Adventures in Learning

Spring 2026
Course Offerings

Registration Opens: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at Noon

Registration Closes: Friday, March 27, 2026

Colby·Sawyer College

Lifelong Education at Colby-Sawyer College

Spring 2026 Courses

Cover Photo by Whit Smith

Courses

Most courses begin the week of April 13

Mondays

1:00-3:30 p.m.	**May I Have This Dance?** / Beverly Marshall 5 weeks beginning April 13 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Tuesdays

9:30-11:30 a.m.	**Apocalypticism: The End-of-Days and World-to-Come** / Art Rosen 4 weeks beginning April 14 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
1:00-3:00 p.m.	**This is My Best** / Nancy Marashio 8 weeks beginning April 14 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Wednesdays

9:30-11:30 a.m.	**The Modern History of American Medicine, 1910-Present** / Tom Ebert 6 weeks beginning April 15 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
1:00-2:30 p.m.	**The Roaring Twenties** / Gordon Terwilliger 4 weeks beginning April 15 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
3:30-5:00 p.m.	**Women of the White House** / Beverly Marshall 5 weeks beginning April 15 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Thursdays

9:30-11:30 a.m.	**From the Meanest Creature: Theatre as a Vehicle for Change** / Sharon Rae Paquette 4 weeks beginning **April 30** in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
1:00-3:00 p.m.	**Let's Get Organized – A Reprise** / Nancy Hodgman 3 weeks beginning April 16 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
4:00-5:00 p.m.	**The Declaration of Independence at 250 /** David Click et al. 5 weeks beginning **April 2** in Gordon Hall, Sawyer Center, Colby-Sawyer College

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in Adventures in Learning courses and presentations are those of the presenters and class participants and do not necessarily represent the views and/or opinions of AIL or Colby-Sawyer College.

Courses

Courses begin the week of April 13

MAY I HAVE THIS DANCE?
AN INVITATION TO FIVE FILMS ABOUT TRANSFORMATION

Beverly Marshall

Mondays, 1:00-3:30 p.m.
5 weeks beginning April 13
AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 40

The great dancer and choreographer Martha Graham said, "Dance is the hidden language of the soul." Albert Einstein said, "Dancers are the athletes of God." Through movement and deep feelings that connect people on a profound level, dance changes lives.

In this course, we will watch five special movies in which the characters' complex lives are transformed by dance. From China to Northeast England, from Pittsburgh to Japan to the Catskill Mountains, we will meet Li Cunxin, Billy Elliot, Alex Owens, Shohei Sugiyama and Frances "Baby" Houseman, experience stunning performances, delight in a variety of dance styles — ballet, ballroom, freestyle, hip hop, breakdancing — and then talk about how dance is a language that speaks to the soul.

I invite you to join me as we watch these movies in their entirety:

- *Shall We Dance?*, 1996, directed by Masayuki Suo
- *Billy Elliot*, 2000, directed by Stephen Daldry
- *Flashdance*, 1983, directed by Adrian Lyne
- *Mao's Last Dancer*, 2004, directed by Bruce Beresford
- *Dirty Dancing*, 1989, directed by Emilio Ardolino

View on ProClass

Courses

Courses begin the week of April 13

APOLCALYPTICISM: THE END-OF-DAYS AND WORLD-TO-COME

Art Rosen

Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
4 weeks beginning April 14
AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 40

For centuries, people have wondered why a perfect God created an imperfect world. Apocalypticism offered an answer: A perfect world awaits the worthy at the end-of-days.

This course will outline the origins of apocalypticism and its diverse shaping by the three Abrahamic religions. Classical histories often come with classical figures and so it is with apocalypticism. The central figures, all messianic, are said to be descendants of Zarathustra, King David or the Prophet Muhammad. The course will outline the messianic concept, its development over time and its impact on Judaism, Christianity and Islam. We will see that concepts from prehistory, expanded in ancient history, play important roles in our lives today.

There are four sessions: Apocalypticism Then, Impact on Jews and Judaism, Impact on Christianity and Islam, and Apocalypticism Now. They will be offered in lecture format supported by PowerPoint slides. Copies of the slide deck will be emailed to all participants and will serve as a text for the course. Time will be set aside for as much class discussion as participants would like.

