #1 OR Reading Discussion #1
Class 5: Student Workshop #2 OR Reading Discussion #2

▸ Baseball at Manzanar, and Other Models of Resistance in Dark Times

(5 Weeks) Fridays: 10:30 AM - 12 PM | Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Instructor: Ben Railton | Enrollment Limit: 30
Online | Cost: $45

This is one of the darkest periods in American history--but we've had plenty of others, and in each of them we've also had models of resistance, individuals and communities who have fought for our best amidst our worst. In this course we'll learn about and discuss five such models of resistance in dark times, starting with the subject of my podcast's second season, baseball at the Manzanar Japanese incarceration camp!

Recommended Materials: Here's that second season of the podcast if folks have a chance to listen: americanstudier.podbean.com

Format: Lecture | Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: Baseball at Japanese American incarceration camps
Class 2: Indigenous resistance to Indian removal
Class 3: The Worcester Women's Rights Convention
Class 4: Activists, authors, and AIDS
Class 5: Lawyers, Jim Crow, and the Constitution



▸ 5-Part Series: Migration in the Global South & Implications on Global North

(5-Weeks) Fridays: 9 - 10:30 AM | Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Instructor: Richard Ndi| Enrollment Limit: 30
Online | Cost: $45

This five-part series examines the many dimensions of migration in the Global South—its deep historical roots, cultural transformations, political drivers, and global consequences. It traces movement from precolonial eras through colonial disruptions, post-independence political shifts, and contemporary global interconnections. The series highlights how migrations have shaped societies in the global South and how these movements continue to influence global politics, economies, and cultures.

Recommended Materials: The presentations will be shared to the participants. They can have notebooks to take notes.

Format: Lecture | Discussion | Demonstration | Reflection | Experience sharing | Brainstorming

Course Outline:

Class 1: Democratization in Africa Change, Political Instability and Migrations to Europe and America
Guest Lecturer: Richard Ndi, Ph.D. in History

Class 2: From Caravans to Crossings: Historical Continuities and Contemporary Crises in African Migration to the West
Guest Lecturer: Raymond Budi, Ph.D. in History

Class 3: Spiritual Survival: Ritual, Memory, and Resilience in Diaspora
Guest Lecturer: Beth Robbins, Community Leader and Mobilizer

Class 4: The World's Table, Set in the South
Guest Lecturer: Joyce Ayadi Hinckley, Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology

Class 5: A Brief Narrative of Africa-Brazil Relations
Guest Lecturer: William Cortezia, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Education

▸ Palaces of the People: Massachusetts Library Architecture and Change

(5 Weeks) Fridays: 12:30 - 2 PM
Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
Instructors: Barbara Friedman & Nicholas Langhart
Enrollment Limit: 25 | Location: Leominster Public Library
Cost: FREE

This course will explore public library history, architecture and the Massachusetts experiment on funding library construction, 1987-2027. Participants will be encouraged to visit public libraries as part of the experience.

Format: Lecture | Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: History of the Building of Libraries in Central Massachusetts Libraries before 1883 / Richardson (1876-1885) and his influence on Libraries in Massachusetts

Class 2: Carnegie Libraries in Massachusetts and the architects who built them

Class 3: 20th Century Library Architects and Libraries

Class 4: The Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program

Class 5: 21st Century Architects; Who's building libraries today? Function vs. Style

▸ Fascism and Resistance in Film

(5 Weeks / EOW) Saturdays: 1 - 2:30 PM
Oct. 3, 17, 31; Nov. 14; Dec. 5
Instructor: Joseph Moser | Enrollment Limit: 25
Online | Cost: $45

This course will delve into insightful cinematic portrayals of fascism in France, Italy, Germany, and Czechoslovakia during the World War II era. We will do background readings to gain historical and political context relevant to the representations of fascism and resistance in each country, and class sessions will be primarily focused on discussion of assigned films.

Required Materials: Students are responsible for accessing and viewing assigned films in preparation for class meetings. Optional readings will be sent via email as PDF files.

Format: Lecture | Discussion

Course Outline:

Class 1: Discussion of *Army of Shadows* and the French resistance

Class 2: Discussion of a film (TBA) on fascism in Italy

Class 3: Discussion of *Sophie Scholl: The Final Days* and resistance to fascism in Germany

Class 4: Discussion of *The Shop on Main Street* and Czechoslovakia in World War II

Class 5: Discussion of *The Great Dictator* and *Jojo Rabbit*, comedic representations of fascism



▸ Rollstone Hill "Rock Walk"

Saturday: 10 AM - 1 PM | October 3
Instructor: Peter Capodagli | Enrollment Limit: 40
Location: Boulder Art Gallery | Cost: FREE

Peter Capodagli will be presenting a guided and narrated historic tour, The Rollstone Hill Rock Walk. This event will feature a comfortable and extraordinarily scenic, two mile walk from the Boulder in the Upper Common to the summit of Rollstone Hill. Along the way we will discuss the historical and cultural connections that the Rollstone Boulder, the quarries, and several notable buildings and structures had on the city's character.

