

SPRING 2024 CLASS SCHEDULE

All classes will meet in person at the Knollwood Center

Tuition is \$225 per day (either Wednesday or Friday) with a one-time semester registration fee of \$9.75

Select one class per time slot

WEDNESDAYS APRIL 3, 10, 17, 24, MAY 1, 8

9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

The New NYC Skyscrapers

Leader: Michael Molinelli, AIA, NCARB, LEED, *is an architect who has designed churches, schools, health care facilities and distinctive residences in Westchester County and around the country*

The New York City skyline of the 20th century is gone. Your grandchildren will know a vastly different New York. In this class each week we will review two of the fascinating new skyscrapers changing the look of the city. There will also be a focus on the structural, design, and economic forces that are driving these changes. The Central Park Tower (Nordstrom Tower), One Bryant Park, the Spiral, 56 Leonard Street (the Jenga), and Brooklyn Tower are among the celebrated new buildings to be explored. Each class will reserve time for reaction and discussion.

The Historical Novel in America

Leader: Linda Ching Sledge, PhD, *Westchester Community College professor emerita of English and Abeles Endowed Chair for Global Literature (retired), author of two historical novels*

Once denigrated by critics as “cut-rate fiction,” historical novels are now mainstays of school curricula and have a powerful influence on the way America’s complicated history is depicted and taught. We will take a close look at the evolution of the genre via three award-winning novels, James Michener’s *Hawaii* (1959), parts 2-3 ONLY; Paulette Jiles’ *News of the World* (2016); and Louise Erdrich’s *The Birchbark House* (1999). (For visual learners, film versions of *Hawaii* and *News of the World* are available on Amazon Prime.) We will compile a class bibliography of favorite works, so come with titles to share!

10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Coffee, Cookies, and Conversation

11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Jewish and Christian Interpretations of Biblical Texts

Leader: Michael Malina, LLB, *retired attorney, author of a commentary on the Book of Genesis, lifelong student of theological texts*

This course has previously been offered at Collegium. The rabbinic sages of the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE, the authors of the New Testament, and the early church fathers revered the Hebrew scriptures (for Christians, the Old Testament) as divinely inspired. However, they had very different takes on what the scriptural words meant. We shall examine some essential features of rabbinic Judaism and classic Christianity, such as the Passover/Easter

celebrations and the concept of a Messiah, or Christ, to delineate similarities and differences in two of the three major monotheistic religions. Bring a Bible to class, preferably one with both the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament) and the New Testament.

History of Opera Part One

Leader: Susan Grunthal, a lifelong operagoer in the great houses from Covent Garden in her native England to the Metropolitan in New York City, instructor and lecturer in all things opera

Collegium welcomes back opera aficionado Susan Grunthal after many years absence. Susan will take us on a delightful musical journey that follows the history of opera from its origins in the seventeenth century up until its later iterations in operettas and—most recently—Broadway musicals. The journey will be in two stages, with the first part being taken in the spring and the conclusion to come in the fall. The major phases of opera development—the Baroque, the Classical, and the Romantic—will be traced through the great arias that made opera so popular, and the great voices that make it so beloved.

12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Lunch: Bring your own or purchase at the Student Center

1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Short Story

Leader: Christine Bobkoff, retired senior adjunct professor of English at Westchester Community College, Chappaqua Library book-group leader

Are you feeling a little guilty that you haven't yet read *War and Peace* or consumed Proust and his madeleines? Are those big novels just doing doorstep duty in your home? Fret no more: the short story discussion group is back. A short story entertains on a train ride, distracts in a waiting room, or soothes before bed. It may also occupy space in your head long after you close the book, because, as critic Steven Millhauser says, "It becomes bigger than the novel." This session we'll be reading from *The O'Henry Prize Stories of 2015* edited by Laura Furman, with jury selections by Tessa Hadley, Kristen Iskandrian, and Michael Parker, available for order online.

Putting it Together: Theater on Film

Leader: Meg Bussert, music associate professor (NYU, retired), award winning musical stage actor (Tony Nomination, Theatre World Award, Cable ACE Award Nomination)

Growing up in Illinois, I was enthralled by movie musicals, a passion I shared with my father, a WWII Navy Vet whose hobby was leading a local band. Following my own career on Broadway, I was drawn to a different kind of movie musical, one that captured the chaotic creative process of mounting a musical stage production: *Topsy Turvy* (1999), for example, the rich, hilarious story behind Gilbert & Sullivan's original production of *The Mikado*; in *Mrs. Henderson Presents* (2005) Judi Dench as Laura Henderson, the hilarious, eccentric 70-year-old widow puts on live shows..."in a time when England was brought to its knees by war, she brings a nation to its feet in applause—with a live show featuring nude girls!"; *Cradle Will Rock* (1999), an account of the Depression-era attempt to mount the Marc Blitzstein pro-labor musical of that name in the face of opposition from the U.S. Congress; and others in this captivating genre. In class we will share the agony and the delirium of putting on a show as we watch movie clips and discuss backstories, historical context, and implications on "Show Biz" of these entertaining films. Full movies are available for streaming.

FRIDAYS APRIL 5, 12, 19, 26, MAY 3, 10

9:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Great Decisions Discussion Group

Leader: Bob Fischer, *Collegium board member, civil engineer, retired electric utility manager, board member of the Westchester Jewish Council, discussion facilitator*

The Great Decisions program of the Foreign Policy Association (FPA), the USA's largest world affairs discussion program, promotes fact-based discussions and critical thinking. Using the FPA 2024 Briefing Book and associated DVD, the first four sessions will begin with a 20-to-30-minute viewing of an FPA master class lecture on the selected topic, followed by a facilitator-led discussion. The topics are: **NATO's Future, Invisible Indonesia, High Seas Treaty, and Pandemic Preparedness.**

Sessions **5** and **6** will be discussions of topics chosen by our group. Our group will determine the topics by Session **4** to allow time for developing material for these discussions.