View on ProClass

Courses

Courses begin the week of April 13

THIS IS MY BEST

Nancy Marashio

Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
8 weeks beginning April 14
AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 15

In 1942, Whit Burnett compiled the first edition of *This Is My Best*. The title page called the 93 authors (selected from a list of 169 by librarians, literary critics, and persons professionally connected with reading, writing, teaching, or publishing) the greatest living writers. The authors were given no guidelines for "best," so even that standard is whatever each author chose. All portions of the United States are represented.

Our Adventures in Learning class will enjoy the most recent 2004 edition, grumbling of course about those of our favorites who were not included and about choices of one work where we would have selected another.

A joy of this text is the breadth of contemporary writing across genres, authors, and particular pieces we know the writers themselves chose.

We will immerse in reading and discussing with—of course—in class writing to clarify our own responses to "surprise insights that only an author can know."

Required Text
This Is My Best
Retha Powers and Kathy Kiernan, editors
ISBN-10: 0-8118-4829-9

View on ProClass

Courses

Courses begin the week of April 13

THE HISTORY OF MODERN AMERICAN MEDICINE, 1910-PRESENT

Tom Ebert

Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
6 weeks beginning April 15
AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 25

This course will explore the history of modern American medicine from 1910 to the present. How did we end up with the health care system we have? Can it be improved or does it need fundamental change? Topics will include:

- The ways in which medical education and training changed profoundly after the Flexner Report in 1910.
- Unique features of the U.S. that have influenced our government and societal values.
- The role of Federalism and the reluctance by the federal government to pass sweeping legislation except during times of profound economic or social upheaval.
- The development of private insurance and the corporatization of American medicine.
- Attempts to expand access to healthcare, particularly after Medicare and Medicaid.
- The introduction of Medicare for All legislation and support for and resistance to expanding access to healthcare.

Is there is a gradual solution to mitigate cost and expand affordable access to healthcare or do we need another major social upheaval?

View on ProClass

Courses

Courses begin the week of April 13

THE ROARING TWENTIES
Gordon Terwilliger

Wednesdays, 1:00-2:30 p.m.
4 weeks beginning April 15
AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 35

The Roaring Twenties invites participants to explore the dramatic changes that reshaped the United States after World War I — many of which echo in our own time. The course will examine the Treaty of Versailles, Woodrow Wilson's leadership, the Spanish Flu, women's suffrage and the experiences of returning soldiers, drawing thoughtful connections to the social and political shifts of the 2020s. We'll dive into the decade under Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover, exploring religious conflict, the Scopes Trial, the rise of the KKK, and the Tulsa Massacre.

Participants will also consider how new technologies, mass production, consumer culture, automobiles, flight and the stock market transformed everyday life, inviting comparison with today's rapid innovation. The cultural energy of the era comes alive through Prohibition, jazz, film, literature and sports legends, alongside the growing divide between rural and urban America. The course concludes with attention to veterans' struggles and the Bonus Army, offering a well-rounded look at this pivotal decade and its relevance today.

- **Week 1:** Treaty of Versailles/Wilson, Spanish Flu, Women's Vote, Return of WW1 Soldiers
- **Week 2:** Harding/Coolidge/Hoover, Religion, Scopes Trial, KKK & Racism, Tulsa Massacre
- **Week 3:** Electricity, Auto Industry & Mass Production, Consumerism, Stock Market, Cars, Inventions, Flight
- **Week 4:** Prohibition, Jazz, Dance, Movies & Literature, Sports: Babe Ruth & Jack Dempsey, Rural vs Urban Class, Bonus Army

View on ProClass

Courses

Courses begin the week of April 13

WOMEN OF THE WHITE HOUSE: THE IMPACT OF SIX FIRST LADIES

Beverly Marshall, Vic Henningsen, Bob Jakoubek, Laney Sammons, Steve Solomon

Wednesdays, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
5 weeks beginning April 15
AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 40

This series presents Dolley Madison, Jane Pierce, Edith Wilson, Lady Bird Johnson, Rosalynn Carter and Michelle Obama: six first ladies who changed history in their own unique ways.

Week 1: We'll begin with two 19th century first ladies: influential political operator Dolley Madison and Jane Pierce, often called "Ghost of the White House," who contributed to the development of the Civil War.