The walk will leave the Boulder Art Gallery, 960 Main Street, Fitchburg, at 10 AM. Bring comfortable walking shoes, water, a friend, and a camera! This will be a very easy, slow, and leisurely walk that most anyone can do, and it is a great opportunity to explore this area in a group setting.

Required Materials: Comfortable walking shoes, and water.

Format: Lecture | Discussion



Registration Info & General Policies | FALL 2026

REGISTRATION OPENS TUESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2026 AT 9 AM

REGISTRATION DEADLINE

To help us get everything prepared for the upcoming semester, please submit your registration by **9 AM on September 18, 2026**. Our online registration store will close at 9 AM on this date. If you need assistance, call ALFA at 978-665-3706. All registrations MUST be completed and received BEFORE this deadline.

WAYS TO REGISTER

To make securing your ALFA course registration as seamless as possible, all ALFA course registrations are now submitted online. We are here to support you every step of the way, and you can choose the method that is easiest for you:

ONLINE from the comfort of your home:
You can easily browse and register for your ALFA courses online, at any time, by going to: **marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/alfa** or scan this code. ⟶

IN-PERSON with the ALFA staff:
If you do not have a computer or internet access at your home or would like assistance with registering, you can come into the Fitchburg State SGOCE office in the Anthony Building on Highland Avenue and register using our new registration kiosk. You may park in the Admissions Parking lot on Highland Ave for short visits to our office. Our staff will be available Monday - Friday from 9 AM to 5 PM, to walk you through the online registration process.

If you need help with online registration, visit: **fitchburgstate.edu/alfa** for a complete-step-by-step tutorial. You can also call ALFA for additional assistance at **978-665-3706** or email us at **ALFA@fitchburgstate.edu**.

A quick note on security: To ensure your personal and financial data remains safe, we are no longer able to accept paper registrations. This change allows us to process everything through Marketplace, the university's official e-commerce portal.

PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

We accept credit/debit cards **(preferred)** and ACH Debit payments. Please pay by debit or credit card if you can. It makes both processing and refunding easier for all involved.

If you choose to pay by ACH Debit, all payments are processed as an e-check electronically and directly from your bank account. ACH transactions 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.

- **For Credit/Debit Payments:** Refunds are issued right away and you should see that money back in your account in a few days.
- **ACH Debit Payments:** If a course is canceled, we will contact you to fill out an I-9 tax form in order to process the refund.

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

CONFIRMATION: 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.

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

PARKING & 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.

- **On-Campus Courses:** Please make sure to fill out your car information on your registration form. Our office will then be in touch with next steps on obtaining your Fitchburg State Visitor Parking Pass.

  Please make sure you are parking in the commuter parking lots. These are the lots marked in red on the map. 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.

Are you 90 or over?

Then your ALFA classes are FREE!

Please email us so that we can get you registered free of charge!

alfa@fitchburgstate.edu

SHUTTLE SERVICE: Parking on campus can be 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 (will have 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 at **978-829-1790** to register for MART Transportation Services

  Once registered, the Senior Center calls in the information to MART. You can then call MART to schedule transportation.

  Go to the MART website at **mrta.us/services/coa-service** for information about service to communities beyond Fitchburg.

ALFA ONLINE: All ALFA online courses are held via Google Meet.

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 & TECH REQUIREMENTS: You will need some basic equipment to participate. To fully participate in the video-based online classroom, you will need:

