

2025 BJÖRKLUNDEN SEMINARS



LAWRENCE
UNIVERSITY
APPLETON, WISCONSIN



Film and Masculinity

Paul Cohen

Still trying to make sense of the 2024 election results? Hollywood films both mirror and help fashion the gender norms at various times in American history. This seminar will focus on how masculinity was constructed in five films between World War II and the 1980s: Casablanca, Red River, Dr. Strangelove, Chinatown, and Die Hard.

April 2 - April 30, Wednesdays 2:00-3:30 p.m.



“Please God Make Me Good, But Not Just Yet” —Three Confessions Across Time

Nikolas Hoel '99

Before becoming a Father of the Church and Bishop of Hippo, Augustine was not even a Christian. In the fourth century, he was on his way to conversion, but he just was not quite ready; something perhaps we can all relate too. He described his process in *The Confessions*, a book I read in Freshman Studies many moons ago. This work became a literary model for later writers. In this seminar, we will read and analyze an Early Christian, a Humanistic, and an Enlightenment “confession” and draw comparison between the works of Augustine, Petrarch, and Rousseau. Perhaps we will even better understand our own person, individual, and unique journeys to enlightenment, whatever that means to you.

May 6 - June 3, Tuesdays 2:00-3:30 p.m.



Why Trump? Ask Freud

Paul Cohen

In 2018, the psychotherapist Gary Greenberg wrote that Donald Trump “urges us all to shake loose the surly bonds of civilized conduct” and satisfy our most basic drives. Following Trump’s victory in the 2024 presidential election, that assessment has become more salient than ever. This seminar will address Trump’s victory through a reading of *Civilization and its Discontents*, the classic work by modernity’s keenest analyst of human drives, Sigmund Freud. We will also read several incisive essays on Trump and his followers by the Irish writer, Fintan O’Toole.

May 7 - June 4, Wednesdays 2:00-3:30 p.m.



What is Existentialism?

Paul Cohen

First broadly disseminated by a set of French writers during and after World War II, the philosophy of existentialism still carries a certain popular mystique. In this seminar we will explore that mystique through short selections from the likes of Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, and Simone De Beauvoir.

July 16 - August 13, Wednesdays 2:00-3:30 p.m.



Westerns and Anti-Westerns

Paul Cohen

The western embodies a fundamental myth about what it means to be an American. In this seminar we'll explore that myth by discussing five Hollywood westerns, some of which convey it and some that revise, critique, or parody it: *High Noon* (Fred Zinnemann, 1952); *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (John Ford, 1962); *McCabe & Mrs. Miller* (Robert Altman, 1971); *Blazing Saddles* (Mel Brooks, 1974); and *Unforgiven* (Clint Eastwood, 1992).

September 17 - October 15, Wednesdays 2:00-3:30 p.m.



Film and History

Paul Cohen

How do historians view films? This seminar will answer that question through a discussion of historical dramas and documentaries such as Jean Renoir's *The Grand Illusion*, Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times*, Alain Resnais' *Night and Fog*, and Stephen Spielberg's *Lincoln*.

November 5 - December 3, Wednesdays 2:00-3:30 p.m.

IN-PERSON



Adventures in Forests in Time

Relena Ribbons

Forests are fascinating environments, full of wonder, joy, and cycles of life playing out over many time scales. Together, we will learn about the history of the forests at Björklunden (including where all those birch trees are!), and how these forests have changed over recent human time scales.

Each day we will engage in discussions on foundational principals in forest ecology, along with readings from across disciplines. Each student will work on a deep listening practice, explore the fundamentals of tree ring climate recording as a process, and hone their observation skills while gaining a broader foundational knowledge base for the forests surrounding us.

We will study the biological and ecological basis behind current challenges forest ecosystems face (climate change, landscape fragmentation, pollution, invasive species). We will also review the role and impact of humans on these communities, focusing on the reciprocal relationships between humans and forests, in addition to the ecosystem services framework.

We will hike through and deeply listen to the Forests of Björklunden in this immersive learning experience. Be expected to engage in a few hours of hiking each day of class, and selected readings will be shared before the seminar to enrich our discussions on forest dynamics.

June 15 - June 20



Saints and Sinners in the Middle Ages

Nikolas O. Hoel '99

The medieval religious landscape was populated by many types of people. One of the most important distinctions for individuals at the time was between saints and sinners. Holy individuals cured the sainted founded churches and exorcised demons; whereas, the evil were the ones possessed by the Demonic, preached heterodox beliefs, and were burned at the stake. In this seminar, we will explore the people who fit into these categories. We will see that there were different types of saints, including but not limited to desert hermits, bishops, popes, missionaries, mystics, and visionaries. In terms of sinners, we will spend the second half of the seminar looking at heretics, heathens, and maybe even witches, and what made them heretical. We will examine the sources, whether written, artistic, or material, that describe saints and their cults as well as their sinful counterparts. By looking at modern views on the medieval religion and hagiography, or saint's lives, we will see how scholars view this typology. Finally, we will problematize these categories with the aim to demonstrate that people in the Middle Ages were as complicated as they are today and the boarders between sanctity and sin were malleable and not fixed, leading to the conclusion that people could be both saints and sinners at the same time, perhaps much like ourselves.

June 15 - June 20



From Conflict to Peace: Northern Ireland, Great Britain, and Ireland, Past and Present

Tim Crain

The Troubles in Northern Ireland significantly impacted the Twentieth Century. Following the establishment of the six-county statelet in 1920, sectarian violence dominated Northern Ireland in the years that followed, particularly from 1969-1998. The unionist community saw itself as distinctly British, whereas the nationalist community believed it was exclusively Irish, and Northern Ireland became the most segregated community in the world. During renewed conflict in 1969, the British Army intervened in Northern Ireland to keep the two sides from civil war, and possible ethnic cleansing. The presence of the British Army though in Ulster also served to further inflame sectarian passions and led to the rebirth of the IRA. Despite the endless violence and fatalities, the two communities came together in 1998 and signed the Good Friday Agreement that led to the formal end to the conflict. In our seminar, we will explore the past, present, and future of Northern Ireland, a one-time war zone that made an extraordinary transformation to peace over the past two decades.

Recommended Reading: [Tim Pat Coogan, The Troubles: Ireland's Ordeal and the Search for Peace, St. Martin's Griffin, 2002.](#)

June 15 - June 20



What Do You Say?

Exploring American Accents and Dialects

Sue Hanna '75

How and why do you say what you say? Is it soda or pop? Do you say y'all, you guys, you-uns or youse? Are "taught" and "tot" pronounced alike? You each have your own dialect—vocabulary, pronunciation, phrases, and grammar—that reflects your life experiences. Where were you born? Where were your parents from? Where have you lived? What activities have you pursued throughout your life? By participating in this fun course, you will explore your personal dialect in the context of the American dialect map and consider what it says about who you are.

June 22 - June 27



The Door Four: Theater Seminar

Dan Klarer

Door County has four professional theaters all producing unique and originals works. Each night the seminar will attend a production at one of the local theaters. Local theater artist Dan Klarer will lead discussions of each show the morning after and facilitate field trips and workshops at these revered local venues. A \$150 per person ticket fee is added upon registration.

July 13 - July 18



Watercolor: A Fresh Start

Helen Klebesadel

Watercolor: A Fresh Start is designed for absolute beginners as well as for those who have had some experience painting with watercolor but need a refresher to gain the confidence to start again. Explore summer at Björklunden while enjoying this opportunity to learn or relearn watercolor from an artist passionate about the medium while enjoying a supportive and friendly environment. Participants will explore basic traditional approaches to watercolor painting as well as fresh and experimental wet-into-wet watercolor techniques. After experiencing the week together, participants will go home with the skills and tools to keep on painting. There is a \$35 materials fee for this course added upon registration.

July 13 - July 18



American True Crime in Books, Docuseries and Podcasts

Harry MacLean

The country's fascination with true crime has soared in the past few years into in to what is often described as a national obsession. The sale of true crime books has increased steadily until it is one of the top genres in publishing. True crimes are a frequent subject of feature movies and TV docuseries, as well as hundreds of podcasts.

