



# Midcoast Senior College FALL TERM II COURSES

Nov 8 to Dec 17, 2021

Registration begins Oct 18, 2021

Website: [midcoastseniorcollege.org](http://midcoastseniorcollege.org)

Email: [mscoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org](mailto:mscoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org)

## MONDAY

### **Curses! The *Oresteia* and *Mourning Becomes Electra* 9:30-11:00 a.m. 6-week course begins 11/8**

Written and performed in 5th-century Athens, the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus is the archetypical tale of pride, sex, revenge, and horror. In the 20th century the American playwright Eugene O'Neill took the story and set it in a New England seaside town. We will read and discuss each play in the two trilogies. **Required reading:** Texts will be available free on the Internet and in downloadable files. In class we will use Richard Lattimore's translation of the *Oresteia*. **Paul Kalkstein**, as an undergraduate concentrator in English Literature and the Classics at Princeton, developed a taste for literary horror and enjoys spreading the blood and gore.

### **The Unreadable Voynich Manuscript 9:30-11:00 a.m. 6-week course begins 11/8**

Welcome to the "ugly duckling" of manuscripts, lodged at Yale University. Part botanical or herbal, part unknown writing, the manuscript was discovered (or created) in 1912 by Wilfred Voynich, a London book dealer. Voynich claimed that this was a cipher manuscript written perhaps by Roger Bacon and present at the Prague court of Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II in the seventeenth century. Or maybe it was a forgery created by Voynich himself. Thanks to the internet, this is your chance to research and explore this manuscript deemed unreadable by legions of linguists, historians, cryptographers, and Voynich addicts. Your exploration will be a fascinating mix of detective story, art history, botany, cryptography, and just plain fun. Enjoy the ride. **Recommended reading:** The best single source is available online from the National Security Agency: Mary D'Imperio, *The Voynich Manuscript: An Elegant Enigma* (1978). **Robert C. Williams** is a retired Russian historian who has taught courses on espionage, the philosophy of history, and codebreaking at Williams College, Washington University in St. Louis, and Davidson College.

### **Essential Opera: German Masterpieces 1:00-2:30 p.m. 6-week course begins 11/8**

In this six-week survey course we will explore the rich history of German opera by examining a specific masterpiece in each session, starting with Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and ending with Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*. The principal resources for this course will be YouTube and pertinent websites. **Recommended resources:** Roger Parker, ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of Opera*, ISBN 978-0198162827; Alan Riding and Leslie Dunton-Downer, *Eyewitness Companions: Opera*, ISBN 978-0756622046. **Ross Crolius** spent over 30 years performing opera professionally in the New York City area, including 25 years singing full-time with the chorus of the Metropolitan Opera. His teaching experience includes several years as an instructor of voice and opera appreciation.

### **The Life and Legacy of Frances Perkins 1:00-3:00 p.m. 6-week course begins 11/8**

Frances Perkins is the woman behind the New Deal, the driving force behind Social Security, the minimum wage, unemployment insurance, the 40-hour work week, and the limits on child labor, all basic worker guarantees that helped establish the modern middle class. This six-part class includes sessions on her Maine roots and early career, her life and times, her work on the New Deal, the perspective of her labor department auditor Charles E. Wyzanski Jr., infrastructure and art in the New Deal, and the Frances Perkins Homestead National Historic Landmark. This course will include presentations by Dr. Christopher Breiseth, Charles M. Wyzanski, Sarah Peskin, and Tomlin Perkins Coggeshall. **Required reading:** Kirstin Downey, *The Woman Behind the New Deal: The Life and Legacy of Frances Perkins--Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, and the Minimum Wage*, ISBN 978-1400078561. **Michael Chaney** has served as Executive Director of the Frances Perkins Center in Newcastle, Maine since 2014.



## TUESDAY

### **Nikolai Gogol: *Dead Souls* and Selected Tales 9:30-11:00 a.m. 6-week course begins 11/9**

Widely recognized as Russia's greatest comic writer, Gogol offers a world view that is at once weird, grotesque, fantastic, idealistic, and painfully realistic. He was a genius who wanted to be a literary Raphael but whose natural bent was toward Hieronymus Bosch. We'll read and discuss *Dead Souls*, *The Inspector General*, and selected tales from both his early Ukrainian and later Petersburg periods. **Required reading:** Nikolai Gogol, *The Collected Tales of Nikolai Gogol* (Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, translators) ISBN 978-0375706158; Nikolai Gogol, *Dead Souls* (Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, translators) ISBN: 978-0679776444. **George Young** studied English literature at Duke and Slavic Languages and Literatures at Yale. He taught Russian literature and general humanities at Grinnell, Dartmouth, and the University of New England, and more recently has offered literature courses at OLLI and MSC.