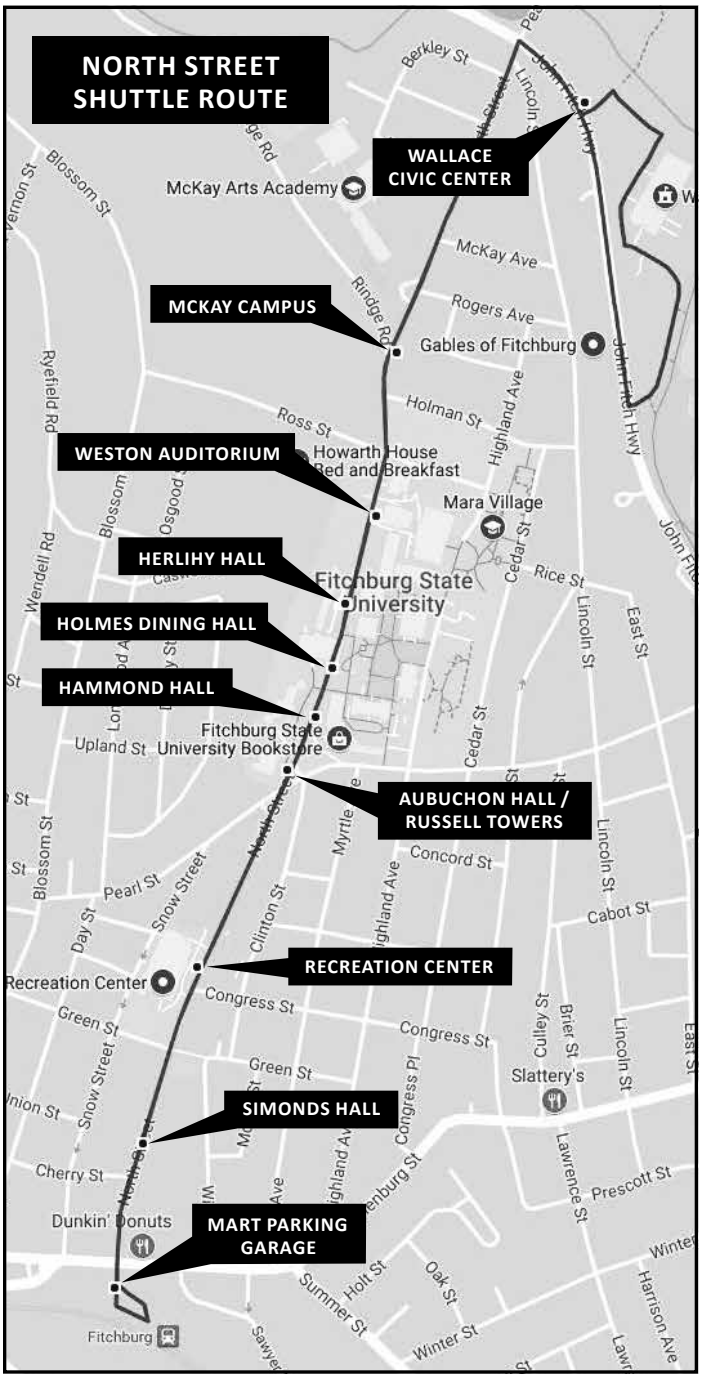
- Computer (Laptop or Desktop), Tablet, or Smartphone.
- Microphone, Speakers, and webcam. Most laptops, tablets and smartphones have these features already built in.
- If you are using a desktop computer, please make sure you have all of these elements.
- Internet/Wifi access

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.

ALFA 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 in newsletters, brochures, etc. If you do not want photos taken of you, please tell the photographer.

REFUND POLICY: All ALFA courses, events, etc. are not refundable unless they are canceled. Registrations are also not transferable to another course OR another person.

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
ALFA—ADULT LEARNING IN THE FITCHBURG AREA
160 Pearl Street ■ Fitchburg, MA 01420-2697

ALFA

Love of **LEARNING** Lasts a Lifetime!

REGISTER ONLINE

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY!
marketplace.fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA

ALFA OnCampus

**Join us this fall semester for all sorts of events across campus.
ALFA participants are welcome and encouraged to participate in a wide variety of activities and events happening throughout our University community such as:**

Hispanic Heritage Month • LGBTQ History Month • Black History Month • Women's History Month
Undergraduate Research Conference • Annual Drag Show • Annual Speaker Series
Theater Performances • Choir and Orchestra Performances • International Night
Annual Lighting of the Campus • Homecoming Events • Sports Games • Scholars OnTap
Harrod Lecture Series • Center for Italian Culture Events • ARTeries, Exhibitions, and Gallery Shows

▶ TO FIND OUT MORE AND SIGN UP FOR OUR MAILING LIST, VISIT: **fitchburgstate.edu/ALFA**

The Community Read Program

The Community Read is a collaboration between Fitchburg State University, local libraries, and the surrounding communities. It is our mission to promote thought-provoking discussions of literature to all audiences. This program is the product of the community, for the community. Our goal is to facilitate a place for insightful discussion, giving members of the community a chance to share their opinions and be heard. Our events offer a comfortable space to exchange views and interact with others.

▶ FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: **fitchburgcommunityread.com**

Community Music Program

The Community Music Program offers year-round programs (individual and group lessons, cello choir, chamber music fest) to the public. Voice and instrumental lessons are offered to all ages and levels of ability.

▶ FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: **fitchburgstate.edu/cmlp**