Edgar-Award winning and New York Times bestselling author Harry N. MacLean '64 has published five True Crime books—all to critical acclaim—and has had movies and docuseries made from several of his books. He will discuss the history of true crime in books, including Truman Capote's "In Cold Blood," Ann Rule's "The Stranger Beside Me," MacLean's book "In Broad Daylight," and the recently published book "Last Call," by Elon Green.

The course will be of interest to more than true crime aficionados. It will explore the differences in the art forms of publishing, movies, docuseries, and podcasts in the telling of true crime stories. The movies made from "In Cold Blood" and "In Broad Daylight" will be shown in the evening. The Showtime docuseries "Buried" based on MacLean's true crime book "Once Upon A Time, A True Story of Memory, Murder and the Law," will also be shown in the evening and discussed in class, along with other recent docuseries. The impact of over 2300 true crime podcasts on the true crime phenomenon will be explored.

The class will also discuss several ethical issues which arise in the investigation and writing of true crime, such as when, if ever, is it permissible for an author to be less than truthful in interviewing subjects, what consideration should be given to the possible harm resulting from interviews, and possible risks to the author in probing unsolved cases. The class will consider the risks to an author in investigating unsolved crimes, as well as the emotional impact of total immersion in the crime for years.

It will be helpful but not necessary for the participants to have read "In Cold Blood," "In Broad Daylight," and "Last Call," and to have listened to Unspeakable Acts and season two of In the Dark.

July 13 - July 18



Chemistry of Art

Allison Fleshman

Chemistry is a crucial part of the artist's toolbox. In this seminar, we will explore the fascinating chemistry of paintings, learn the chemical reasons dyes bond to textiles, reflect on the importance of light in the experience of art, and explore the chemistry of glass and stained glass. This workshop will involve some hands-on activities and lab experiences to complement the discussions. I will also share my research on pigment identification in Medieval illuminated manuscripts and discuss the current practices of scientific inquiry of artistic objects.

*\$15 materials fee payable upon arrival in class.

July 13 - July 18



The Mindful Brain

Lori M. Hilt, '97

Eastern religion and philosophy, it has been applied to well-being, stress reduction, and the treatment of various physical and mental conditions in contemporary Western cultures.

This seminar will explore how mindfulness has been secularized and utilized in such settings as schools, workplaces, hospitals, as well as in daily life. Additionally, we will explore neuroscience research on how mindfulness changes the brain. Finally, we will engage in the experiential practice of mindfulness, taking full advantage of the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touch of Björklunden.

During this seminar, participants will be provided with accessible background readings to spur discussion. We will spend approximately half of our time each day in engaged lecture and discussion. The other half of our time will involve interspersed guided practice in mindfulness techniques. This may involve mindful walks on the property, seated mindful listening near the lake, mindful eating, etc.

This seminar will be based on two courses that I have taught at Lawrence. The first is Topics in Neuroscience: The Mindful Brain, and the second is Meditation: Psychological and Buddhist Perspectives. I have also taught mindfulness as part of the Doing Nothing course and have done a seminar for the Lunch at Lawrence series on this topic.

July 20 - July 25



Our Cosmological Origins: Something from Nothing?

Dr. Megan Pickett

We are a species that is a few hundred thousands of years old, living on a beautiful blue rock a few billion years old, in a vast cosmic ocean, the Universe, that is not quite 14 billion years old. In a Universe full of galaxies, stars, planets--people?--how did it all start? In this class, we'll cover our cosmological origins, including the Big Bang, formation of our galaxy, the origin of our solar system, and the beginning of life. Evening observations weather permitting.

July 20 - July 25



Type 2 Diabetes: A Modern Affliction with Roots in the Past

Mark R. Jenike

After covering the basics of type 2 diabetes as a disease in the present, we will consider why the prevalence of type 2 diabetes has exploded over the past fifty years. We will consider how our modern environment causes diabetes and why as a species we are vulnerable to these environmental triggers. We will also discuss the burden – financial, economic, and human – of type two diabetes, a disease whose complications are expensive to treat, that people live with for decades, that affects more than 10% of the adult population of the US, and that has profound effects on the lives of caregivers and other loved ones. With all of that understanding in place we will consider what the future holds and what our options are for coming to grips with type two diabetes. Should we put our hope in pharmaceutical advances? What would it take to make our food system less diabetogenic? Is that realistic? What about personal responsibility? Corporate responsibility? Political responsibility? Are there better ways to fund the more than \$300 billion annual cost of treating diabetes in the US? How are the burdens of diabetes shared and are there ways to make it more just? Time permitting, we will also discuss the ways that type 2 diabetes manifests internationally for comparison, in both more developed and less developed nations.

Please note that this will NOT be a personal diabetes management class, covering nutrition, exercise, stress management, personal care, or other things that are covered in lifestyle medicine workshops. We will be thinking about diabetes as a biological, social, political, and economic dilemma.

July 20 - July 25



Taking the Leap into Writing Poetry

Lauren Gatti '94

This seminar offers an engaging introduction to writing poetry, blending creative practice with an exploration of poetic craft. Together, we will study a range of poems from contemporary and classic poets, using the images and lines that are beautiful to us as readers as a starting point for discussion about what poetry can do and how it can move us. Powerful poems about childhood, parenting, love, grief, and the natural world will serve as springboards for our own poetic exploration of the themes, stories, and images we feel inspired to render in poetic form. This seminar is designed for those who love words and literature but may be new to writing poetry. It will provide a supportive space to experiment, learn, and grow as writers while developing the skills to thoughtfully study and discuss poems.

July 20 - July 25



Trump II

Terry Moran '82

Trump won the presidency again by understanding better than anyone else that there was a latent energy in the electorate—a raging desire in many voters for disruption and destruction—and he gave it a voice, a style, and a direction. Trump's the most consequential U.S. politician since Ronald Reagan. What will his return to the White House look like six-months in? Will the Republicans be united? Finally, can we guess what the legacy of this extraordinary force on the American political stage and the man who unleashed it will be? This seminar will take a hard look at where Trump and Trumpism stand as it enters yet another presidential term.

July 27 - August 1



Computational thinking is NOT just programming

Keith W. Miller, Ph.D.

You may have the impression that computer science is just about programming; many people do. But during the last decade, we've learned that many of the skills seen in the best computer programmers are useful for more than just writing code. Pattern recognition, thinking in levels of abstraction, and decomposition are three examples of such skills. Computational thinking also thrives when someone likes to tinker, keeps persevering, and is willing to succeed through failure.

Participants will learn about these skills and attitudes through games and challenges, none of which require any experience with programming computers. Activities will include the Art Dealer game, which practices pattern recognition skills, and is useful for software testing; the Silly Sally riddle, which depends on perceiving unusual perspectives, often helpful in designing technology; and making guesses that we can quickly check using simple software tools.

Another activity will look at data visualization, exploring how looking at data (and not just reading about it) can make a huge difference in our understanding trends efficiently.

NO PRIOR EXPERIENCE with computer programming is assumed. You will see some short programs, and you may become sufficiently intrigued that you may want to play around a bit with programming. But computer programming is NOT a required activity for this seminar.

July 27 - August 1



The Unfinished Nation: The American Civil War and Reconstruction, 1861-1877

Jerald Podair and Jon Greenwald

No period transformed the United States more profoundly than did the sixteen years between 1861 and 1877. The American Civil War and Reconstruction created a modern nation, but an unfinished one, with arguments over the meanings of freedom and equality that continue to this day. This seminar will discuss the Civil War and Reconstruction as military, political, and social events, and the ways in which the unresolved issues of their time resonate in our own.

This seminar was made possible, in part, by the Constance and Robert Berner Memorial Endowment for Björklunden.

July 27 - August 1



What a Long Strange Trip: The Grateful Dead and American Cultural Change

Eric Mlyn

This seminar is being offered in conjunction of the 60th anniversary of the Grateful Dead. Few musical acts have ever reached the level of cultural awareness and impact as the Grateful Dead, and perhaps none has enjoyed such ardent devotion for so long. The story of the Grateful Dead offers a lens through which to view not only the tumult of the 1960s counterculture movement but also to understand broader political and historical forces in the United States.