### **Reconsidering Latin America's Cold War 9:30-11:30 a.m. 6-week course begins 11/9**

Latin America's Cold War conjures up images of guerrilla insurgency, dirty wars, mass graves, and the disappeared. As riveting as these topics are, they lend themselves to an all-too-familiar narrative, one where the region is cast as either witting or unwitting proxies of Moscow or Washington. This course seeks to complicate our understanding of this era, presenting Latin Americans as protagonists rather than unfortunate victims of a conflict not of their making. Among the topics to be examined: U.S. intervention in Guatemala (1954); the Cuban Revolution (1959-present); Chile's peaceful road to socialism (1970-1973); the Argentine Dirty War (1976-1983); and Nicaragua's Sandinista Revolution (1979-1990). A variety of course materials, including primary documents, photographs, memoirs, films, music, and fiction, should lend themselves well to a spirited discussion of such topics as revolutionary movements, dictatorships, human rights, liberation theology, and U.S. foreign policy. **Required reading:** Antonio Skármeta, *The Postman*, ISBN- 978-0393330397. For further reading on the topic, see Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, ISBN-978-0674064270. **Allen Wells** taught Latin American history at Bowdoin College (1988-2019) and Appalachian State University (1979-1988).

### **Dark Ages, Says Who? 1:00-2:30 p.m. 6-week course begins 11/9**

The Medieval period was a time of widespread illiteracy, poverty, superstition, and religious fervor. There were also, however, magnificent buildings erected, beautiful manuscripts created, and philosophical arguments developed, along with the emergence of universities and the nation-state. The ideas and customs of the time often seem strange and remote and open to ridicule, but they laid the foundation for many of our modern precepts and institutions. **Suggested reading:** Titles to be provided, along with film suggestions, during the course by instructor. **Alicia Harding**, currently an adjunct instructor in World History and Historical Archaeology at Southern Maine Community College, has long enjoyed teaching in senior colleges. She has attended workshops at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and has twice been a recipient of a National Endowment for the Humanities grant.



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## WEDNESDAY

### **American Sign Language - Level 1 9:30-11:00 a.m. 6-week course begins 11/10**

Learn basic sign language communication, including handshapes for the manual alphabet, fingerspelling, numbers, vocabulary, and easy-to-use sentence structure. Deaf culture and familiar phrases will be included to enhance your communication with deaf and hard of hearing family, friends, co-workers, students, clients, and customers. Our ASL syllabus will detail learning outcomes and course content areas. No previous sign language experience is necessary. ASL is a visual language, so no note-taking, textbooks, or dictionaries are required. The instructor will provide handouts via the Internet. **Martin Samelson** is an ASL college professor and job coach for the Deaf, a specialist in learning to communicate without voice.

### **The U.S. Coming Together or Falling Apart? What Next? 9:30-11:00 a.m. 6-week course begins 11/10**

America is riven by anger and hatred-suffused divisiveness. It has not always been so. Why now? Whence now? Is there hope? Definitely. Certainty? No. Robert Putnam, in his most recent book, places these questions within the historical and cultural context of the last century and a half. This lecture and discussion course will consider his perspective and address relevant interrelated issues of gender, social class, race, economics, culture, and politics, as well as the role of the sixties. **Suggested reading:** Robert Putnam, *The Upswing: How Americans Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again*, ISBN 978-1982129149. **Steve Piker** is an anthropologist who taught for 44 years at Swarthmore College. At MSC and other senior colleges, he has both taught and taken numerous courses.

### **New England Architecture, 1620-1900 1:00-2:30 p.m. 6-week course begins 11/10**

The old houses of New England testify to the daily lives, the tastes, and the spirit of those who came before us, and they have their own character. New England's vernacular architecture is distinct in its beauty and originality, its transformation of European models, its adaption to the natural environment, and its reflection of social and economic conditions. This course will serve as an introduction to the main movements of that history in the styles known as Colonial, Georgian, Federal, Greek revival, and the various manifestations of Victorian, including the Shingle Style. The emphasis is on residential architecture, without excluding church and civic buildings. **David Spurr**, emeritus professor at the University of Geneva, has written widely on the relations between architecture and literature. In addition to teaching literature, he has taught architectural history at Geneva and in the school of architecture at the University of Iceland.