You can purchase the *2024 Great Decisions Briefing Book* (highly recommended) and companion DVD (if you like) by ordering online at <http://www.fpa.org> or calling 1 800-477-5836. Please allow time for the book to be shipped to you. Supplemental readings may be emailed to the class to enhance the discussion.

For example... The Human Condition in Literature and Life

Leader: Andrew Bausili, *retired English teacher with 21 years of experience at the Bronx High School of Science*

We have all pondered the Big Questions in life: The problem of evil; fate vs. free will; reason vs. emotion; and others. On a personal level, the concept of self-identity is an issue of growing relevance: How do we define who (and what) we are? To aid in our discussions of these topics, we often use characters from literature as illustrations (e.g., Lady Macbeth as an example of evil). Even more common is to use people from real life to represent our ideas. In this class we will examine the personages from both literature and life that follow the words "For example..." in our conversations. Expect some verbal fireworks—and some fun—when we cite our favorite examples from today's headlines. A lively discussion class.

10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Coffee, Cookies, and Conversation

11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Women as Poets

Leader: Joseph Sgammato, *Collegium board member, senior adjunct faculty, English and Film Departments, Westchester Community College*

A companion of sorts to this afternoon's Collegium course on "Women as Artists," which celebrates the triumph of women as painters in the 19th – 20th centuries, this class takes a complementary look at the progress made by women in literature. The advances made by women in the 20th century—in suffrage, education, workforce progress, and overall respect—includes growing stature as poets. We will cover major women poets of the last hundred years, including Marianne Moore, H.D., Elizabeth Bishop, May Swenson, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, and others. All texts will be provided.

A la Carte

Leaders: **Sue Brownie**, *Collegium member, retired medical physicist in radiation oncology, and volunteer with Neighbors for Refugees, the Bronxville Giving Garden, and the Native Plant Center;* and **Jim Burnett, JD, LLM**, *retired FBI Agent, criminal justice professor and Collegium board member*

This Collegium staple is back with a new blend of stimulating sessions for curious minds. On April 5 **Toni McKeen**: an instructor and travel group leader brings her expertise in Italian culture to a class on **The Medici**. Then on April 12 **Serdar Arat**, a successful artist who has lectured on art and the art market will put a spotlight on **Napoleon's Looted Art**, and its consequences for western civilization. April 19 **Michael Shamosh**, whose amazing career in finance could not quash an overriding passion for music, will rock Collegium with **From Doo Wop to Hip Hop: Music from the Streets of New York**. On April 26, Collegium welcomes **Carmen Martinez-Lopez PhD**, WCC's distinguished Dean of the School of Business and Professional Careers, who will share her love for her native country and pride in her home city, in **Discovering Medellin, Colombia**. May 3 marks the return of **Rick Leibert**, a history buff par excellence who sets his sights on one of the most troubling figures of the 20th century in **Demagogue: Joseph R. McCarthy and the Chaos of the 1950s**. For our final class on May 10, **Patrick Sheehan LMHC**, licensed psychotherapist and Director of the Department of Mental Health and Counseling Services at SUNY WCC; and **Nicole Sartarano, LMHC**, a professor of Mental Health Counseling at Pace University and a mental health counselor at SUNY WCC, will celebrate a record of progress in a critical area as they present **A Brief History of Mental Health Treatment in America**.

12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Lunch: Bring your own or purchase at the Student Center

1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Women as Artists

Leader: Jane Roos, PhD, *Collegium board member, professor emerita, author and lecturer on art history and Impressionism*

For much of history, “woman” and “artist” constituted antithetical terms. The few females who succeeded in the visual arts were generally the daughters of artists or the progeny of families who were wealthy enough to subsidize their daughters' education. This course will discuss artworks produced by women painters and sculptors in 19th-century France, with a focus on Rosa Bonheur, Berthe Morisot, Mary Cassatt, and Camille Claudel. We will analyze their themes and their styles, and will consider the strategies they developed to navigate the exclusionism of their times.

Animated Films for Adults

Leader: Will Costanzo, *retired faculty, English and Film Departments, Westchester Community College, author and lecturer*

Animated films can speak to adults as well as children, and they can often take on serious, highly complex topics. Viewed from certain angles, this deceptively simple form of storytelling offers an engrossing method for exploring history, politics, ethics, and the arts. For this course, we will focus on six landmark movies that illustrate a variety of cultures and aesthetic styles. Starting with the second week, participants will watch each film on their own before class, during which we will use selective film clips as prompts for discussion and analysis. The films are April 12: *The Triplets of Belleville* (France, 2003); April 19: *Chicken Run* (Britain, 2000); April 26: *Spirited Away* (Japan, 2001); May 3: *Persepolis* (Iran/France); May 10: *Waltz with Bashir* (Israel, 2008).

SAVE THE DATE

EXCITING BONUS CLASS – Open to all current Collegium registrants

WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024

11:00 a.m.

Braver Angels Interactive Program

Are you disheartened by the Democracy-threatening level of rancor and discord in our country these days? Have you lost friends, stopped speaking to neighbors, dreaded big family holiday get togethers because of political differences? Come hear from Braver Angels, a cross-partisan volunteer-led movement that urges us to summon the courage to have those difficult conversations with people we don't agree with. Members of the group (<http://www.braverangels.org>) will lead us in a stimulating, thought-provoking interactive program with the goal of renewing trust and civic confidence. Indicate your interest on the registration form!

Stay tuned: Details will follow!