Though the Grateful Dead officially ceased to exist in 1995 after the death of their unanointed leader Jerry Garcia, they are now in many ways bigger than ever. This seminar will explore the band's past and continuing cultural relevance. From their start as Mother Mcree's Uptown Jug Champions in the Bay Area in the early 1960s to their latest reincarnation as Dead and Company today, the culture, music and spirit of the Grateful Dead endures. This seminar will ask the question how is that this music and adjacent culture stays alive and vibrant. Today, nearly 60 years after its start, surviving members of the Grateful Dead received a lifetime achievement award from the Kennedy Center and recently played 30 nights at the Sphere (and will have played another 18 nights by the time we meet), America's newest and most technologically advanced concert venue.

Through the use of poetry, art, film, first-hand accounts and of course music, we will explore the history of Grateful Dead as a lens to better understand the counterculture, the Hippies and Beats, the influence of psychedelics, and the business of the music industry. Ultimately, we will immerse ourselves in this uniquely American phenomenon that has spawned numerous performing ensembles with Grateful Dead members as well as over 600 Grateful Dead cover bands around the United States.

August 3 - August 8



Protecting Door County's Wild Places: From Estuaries to Escarpments

Titus Seilheimer '00, Paul Senner '11,
Caitlin Williamson '11

Door County's unique geography, with the Niagara Escarpment, the west shore of Green Bay, and Lake Michigan, features "microhabitats" that make it one of the most biologically diverse places in Wisconsin. The peninsula is home to numerous rare natural communities and imperiled species that are found only here – as well as legendary public and private conservation efforts. During this seminar, we will explore the natural wonders of Door County, from its boreal forests to coastal wetlands, while also learning about the people and organizations who have worked to protect this incredibly special place. Participants will engage in an in-depth exploration of Door County's incredible natural features and the efforts to protect them through engaging presentations, interactive discussions, and optional field trips to experience conservation in action. We will offer an optional early morning birding session each day for all Bjorklunden seminar participants.

August 3 - August 8



The Politics of Fear: J. Edgar Hoover, Joseph McCarthy, and the Red Scare in 20th Century America

Tim Crain

McCarthyism represented one of the more interesting time periods in modern American history. On February 9, 1950, Joseph McCarthy, a junior senator from the state of Wisconsin, burst into national prominence by claiming that he had the names of 205 known communists in the US State Department. At the time, the United States was deeply involved in the Cold War with the Soviet Union, and many Americans feared communist subversion, especially after the Soviet Union detonated its first atomic bomb in 1949, and China fell a few weeks later to Mao Zedong and the communists. Most of the information that Senator McCarthy received regarding communist infiltration came from J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI. The Wisconsin senator failed to find even one communist throughout his half decade of investigations, though he did destroy the careers of countless innocent Americans by accusing them of being communists. In our seminar, we will explore anti-Communism in America that led to McCarthyism in the 1950s.

August 3 - August 8



Books and Movies: The Soviet Tradition

Peter Thomas

This seminar will examine the rich world of Russian literary culture through the lens of film adaptations. Participants will read and discuss short works of literature by Russian, Soviet, and Eastern European authors. We will also view and discuss adaptations of those works for film. We will situate the literary works and films in their historical and cultural contexts. We will also screen film versions of longer literary works, such as the 2024 Master and Margarita. Authors may include Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Gorky, Bulgakov, Zamyatin, the Strugatsky Brothers, and Lem.

August 3 - August 8



The Importance of Philosophy: Then and Now

Terry Goode

Philosophy is the ultimate intellectual discipline, described by Immanuel Kant as the “mother of all sciences.” It is the only discipline that can call itself into question...using its own standards. Philosophy is unique in that respect, making it both self-reflexive and intrinsically progressive. But what has that progress been? And is philosophy relevant in current times? This seminar will examine philosophical progress, past and present. We will identify the seminal theories and ideas that attempted to answer its traditional problems; then we will explore how and why those problems changed over time, leading to progress in the discipline. This will take us to a discussion of the importance of philosophy for society today. Terry will argue that philosophy is integrally important for solving today’s problems, not only theoretically but practically, through critical thinking, a commitment to civil discourse, and an endorsement of rational thinking. Ultimately, it is commitment to the value of the search for truth that will engender progress and preserve our most important societal institutions.

August 10 - August 15



Watercolor: The Expressive Medium

Helen Klebesadel

This seminar is for novice through experienced artists. Drawing skills are useful but not required. Participants will be a part of a creative community that invites them to experiment with a wide range of traditional and nontraditional watercolor techniques and learn to create strong individualized artistic statements. Participants from previous summers are welcome to repeat this class and are welcome to focus on independent projects or work with the instructor to figure out next steps. A list of suggested materials to bring to this seminar will be sent to participants at a later date. There is a \$35 materials fee for this course added upon registration.

August 10 - August 16



The Biotechnology Revolution: Building with Genes

Eric Lewellyn

Biotechnology permeates our lives and society. Today, over half the crops grown and half of new FDA-approved pharmaceuticals are products of the biotechnology industry. These achievements can appear miraculous, and it is fair to say that the tools of modern biotechnology accomplish extraordinary things. However, the most remarkable feature of these tools is that most of them were not invented by humans. Natural selection and evolution have been the primary toolmakers behind this revolution. Humans' main contribution has been to find these tools, recognize their potential, and modify them for new jobs. The story of biotechnology is a story of discovery-inspired invention and a re-imagining of what is possible in and through nature.

In this course, we will study key discoveries and technologies over the past half century that have enabled the modern biotechnology enterprise. We will begin with an overview of fundamental concepts in molecular biology and genetics. This seminar is intended for a general audience so no prior knowledge of these subjects is required. We will then focus on several key technology stories including the development of Recombinant DNA Technology, Plant Genetic Modification, and CRISPR-based Genome Editing. We will follow with the ways these technologies have given rise to prominent biotechnology-based products from recombinant human insulin to GMO crops, RNA vaccines, and antibody-based pharmaceuticals. Finally, we will conclude with an exploration of how these technologies may develop in the future, the potential benefits, and unintended consequences.

August 10 - August 15



Ranking the Presidents: The Best and Worst of America's Chief Executives

Jerold Podair, Arnold Shober

America's real "national pastime" is ranking its presidents. For decades, historians, political scientists, and assorted pundits have argued the merits and demerits of the forty-five men who have held the nation's highest office. Now, Arnold Shober and Jerold Podair – "The Professors" on the Outside the Box morning radio program on WHBY in Appleton – offer their own definitive list. What are the attributes of a great president? Who had them? Who didn't? More to the point, who's number one and who's number forty-five? Join us and find out.

August 24 - August 27



Poets' Circle: Reading and Writing Poems with Austin Segrest

Austin Segrest

This workshop will cultivate the camaraderie of a poets' circle. Drawing on my long experience creating such workshops and communities, I'll guide the group through model poems, old and new, including some from my two books, *Door to Remain* (UNT Press, 2022) and *Groom* (Unbound Edition Press, 2025). We'll also be generating new poems. The goal is to create and inhabit a space for poets to mutually strengthen and support each other's work.

August 24 - August 27



Moving Through Your Day with Ease: Applying Alexander Technique

Kathy Privatt

Discover how to bring ease and efficiency to your everyday movements with Moving Through Your Day With Ease, a hands-on workshop that applies the principles of the Alexander Technique (AT) to daily activities. AT is a technique that brings ease to our lives by teaching us to use ourselves efficiently and effectively, no matter what we're doing. In this workshop we'll take on sitting, standing, working at a counter, using phones/tablets/computers, carrying bags/boxes, and more. Learn to move mindfully and reduce strain, whether you're waiting in line, walking, completing specific tasks from your day or even when going up and down stairs. With practical guidance and simple tools like chairs, tables, and yoga mats, you'll develop skills to enhance your comfort and posture in any setting. Perfect for anyone looking to improve their physical well-being in day-to-day life. We'll use items you bring with you for personalized tips. Grab this chance to add ease to your life with a certified AT teacher!

August 24 - August 27



Great Migrations: Animal Behavior Across Distance and Time

Bart De Stasio '82

This seminar will introduce participants to the ways that animal groups move across space and time to survive and reproduce. Discussions and field trips will cover the mechanisms, costs and benefits of some of the most amazing movements of animals on the planet, including Door County examples such as birds, monarch butterflies and fish. In addition, we will explore the main drivers of the evolution of migrations such as seeking food, avoiding predation, and finding mates.