## THURSDAY

**(No Courses Offered on Thursday)**



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## FRIDAY

### **Blackout Poetry 9:30-11:00 a.m. 4-week course begins 11/12**

To make a blackout poem, a poet takes a page of printed text and marks out everything but a few chosen words. The resulting poem is usually in free verse, short, and surprising. For this workshop, we will study blackout poems by established writers and construct our own. **Readings:** The instructor will distribute handouts of published poems. Students will be asked to bring to class copies of documents (such as pages of newspaper) to serve as source materials for their own poems.

**Charisse Gendron** holds a PhD in English literature from the University of Connecticut. She has taught at the University of Connecticut, Middle Tennessee State University, OLLI, and MSC.

### **To the River Styx: *Felo de se* in Shakespeare's Tragedies 1:00-3:00 p.m. 6-week course begins 11/12**

In addition to a myriad of other themes in Shakespeare's works, the ending of one's own life echoes through all five of the great tragedies. In particular, three of Shakespeare's most memorable women embrace the Medieval Latin *felo de se* phrase known to contemporary audiences as suicide. Cleopatra, Juliet, and Lady Macbeth all travel a slow road to self-destruction on significantly different journeys that end for equally shattering but significantly different reasons. This discussion-oriented exploration of three plays, three characters, and three journeys will strive to identify and assemble the paving stones and *felo de se* puzzle pieces in *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Macbeth*. **Required reading:** Any edition of these plays of William Shakespeare. **Joseph Côté** is an experienced Shakespearean actor and a lifelong friend of the Bard. At MSC he has taught numerous courses on the world's most famous playwright and conducts the monthly meetings of the "Clubbing with Willy the Shake" program.

## *THANK YOU, MSC SPONSORS!*

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## FALL TERM II CLASSES WILL BE HELD ON-LINE USING ZOOM

Carefully read the following important information:

### HOW TO REGISTER

- Registration for courses is on-line; phone assistance is available at 207-725-4900.
- Registration opens October 18 at 9:00 a.m. for MSC members. Midcoast Senior College's current membership period is July 1, 2021 -June 30, 2022. To pay your membership fee, go to <https://midcoastseniorcollege.org/membership-form/>
- Not sure if you're a member? Email us at [msoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org](mailto:msoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org)
- A link to the registration page (with full instructions) will be emailed to current members in advance. On October 20, 2021 the registration page will be published for others on our website.
- Space is limited; if a course is full, please notify us of your interest at [msoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org](mailto:msoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org).
- Two persons in a household sharing one Zoom screen are granted discounted tuition:

#### SINGLE PERSON REGISTRATION

Tuition is \$60 per course

#### TWO-PERSON REGISTRATION

Tuition is \$50 per course, each person

**ON-LINE CLASSES:** All classes are on-line, using Zoom. Information on Zoom will be provided upon registration. More information is on our [website](#). Assistance is available. For help, contact Clare Durst at [briegull@gmail.com](mailto:briegull@gmail.com).

**BOOKS & READINGS:** Course descriptions include information regarding books: "required" book = strongly recommended; "suggested" or "recommended" book = optional reading. It is the student's responsibility to acquire books.

**CONTACT US:** Email at [msoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org](mailto:msoffice@midcoastseniorcollege.org) or call 207-725-4900. Visit our website: [midcoastseniorcollege.org](http://midcoastseniorcollege.org).

### CLUBS & GROUPS: VISIT WEBSITE FOR DETAILS

- **WRITING GROUP:** "Senior Scribblers" writing group for all levels meets every other Wednesday, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- **CURRENT EVENTS FORUM:** Weekly moderated topic-related forum meets Thursdays noon-1 p.m. at Curtis Memorial Library, sponsored by Thornton Oaks and in partnership with CML.
- **SHAKESPEARE FOCUS:** "Clubbing with Willy the Shake" is a monthly special interest group that meets the first Wednesday of each month at 10 a.m. for a 2 1/2 hour exploration of a theme.