September 7 - September 12



Democracy Book Club

Bronwyn Mauldin

The Democracy Book Club returns to Björklunden with a brand new reading list! Over five days we will discuss five works of literature that will help us reflect on how we can strengthen civic life during troubled times. We will read across geography and history, including both fiction and non-fiction. These books will be the jumping off point to engage with each other in deep discussions. The week will begin on Monday with *A Paradise Built in Hell* by Rebecca Solnit, followed by *Pacific Edge* by Kim Stanley Robinson on Tuesday. On Wednesday we will discuss *Black Reconstruction in America* by W.E.B. Du Bois, and on Thursday, *The Pyramid* by Ismail Kadare. We will close the week Friday on a note of hope with *On Freedom* by Timothy Snyder.

September 7 - September 12



Be Present in Nature and Discover What Nature has to Present You

Jane Burress

Leave the busy world behind and spend each morning immersed in nature through guided forest bathing walks—slow, mostly silent experiences that awaken the senses and imagination. Led by a certified nature and forest therapy guide, participants will engage in open-ended invitations that foster presence, connection, and community. Each walk is typically under 1.5 miles and suited for those 16 and older who can navigate uneven terrain in any weather. The week includes time for learning the history and health benefits of forest bathing, opportunities to journal and create in nature, and a possible off-campus walk. As founder Amos Clifford says, “The forest is the therapist; the guide opens the door.”

September 7 - September 12



“Yes, You Can!” Yoga-Pilates Emersion

Pia Kamonsit

Join us for a three-day wellness retreat at the majestic Björklunden lodge to rejuvenate the body and mind and encourage sustained practice after the retreat. Pia creatively combines multiple modalities designed to strengthen, tone, and attune. Her expert and individualized attention provides an inviting space for individuals of all fitness levels, including those recovering from injuries.

75-minute morning sessions will incorporate mat Pilates, yoga, and light cardio practices that build strength, improve flexibility, and foster movement practices that you can sustain. Afternoon sessions (also 75-min.) will offer a slower pace with restorative yoga, deep stretching, and guided meditation to unwind and reconnect.

Resistance bands and Pilates balls will be provided which you can take home to support continuing practice. Yoga mats and blocks will be available to borrow and for purchase, or you may bring your own.

Healthy eating will also be a centerpiece of the week. Residents, “Commuter,” and “Auditors” who add meals ala carte will enjoy a special selection of healthy foods.

September 14 - September 17



Explore Door County's Less Traveled Trails

Jane Whitney

Become acquainted with some of the “quiet” preserves and parks throughout Door County. Each morning, the class will hike through one of Door County’s less-frequently visited nature preserves. Walking at a leisurely pace, we will focus on the plants, wildlife, geology, and whatever presents itself in front of us. Afternoons will offer optional hikes to explore additional preserves. Participants should be able to walk 2-4 miles over the course of the day on rustic, uneven, sometimes hilly trails. Good walking/hiking shoes are a must. Rain gear, walking sticks, and binoculars useful, although not required.

September 14 - September 17



Is Journalism Dead?

Melissa Wall

American journalism faces increasingly serious threats to its ability to carry out its main function: to inform the public about important matters. In this seminar we will discuss three key pressures on the news industry: economic, technological, and political.

With much of the public unwilling to pay for news content and advertisers investing in other media, thousands of news outlets have closed, creating “news deserts” that have left 54 million Americans without access to local news. At the same time, some of the most influential outlets are now owned by billionaires who are censoring news and trying to set a news agenda to benefit themselves. The introduction of artificial intelligence into the journalism profession has seen AI increasingly deployed to write stories, create images and, in some cases, viewed as future replacements for humans to literally deliver the news.

In a polarized environment full of propaganda and disinformation, journalists face the challenge of defending not only the truth but each other from increasing online harassment and threats of physical violence.

September 14 - September 17



Power and Intimacy: Writing Small

Kimberly M. Blaeser, PhD

What do haiku, flash fiction, and micro-memoir have in common? Each of these short form works use brevity as a tool to create intense, suggestive literary pieces that may raise questions or gesture beyond themselves. All, if done well, linger in the mind of the reader. This workshop will center on techniques to focus and render “in brief” resonant experiences, scenes, or images. Meetings will include discussions of sample works, exploration of tools and techniques, prompts and practice in writing small. We will also engage in focused explorations of the world outside our door. Participants will generate new work during the week and have an opportunity to workshop one or more pieces.

September 14 - September 17



Where Does Creativity Come From? The Performing Arts in the 21st Century

Eric Simonson '82

This course, which takes place concurrently with Lawrence's Door Kinetic Arts Festival (or DKAF), will examine daring artistic collaborations.

Every year, artists from across the country collaborate with one another to create projects in an immersive, one-week residency at Björklunden. Embedded within this evolving setting, Artistic Director Eric Simonson leads a seminar which examines topics ranging from the current state of the arts in America, to the future of artistic collaborations.

Where Does Creativity Come From? invites students to take a fully immersive journey in observing and learning about the act of artistic creation. Nationally recognized artists participating in the festival — which in the past have included actor Rainn Wilson, playwright Lydia Diamond, composer Ricky Ian Gordon, and Dance companies Lucky Plush and The Seldoms — will serve as class guests, discussing and, when called on, demonstrating their talents.

This course includes a free guest pass to the arts festival, which includes cocktails, workshops and performances.

September 21 - September 26



Watercolor: In the Flow Workshop

Helen Klebesadel

This workshop offers a guided painting retreat focused on participants own artistic trajectories. You will have some experience being guided and supported through realizing your personal painting project(s). Your goals are what the curriculum will focus on. There will be periodic demos coupled with open painting. It will be a perfect workshop for people ready to launch a new series or realize painting projects that have been difficult to start or complete without support. There is a \$35 materials fee for this course added upon registration.

September 28 - October 1

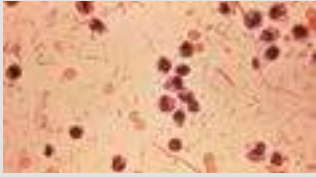


Writing Short Fiction: From Blank Page to Last Page

Holly Day

Have you ever sat down to write a story and realized you have no idea how or where to start? In this fun, noncompetitive multisession workshop, we'll go over dozens of ways writers get their creative engines revved up and moving, from exercises in basic character formation and development to creating vivid scenes and scenarios for your characters to live and participate in. By the time this class is over, you'll know how to make yourself get started writing, and keep writing.

September 28 - October 1



Mysteries with a Medical Explanation

David W. Hines MD '76

Ever wonder: Why were so many women executed during the Salem Witch Trials? Christopher Columbus and Spain conquered the New World aided by measles and smallpox; what equally devastating illness did they bring to Europe? How did a doctor save 8,000 lives by keeping the Nazis from invading the city of Rozwadów during WWII? What did Winston Churchill do to an island in Scotland to make it uninhabitable? How did a harmless bacteria like *Serratia* infect the heart valves of so many drug addicts in California? How was a woman with Sickle Cell disease cured forever? How did the Plumbers Union in Chicago keep the city almost free of Legionnaire's Disease? Why were Russian scouts dragging corpses of dead Nazis invading Stalingrad back to safety? Can HIV be cured by clipping and pasting genes around as in a word processor?

Come to the course to deepen your understanding about the answers to all of these questions. Trust me, I'm a doctor. Together, we'll enjoy time as a group discussing in-depth the fascinating pathogenetic phenomena which often gets glossed over or omitted in historical texts and documentaries. We'll also appreciate together the amazing role microbes play in winemaking and cheesemaking processes with an optional wine and cheese gathering toward the end of our week together.

October 5 - October 8



Understanding Color: A Painting Workshop

Jill Newman

This three-day Understanding Color: A Painting Workshop is suitable for both novices and more experienced artists who want to deepen their understanding and knowledge of color theory. This intensive will build confidence in participant use and understanding of color, with explorations ranging from how to mix specific colors, create specific color relationships, and dive deeper into artistic perceptions of color.

The hands-on exercises and lectures will focus on using the principles of color theory. We will learn traditional color attributes such as hue, value, and intensity and utilize color relationships to create harmony, contrast, and emphasis. We will also explore various visual, perceptual, and psychological aspects of color. The exercises will include color wheels, value scales, and intensity charts. By the end of the course, participants will create a small color and value matched painting-of-choice to achieve a specific chromatic impact.

We will work with acrylic paints because of their versatility and water solubility, but the understanding of color can be applied to any medium and is integral to all visual design fields. Full engagement and completion of the exercises and work will require some time painting outside of the 3 hour/ day course. Participants will have access to the studio classroom during afternoon and evening hours. A list of supplies will be provided in advance of registration.

October 5 - October 8



Improv for Life

Lisa Cormier and Mary Trieschmann

Are you ready for some “serious play”? Join the fun in this 3 day workshop. You will improve your communication skills by learning Improv theatre techniques. We will focus on adaptability, collaboration and active listening. Don’t worry about being funny, Improv is not comedy. It can naturally lead to funny situations but being funny is not a requirement for this class. We will learn together as we face the challenges of human communication and connection. Come join the fun!

October 5 - October 8



The power of sound all around: A hands-on exploration of audio and content creation

Nathan Heffel '02 (Fernando-Frescas)

Through interactive hands-on learning and on-site content creation, students will explore the power of audio and its unique place in our media landscape today. Students will use provided professional equipment to create a group audio project of their choosing. You’ll also hear from top radio/audio journalists for an intimate behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to gather engaging audio, write for a listening audience, and craft thought-provoking interview questions for insightful radio/audio interviews and podcasts.

October 19 - October 24



John Steinbeck: Scribe of Social Conscience

Paul McComas '83

Nearly 90 years after the publication of the great American short novel “Of Mice and Men” (1937) and the epic, Pulitzer-Prize-winning, Depression Era protest novel “The Grapes of Wrath” (1939), we’ll take a fresh, expansive look at both masterpieces, plus a dozen other classics by Nobel-Prize-winner John Steinbeck: “The Pastures of Heaven” (1932), “The Red Pony” (1933), “To A God Unknown” (1933), “In Dubious Battle” (1936), “The Moon Is Down” (1942), “Cannery Row” (1945) and its underrated sequel “Sweet Thursday” (1954), “The Pearl” (1947), “East of Eden” (1952), “Once There Was A War” (1958), “The Winter of Our Discontent” (1961), and “Travels with Charley: In Search of America” (1962).

Instructor Paul McComas, LU '83 is not just a literary- and media-scholar but also an acclaimed actor; he performs dramatic excerpts from, then provides keen analysis and leads lively discussion of, each book, in chronological order. The result: a vivid, comprehensive panorama of the author/activist’s entire, eclectic 35-year career. In the evenings, several faithful film adaptations will be screened, along with a biographical documentary. Throughout, the main emphasis will be on the Salinas, California native’s status as a master chronicler of — and an avid advocate for — “the have-nots.” With his unflagging insistence that each of us is, indeed must be, our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, Steinbeck in 2025 could hardly be more timely ... or more necessary.

Reading some or all of the the books (many of which are short) in advance is not required ... but *choosing* to read some or all of them after the seminar is highly likely!

October 26 - October 31

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Kimberly M. Blaeser, PhD

Blaeser, past Wisconsin Poet Laureate and founding director of Indigenous Nations Poets, is a writer, photographer, and scholar. She is the author of six poetry collections including *Ancient Light*, *Copper Yearning*, and *Résister en dansant/Ikwe-niimi: Dancing Resistance*. Blaeser edited *Traces in Blood, Bone, and Stone: Contemporary Ojibwe Poetry* and wrote the monograph “Gerald Vizenor: Writing in the Oral Tradition.” Her photographs, picto-poems, and ekphrastic pieces have appeared in exhibits. An Anishinaabe activist and environmentalist, she is an enrolled member of White Earth Nation and grew up on the reservation. 2024 Mackey Chair in Creative Writing at Beloit College and a Vassar College Tatlock Fellow, Blaeser is a Professor Emerita at UW–Milwaukee and an MFA faculty member for Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. She serves on the Poetry Coalition of the Academy of American Poets and is Vice President of Letters for the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters. Her accolades include a Lifetime Achievement Award from Native Writers’ Circle of the Americas. Blaeser splits her time between her home in rural Wisconsin and a water-access cabin near the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in Minnesota.



Jane Burress

Jane Burress is the owner of Doorway to Nature LLC and a life-long resident of Door County. The mission of her business is to promote wellness, harmony, community, and environmental stewardship by connecting people with nature and its benefits. Her background includes working as a Registered Nurse for 15 years, Youth and Family Minister for 20 years, Certified Nature and Forest Therapy Guide and business owner 5 years. During the Covid years, she returned to college for a degree in Psychology. She guides walks for the County of Door, Gibraltar Schools, The Ridges Sanctuary, the public, and private groups.



Paul Cohen

Paul Cohen is a professor emeritus in history and Patricia Hamar Boldt professor of liberal studies at Lawrence University, where he taught for 37 years. He specializes in Modern European history but has also taught courses on film and history. Between 1996 and 1998, he was Director of Lawrence’s Freshman Studies Program (currently ‘First Year Studies’), which introduces students to the liberal arts. He helped oversee that program’s transition from its great-works-of-the-West origins in 1945 to its current multi-civilizational and multidisciplinary orientation. While he is the author of two books on the intellectual history of modern France, Professor Cohen considers himself first and foremost a teacher. In 1999, Lawrence awarded him with the Lawrence University Freshman Studies Award, and in 2008 with the Lawrence University Excellence in Teaching Award. “Teaching,” he writes, “has amounted to a calling more than an occupation for me. Being a spur to student growth has been the greatest joy of my career. That, I like to think, more so than the mastery of a field of study or the preparation for a career, is what characterizes a Lawrence education at its best.”



Lisa Cormier

Lisa Cormier took her first Improv class in 2015 and discovered the power of saying YES! She was hooked and wanted to share this superpower with others in her profession and anyone else in search of expanding their communication skill. She recently completed the “Train the Trainer” course at Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University and became a certified Improv teacher. Her day job is working as an Infectious Disease and wound Care Physician at Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Tim Crain

Tim Crain received a Ph.D. in modern Europe, modern British and Irish, and modern Jewish history at Arizona State University, after earning his B.A. and M.A. from Marquette University. Crain taught for fifteen years at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Marquette University. He left UW-Madison after accepting a position at Seton Hill University where he was a professor and director of the National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education. Crain is a recipient of numerous teaching and professional awards, and in 2015, he received Marquette University's Alumni Award for Leadership Excellence. A noted public speaker, he delivers over one hundred lectures nationally each year. Crain has instructed thirty seminars at Björklunden over the past twenty years, and Tim and his family always look forward to their time on Lawrence University's North Campus.



Holly Day

Holly Day has worked as a freelance writer for over 30 years, with over 7,000 published articles, poems, and short stories and 40 books and chapbooks, including the nonfiction books, *Music Theory for Dummies*, *Music Composition for Dummies*, *Walking Twin Cities*, *Stillwater, Minnesota: A Brief History*, *Northeast Minneapolis: A History*, *Tattoo FAQ*, and *History Lover's Guide to Minneapolis*; and the poetry books, *A Book of Beasts* (Weasel Press), *The Tooth is the Largest Organ in the Human Body* (Anaphora Press), *Bound in Ice* (Shanti Arts Publishing), and *Cross-Referencing a Book of Summer* (Silver Bow Publishing). Her writing has been nominated for a National Magazine Award, a 49th Parallel Prize, an Isaac Asimov Award, several dozen Pushcart awards, and a Rhysling Award, and she has received two Midwest Writer's Grants, a Plainsongs Award, the Sam Ragan Prize for Poetry, and the Dwarf Star Award from the Science Fiction Poetry Association. She currently teaches writing workshops at the Loft Literary Center in Minnesota, The Muse Literary Center in Virginia, and the Richard Hugo House in Washington.



Bart De Stasio '82

Bart De Stasio received his Ph.D. from Cornell University in ecology and evolution and has been teaching courses in biology and environmental studies at Lawrence University since 1992. He has had grants from the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Dept. of Energy, and the Wisconsin Sea Grant program for his studies of the potential effects of climate change on lakes, especially how prey of fish migrate to avoid predation. Professor De Stasio conducts research with students on the impacts of invasive species and climate change on the ecology of NE Wisconsin watersheds, including Lake Winnebago and Green Bay. His award-winning research on how dormancy in aquatic organisms results in escape in space and time from harsh conditions continues with the 2nd edition of his edited book *Diapause in Aquatic Invertebrates*. Over the years he has performed research on Lake Winnebago, Green Bay, the Baltic Sea, coral reefs in the Caribbean, Lake Baikal in Siberia, and numerous smaller lakes in New England and the Midwest. He currently also serves on the Board of the Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust. His current research focuses on how human impacts on productivity of lakes affect migration behavior of prey when avoiding predators.



Allison Fleshman

Allison Fleshman is an associate professor of chemistry at Lawrence University. She earned her PhD in physical chemistry from the University of Oklahoma studying the fundamental properties of conductive liquids that are used in lithium battery systems. She uses her skills in vibrational spectroscopy to study art objects. She teaches classes in Thermodynamics and Reaction Kinetics, Quantum Chemistry and Spectroscopy, and the Chemistry of Art.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Lauren Gatti '94

Lauren Gatti received her B.A. in English from Lawrence University in 1994, her M.A. in English from Loyola University of Chicago in 1999, and her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 2012. Before earning her doctorate, Lauren taught high school English for 11 years in and around Chicago. She is an Associate Professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) where she coordinates the Secondary English Education program and teaches graduate courses in Democratic Education and Teacher Education Policy. She has been the recipient of two college-wide teaching awards, the Distinguished Teaching Award (2015) and the Donald R. and Mary Lee Swanson Award for Teaching Excellence (2020). She is very involved in the Nebraska Writing Project (NeWP) and regularly co-facilitates NeWP summer institutes for K-16 teachers. Door County is one of her favorite places in the world and she is very excited about leading her inaugural Björklunden seminar!



Terry Goode

Terry Goode has a Ph.D. in philosophy from Wayne State University. He taught philosophy at the University of South Carolina, UW-Fox Valley, and UW-Oshkosh. He teaches regularly for The Clearing in their winter program, Björklunden in their summer program, and speaks often at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Door County. Prior to his retirement, Terry owned and managed two technology companies, and then served as an officer and information technology consultant to firms in the Fox River Valley. Terry and his wife, Pamela, live in Baileys Harbor and support many Door County organizations.



Jon Greenwald

After graduation from Princeton and Harvard Law School, Jon Greenwald served 30 years in the U.S. Foreign Service, mainly in Europe, including East Berlin as the Wall fell and ending with the U.S. Mission to the European Union. He taught diplomacy and foreign policy at Lawrence University as the Scarff Professor, 1998-1999, coordinated foreign policy for Bill Bradley's presidential campaign (2000), then served as vice president of the International Crisis Group, the Brussels-based conflict prevention organization for 17 years. He has taught frequently at Björklunden, most recently in 2022 on the Weimar Republic. He leads a project to bring youths from conflict zones -- beginning with Israelis and Palestinians -- to study together at top U.S. and other prep schools. He is also the author of *Berlin Witness: An American Diplomat's Chronicle of East Germany's Revolution*.



Sue Hanna '75

Hanna is a self-described "word nerd." She grew up in northern Florida with midwestern parents, which exposed her to a lot of the differences in how people speak. She continued her interest by majoring in Anthropology and Linguistics at Lawrence. After graduation, she became a software engineer and a "translator" of customer needs into system requirements. After retirement, she has been very active in OLLI-CSUF, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at California State University Fullerton, teaching science, technology, and linguistics. She looks forward to hearing what you have to say!

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Nathan Heffel '02 (Fernando-Frescas)

Heffel is an accomplished radio and television journalist based in Denver, CO. He's the senior host of All Things Considered on Colorado Public Radio News, and the co-host of the television show "Real Talk with Denver7 and CPR News" a local ABC affiliate. His work has been featured on national and international radio shows including PRI's "The Takeaway," NPR's Morning Edition, Weekend Edition, All Things Considered, Here and Now, and ABC's Victoria Statewide Drive. In print, The Denver Post, U.S. News and World Report and numerous other local newspapers around Colorado. Heffel's work in journalism has been recognized by the Associated Press, the Colorado Broadcasters Association, the Society of Professional Journalists and Public Radio News Directors Incorporated. He graduated from Lawrence University with a degree in Government in 2002. He now lives in Denver with his husband William ('00) and their daughter Maya.



Lori M. Hilt, '97

Hilt is the Milwaukee-Downer College and College Endowment Association Professor of Liberal Studies and Professor and Chair of Psychology at Lawrence University.

Hilt is a licensed clinical psychologist and developmental psychopathology researcher who directs the Child and Adolescent Research in Emotion lab.

She co-edited the Handbook of Depression in Adolescence and has published several research studies on adolescent mental health. Much of her research focuses on rumination, the tendency to passively dwell on negative emotions. Hilt and her students developed a mindfulness-based mobile app that reduces rumination in adolescents at risk for depression and anxiety.

Her teaching interests include child clinical psychology, mindfulness, and affective neuroscience. She is on the editorial board for the Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology and serves as a research consultant for the Samaritan Wellness Screen program.



David W Hines MD '76

David Hines practices Infectious Diseases (ID) in Chicago. He started medical school in Guadalajara, Mexico, because of more B's than A's while at Lawrence. While in Mexico he diagnosed a case of leprosy which likely kindled his interest in Infectious Diseases. He then did well enough on boards to transfer into the third-year class at Rush Medical College in Chicago. He remained at Rush for his Internal Medicine Internship, Residency, Chief Medical Residency and Fellowship in ID.

He managed to raise three pretty outstanding children in Oak Park, IL with fellow '76 Lawrence grad, Nancy Gazzola.



Nikolas Hoel '99

Nikolas Hoel is an instructor of history at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. He is a graduate of Lawrence University and went on to earn an M.A. at the University of Colorado-Boulder and a Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is trained in both medieval and Byzantine history. At NEIU he teaches classes concerning both ancient and medieval Europe, for which he has been honored with several Instructor Excellent Awards. Hoel's primary research interests concern the religious, cultural, and intellectual history of the Middle Ages, and he became a medieval historian because of the passion for the barbarians he developed while at Lawrence.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Mark R. Jenike

Professor Mark Jenike teaches in Lawrence University's Health and Society Program and the Department of Anthropology. Mark grew up in Cincinnati, OH and earned his BA in Biological Anthropology from Harvard University in 1985 and his PhD in Anthropology from UCLA in 1994. After a postdoctoral fellowship in Anthropological Demography at UC Berkeley, Mark taught at Pomona College for seven years before joining the faculty at Lawrence in 2004. Mark has studied adaptation to seasonal hunger in central Africa, as well as over nutrition, obesity, and diabetes in the US. He has a decades-long academic interest in human nutrition and chronic disease and has family members who have suffered complications from type 2 diabetes. His current research includes a study of a food and education-based diabetes management program in the Fox Valley, Wisconsin, and a study of the impact of programming connected to a new food-based exhibit at the Building for Kids children's museum in Appleton. He teaches biological and nutritional anthropology at Lawrence, as well as a new course called "Understanding Diabetes." Mark also has a teaching and research interest in humans' long and impactful relationship with alcoholic drinks. Mark cooks, gardens, and enjoys being outside when not teaching and researching.



Dan Klarer

Klarer is a local theater artist living in Door County. He has worked as an actor, stage manager, costume designer, house manager, fight director, and company manager. Klarer has worked in theater in Madison, Milwaukee, Chicago, New York, London, and Glasgow, as well as over a decade of seasons at Third Avenue PlayWorks, Peninsula Players, Northern Sky Theater, and Door Shakespeare. He holds a BA from UW-Stevens Point and a master's degree from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.



Helen Klebesadel

Klebesadel was a tenured member of the Lawrence University faculty, teaching studio art and gender studies from 1990 to 2000. She has continued to offer her summer Björklunden watercolor seminars annually since that time.

Klebesadel served as director of the University of Wisconsin System Women's and Gender Studies Consortium (2000–2018) and as director of the Wisconsin Regional Arts Program (2013–2017). She is known as an engaging teacher and for her evocative and highly detailed narrative watercolors. Klebesadel maintains an art studio in Madison, Wis. and exhibits her paintings nationally and internationally.

She has been invited to teach watercolor and creativity workshops from Texas to Alaska. Klebesadel is proud to be a past member of the Wisconsin Arts Board and a past-president of the national Women's Caucus for Art.

Learn more about her artwork and exhibition schedule at www.klebesadel.com.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Pia Kamonsit

Los Angeles-based fitness instructor Pia Kamonsit regularly teaches at many of the city's top fitness and yoga studios including Equinox and Yoga Center LA. She holds multiple certifications in Power Yoga, Pilates, and Barre instruction and practices. She draws from multiple modalities to craft exciting workouts that are fun and deeply engage the body and mind. Pia inspires students to believe in themselves, approach life in a positive and healthy way, and be passionate about achieving their fitness goals. If you ever had her class before, you've heard her tell you "YES! YOU CAN!" pialatesyoga.com.



Eric Lewellyn

Eric Lewellyn received a Ph.D. in Cellular and Molecular Biology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison where he studied hepatitis B virus and taught microbiology as a Howard Hughes Teaching Fellow. He subsequently worked as a Ruth Kirschstein Postdoctoral Fellow and lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley where he studied and taught cell biology. Lewellyn then joined Assembly Biosciences, a San Francisco-based pharmaceutical company dedicated to finding a cure for hepatitis B virus as a staff scientist. Since returning to the Midwest, Eric has taught numerous courses at Lawrence University and St. Norbert College including virology, microbiology, genetics, and molecular biology.

In his research, Lewellyn employs a synthetic biology approach to answer fundamental questions in cell biology. He has published original research and review articles in various academic publications including *Journal of Virology*, *Virology*, *Molecular Biology of the Cell*, *Clathrin-Mediated Endocytosis Methods and Protocols*, and *Developmental Cell*. Currently, Eric serves as the Biology Laboratory Supervisor at Lawrence University where he mentors the team of staff and student workers who set teaching laboratories, support student-faculty collaborative research projects, and develop new teaching modules.



Bronwyn Mauldin

Bronwyn Mauldin is a writer, zine maker, and researcher based in Los Angeles. She is Director of Research and Evaluation at the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, where she has written several studies on the arts and cultural workers. Her first novel, *Love Songs of the Revolution*, was published by CCLAP. Her short fiction and poetry have been published in a wide range of literary journals. Zines in her *Democracy Series* are available in bookstores and libraries across the US and in a time capsule. She is also founding editor of the *Artists 4 Democracy Newsletter*. Bronwyn has been an artist in residence at Mesa Verde National Park, Denali National Park, and Kulturni Centar REX in Belgrade, Serbia. More at bronwynmauldin.com.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Harry MacLean

Harry MacLean is a lawyer and author living in Denver, Colorado. His first book, “In Broad Daylight,” won an Edgar Award for Best Fact Crime, was a New York Times bestseller for three months, and was made into a movie starring Brian Denehy. His second book, “Once Upon a Time,” involving a first-degree murder prosecution based solely on a repressed memory, was selected by the New York Times as a Notable Book of the Year. “The Past is Never Dead,” was selected as a finalist for the William Saroyan International Prize for Writing awarded by Stanford University. The Washington Post selected “Starkweather” as a Best Non-fiction Book of 2024. The Post review compared the author’s writing to that of Truman Capote’s “In Cold Blood” and Norman Mailer’s “The Executioner’s Song.”

As a lawyer, MacLean was a trial attorney for the Securities and Exchange Commission, a Denver juvenile court magistrate judge, Adjunct Professor of Law at the University of Denver College of Law, First Assistant Attorney General for Colorado, General Counsel of the Peace Corps in the Carter administration, and Special Counsel to Colorado Governor Richard Lamm. He currently sits as an arbitrator and mediator in labor disputes.



Paul McComas ‘83

Recognized for his arts-driven advocacy and activism by the Wisconsin state legislature, Paul McComas is a two-time Chicago Reader Critic’s Choice honoree in Theatre and Performance and the award-winning author of six books of fiction with two more under contract. He is an American Film Institute Prizewinning filmmaker whose current project, a feature adaptation of his acclaimed novel Unplugged, stars Christina Ricci and, in their final roles, the late Louis Gossett Jr. and Edward Asner; it’s being co-produced by Paul with Oscar winner Lynne Littman and Emmy winner Adam Belanoff. McComas is a literary- and media-scholar with a film book upcoming from an academic press, as well as a musician and recording artist. He earned teaching awards from Northwestern (in the continuing education program) and, for instruction at the Master’s level, National Louis universities; works regularly with both Marquette University’s Center for Peacemaking and The Kennedy Forum for mental health; spent a decade on the National Advisory Committee of the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network; and founded Rock Against Depression and the Fool for Love Sam Shepard Memorial / ALS Benefit project. He holds a Master of Arts in Film/Media from Northwestern.



Keith W. Miller, Ph.D.

Keith W. Miller was born on Long Island, New York, and grew up in the Bronx, and later near Detroit. His bachelor’s degree was in education (Concordia Teachers College), his master’s degree was in math (The College of William & Mary), and his Ph.D. was in computer science (The University of Iowa).

Prof. Miller taught at Concordia University in Edmonton, Alberta; The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA; Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond; and the University of Illinois – Springfield. He is currently the Orthwein Endowed Professor for Lifelong Learning in the Sciences at the College of Education in the University of Missouri – St. Louis (UMSL). He is also a member of UMSL’s Computer Science Department.

Dr. Miller’s primary research area is computer ethics, although he also publishes about software testing, online learning, and teaching computational thinking. Google Scholar lists 8777 citations to publications he has authored or co-authored. Dr. Miller has mentored dozens of doctoral students. He also works with the St. Louis Science Center and with Girls Inc. of St. Louis in community outreach.

Keith and his wife own a condo in Egg Harbor, WI. Their current favorite hike is along the Lake Michigan shore at Björklunden.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Eric Mlyn

Eric Mlyn is a Distinguished Faculty Fellow at the Kenan Institute for Ethics and Lecturer at Duke's Sanford School for Public Policy. He was the founding Executive Director of DukeEngage and Assistant vice Provost for Civic Engagement. Before that, he was the founding director of the Robertson Scholars Program and served on the Political Science Faculty of UNC-Chapel Hill.

Mlyn leads a project on Democracy and the Politics of American Higher Education which gathers faculty, administrators, and members of the public to reflect on how the university should respond to ongoing threats towards democratic values and principles. He holds a BA in Political Science from Tufts University and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Minnesota. During the fall of 2019 he was a visiting scholar at the Tisch College for Civic Life at Tufts University and in 2012 was a Senior Fellow of the at the John D Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement at the American University in Cairo. He is the author of *The State, Society and Limited Nuclear War* and co-editor of *Connecting Civic Engagement and Social Innovation: Toward Higher Education's Democratic Promise*. He teaches a course on the Grateful Dead at Duke and is the proud collector of over 500 Grateful Dead posters.

He attended his first Grateful Dead Show in 1976 and his last one (Dead and Company with two original members of the Grateful Dead) just this year. He has been teaching a first year seminar at Duke on the Grateful Dead for the last four years.



Terry Moran '82

Terry Moran is Senior National Correspondent at ABC News. Based in Washington, D.C., Moran covers national politics and policy, reporting from the White House, Congress, the Supreme Court and the campaign trail for all ABC News programs. Previously, Moran served as ABC's Chief Foreign Correspondent, based in London, as co-anchor of the ABC News show Nightline from 2005-2013 and as Chief White House Correspondent from 1999-2005.



Jill Newman

Jill Newman has over twenty years of experience teaching studio art and art education courses at institutions including the University of California - Riverside and California State University - Fullerton. Jill has worked in painting, drawing, collage and installation and has shown at venues such as Dumbo Art Center in New York, the Banff Centre in Canada, and Machine Project in LA. Her work has been written about in publications such as the LA Weekly, L Magazine, and Arthur Magazine. Her awards include a Pasadena Department of Cultural Affairs grant and the Curators Lab Award from the Fellows of Contemporary Art in LA. She earned a BS degree in Art Education from the University of Wisconsin at Madison in 2001, an MFA from California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in 2003.



Dr. Megan Pickett

Dr. Megan Pickett is an associate professor of physics at Lawrence University. She earned a B.A. in physics at Cornell University in 1988, and a Ph.D. in Theoretical Astrophysics from Indiana University in 1995. She was a research fellow at NASA's Ames Research Center until 1999, after which she taught at Valparaiso University and Purdue University, before joining Lawrence in 2006. She is currently writing a biography of Elda Anderson, a Manhattan Project Scientist and the first woman to chair the physics department at Milwaukee-Downer College. Her scholarly interests include the origins of solar systems, neutron star and black hole formation, and inclusive physics education.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Jerald Podair

Jerald Podair is a professor of history emeritus and the Robert S. French Professor of American Studies at Lawrence University, where he specializes in 20th-century United States history. He is the author, co-author or co-editor of seven books, including *The Routledge History of the Twentieth Century United States* and two books about civil rights in America, *The Strike That Changed New York: Blacks, Whites, and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Crisis* and *Bayard Rustin: American Dreamer*. He is the recipient of the Allan Nevins Prize, awarded by the Society of American Historians for “literary distinction in the writing of history,” and the first two-time winner of Lawrence’s Award for Excellence in Scholarship. His *Wrecked: The Edmund Fitzgerald and the Sinking of the American Economy*, written with Thomas Nelson, will be published by Michigan State University Press this summer. He is currently writing *Promised Lands: A History of the American People in the Twentieth Century*, a comprehensive history of the American century written for a general audience, to be published by Princeton University Press.



Kathy Privatt

Kathy Privatt, PhD., ATI certified Alexander Movement Technique (AT) teacher, is the James G. and Ethel M. Barber Professor of Theatre and Drama at Lawrence University. She received a Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, specializing in 20th-century American theatre. Privatt is in her 25th year at Lawrence, teaching acting, AT, theatre literature and history, and directing departmental productions. She also teaches AT workshops and currently serves as Communications Co-Chair for Alexander Technique International.



Relena Ribbons

Ribbons is a forest ecologist who teaches in the Lawrence Geosciences department. She has been working and playing in forests her entire career.



Austin Segrest

Austin Segrest is an assistant professor of English at Lawrence University. He’s the author of two poetry collections, *Door to Remain*, winner of the 2021 Vassar Miller Poetry Prize, and *Groom* (Unbound Edition Press, 2025). He has a PhD from the University of Missouri, where he was poetry editor of *The Missouri Review*. He’s been awarded fellowships from the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Ucross, the Vermont Studio Center, and the Sewanee Writers’ Conference. His work appears in *POETRY*, *APR*, *The Threepenny Review*, *Ecotone*, *The Common*, *New England Review*, *Yale Review*, *VQR*, and many other journals.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Titus Seilheimer '00

Titus Seilheimer, Ph.D.: Titus Seilheimer has been a fisheries specialist with Wisconsin Sea Grant since 2012, where he leads research, outreach, and education activities focused on Great Lakes fisheries and ecosystems. He has a B.A. in Biology from Lawrence University and a Ph.D. in Biology from McMaster University. His past fish research took him to all five Great Lakes as well as the southern Great Plains. Seilheimer has spent more than 100 days on Lake Michigan commercial fishing boats since 2015. He is based out of Manitowoc, WI.



Paul Senner '11

Paul Senner, M.Sc.: Paul is a Population Analyst at the Lincoln Park Zoo's Alexander Center for Applied Population Biology, where he applies his knowledge of population management to wildlife reintroduction and translocation programs. Paul is also interested in the use of molecular genetic data in the conservation of wildlife populations, and researching the factors that influence the success of wildlife reintroduction programs. Paul's past work focused on the conservation of grassland and wetland birds in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam, whooping crane reintroduction in Wisconsin, and the restoration of tallgrass prairie in the Midwest. He received his M.Sc. in Environment & Resources from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and received a B.A. in Biology from Lawrence University. Paul is based out of Chicago, IL.



Arnold Shober

Arnold Shober is a professor of government at Lawrence University (PhD, University of Wisconsin--Madison). Courses in elections, public opinion, public policy, federalism, mass media, and education policy are among his offerings. His research focuses on questions of public policy in the American federal system and covers such subjects as state-level bureaucracy and education governance. His recent work includes "Can Equity Survive Governance? Politics, Accountability, and Local Control in US Education" (2019), "In Common No More: The Politics of the Common Core State Standards" (2016), and "Out of Many, One? The Democratic Dilemma of American Education" (2012). Prof. Shober has appeared frequently in the news media, including in such sources as USA Today, the Christian Science Monitor, Education Week, Wisconsin Public Radio, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel, and every other week on Appleton's WHBY radio.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Eric Simonson '82

Eric Simonson is a 1982 graduate of Lawrence University, where he majored in Theatre Arts. Today, he is an ensemble member of Steppenwolf Theatre Company, a position he maintains while working as a writer and director for film, television, theatre and opera. Directing and writing credits in theatre include work at Manhattan Theatre Club, Primary Stages in NY, The Huntington Theatre and the Milwaukee Rep, among others. He directed “The Song of Jacob Zulu”, which ran on Broadway and received six Tony nominations including Best Director. He is the author of published works “Bang the Drum Slowly” and “Work Song” (with Jeffrey Hatcher). Broadway writing credits include “Lombardi”, “Magic/Bird”, and “Bronx Bombers”. Film and television work include “Studs Terkel: Listening to America” (Emmy nom.); “A Note of Triumph” (Oscar win); “On Tiptoe” (Oscar nom., Emmy nom). Simonson recently wrote the book for Milwaukee Rep’s musical “Run Bambi Run”. He has written and produced for TV shows “Man in the High Castle”, “Homecoming” (WGA nom.) and “Swagger”. His film “Killing Reagan” aired on NatGeo and was nominated for a National Critics Association Award. Simonson founded The Door Kinetic Arts Festival in 2016.



Peter Thomas

Peter Thomas has been teaching Russian language and culture in the Russian Department at Lawrence University since 2006. Before coming to Lawrence, he taught courses in comparative literature, and in Russian language, culture, and film, at Northwestern University, Beloit College, and St. Olaf College. Since arriving at Lawrence, Thomas has received the Young Teacher Award (2013) and the Freshman Studies Teaching Award (2015). This is his fourteenth summer seminar at Bjorklund.



Mary Trieschmann

Mary Trieschmann, MS Ed. has studied and performed improv since 1994 when she began her journey with Improv Olympic in Chicago. She was trained in the Medical Improv at Feinberg School of Medicine, Northwestern University. Mary has 25+ years of experience facilitating adult learning spaces. She is currently the Executive Director of the Winnetka Historical Society and the Principal of Trieschmann Exhibit Development where she applies the tenets of improv on a daily basis.



Melissa Wall

Melissa Wall is a professor of journalism at California State University - Northridge. She is the author of the book, *Citizen Journalism: Practices, Propaganda, Pedagogy*, and the editor of two other volumes on the same topic. She is the co-founder of the Pop Up Newsroom, a global reporting project for journalism students. She has taught journalism in Lebanon as a Fulbright Scholar, in Ethiopia for USAID, and advised the establishment of the first journalism doctoral program in Ukraine as an Open Society Research Scholar. She co-founded the journalistic-art project, the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (ICTA) as a scholar in residence at Kulturni Centar Rex in Belgrade.

2025 SEMINAR INSTRUCTORS



Caitlin Williamson '11

Caitlin Williamson, M.Sc.: Cait is the director of conservation for the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin, where she leads the organization's initiatives for conservation and environmental education and works closely with partners across the state to ensure that NRF has the most significant impact possible on Wisconsin's lands, waters, and wildlife through strategic, science-based investments. Cait earned a M.Sc. in Environmental Conservation from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and received a B.A. in Biology and Environmental Studies from Lawrence University. She serves on the Outcomes Advisory Board for the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts, and the Board of Visitors for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies. She is based out of Madison, WI.



Jane Whitney

Whitney has been learning about the natural world for as long as forever. She is a selftaught naturalist, a certified Wisconsin Master Naturalist, and a plant nerd. Since retiring to Baileys Harbor, Whitney has spent her time studying the plants and wildlife that lives in Door County. She lead hikes for The Ridges Sanctuary, Door County Land Trust, Björklunden, and The Clearing. She also presents programs for The Ridges Sanctuary on topics such as owl adaptations, woodcocks, orchids, frogs, conifers, clubmosses, etc. Among her greatest joys is sharing the world of nature with others. In her former life, Whitney was an academic librarian, a public librarian, and an elementary school librarian.