Week 2: Moving into the early 20th century, we will explore Edith Wilson's role in the White House following Woodrow Wilson's stroke. Did the level of assistance she provided make her our first woman president?

Weeks 3 & 4: Two first ladies emerge later in the 20th century: Lady Bird Johnson and Rosalynn Carter. A close adviser to her husband, Lady Bird Johnson also managed a media empire and as first lady championed environmentalism, civil rights and the War on Poverty. Rosalynn Carter was an equal partner to her husband during his term and was an influential global humanitarian in her own right.

Week 5: We conclude with Michelle Obama, who never wished for a political life but more than rose to the challenge. Her strength of character provides an inspiration to many.

Classes will combine lecture and discussion.

View on ProClass

Courses

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FROM THE MEANEST CREATURE: THEATRE AS A VEHICLE FOR CHANGE

Sharon Rae Paquette

Thursdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
4 weeks beginning April 30
AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 20

This four-week class examines three programs where theatre has been used as a vehicle for self-exploration, expression, learning and growth in the U.S. prisons Luther Luckett in Kentucky, Sing Sing in New York and the New Hampshire State Prison for Men.

We will view and discuss the films *Sing Sing* with Colman Domingo, an artistic exploration of the program Rehabilitation in the Arts at the facility of the same name as well as *Shakespeare Behind Bars*, a documentary which premiered at Sundance in 2005 that follows the nine-month process of bringing Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to life.

We will also read and discuss two chapters from the book *Performing New Lives: Prison Theatre* which gives further insight into The Rehabilitation in the Arts program at Sing Sing and the program Sharon led at the NH State Prison for Men.

View on ProClass

Courses

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LET'S GET ORGANIZED – A REPRISE

Nancy Hodgman

Thursdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
3 weeks beginning April 16
AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 25

Getting organized is among the top New Year's resolutions after losing weight and quitting smoking. Participants in this course will learn principles of organizing in a household and home office, as well as how to manage a household move. Organized spaces contribute to enhanced productivity and reduced stress. Studies show that when people think of their surroundings as orderly, they have lower cortisol stress hormones. This course will present systems that participants can use to get organized and stay organized. These systems will focus on clutter, memorabilia, clothing, paper management and electronic organizing. Participants will be given printed resources that can be used when implementing organizing projects on their own. During the course, participants will be invited to pose questions about their specific organizing challenges and projects.

View on ProClass

Courses

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THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE AT 250
David Click, Eric Boyer, Craig Gallagher, Peter Gunn

Thursdays, 4:00-5:00 p.m.
5 weeks beginning April 2
Gordon Hall, Sawyer Center, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 90

April 2: The Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution – Craig Gallagher

As we approach the 250th anniversary of the July 4, 1776, signing of the Declaration of Independence, we ought not to forget the monumental risk that its signatories in the Second Continental Congress were taking. Amidst a war with the globally recognized superpower — and with an army better described as a ragtag group of militias — that the Americans would hold out long enough to make the Declaration matter was no sure thing. How did thirteen disparate colonies ultimately come together and find a way to overcome the mighty British Empire? And what did it mean to become the first recognized independent country in the Western Hemisphere born out of a former colony?

April 9: No Taxation Without Representation — The Meaning of Representation and the New Republic – Eric Boyer

Often treated as a mere political slogan, "No Taxation without Representation" is much more than a catchy reimagining of the Magna Carta by rebellious colonists; it represents the first step of a radical revision of the British concept of "virtual" representation. As the colonists moved from revolution to political construction, they developed a radically new concept of "actual" representation: an ongoing political experiment that has had a profound impact on the meaning of republican liberty and the necessity of public virtue. As we approach the 250th anniversary of this experiment, we are left asking: Can a republic survive on ambition alone?

April 16: No Kings — How British Colonists Became Americans – Craig Gallagher

At the conclusion of the French and Indian War in 1763, the British Empire stood atop the world. King George III's subjects in London, Boston, New York and Charleston rejoiced that the hated French had been driven from Canada and that North America was now truly a British domain. No less an authority than Benjamin Franklin opined that the colonists had never been prouder to be British. Yet just thirteen years later, these same colonists tore the Empire in two by declaring independence and forming the United States of America. What explains this monumental collapse in British identity, and why did some of the most loyal subjects of George III embrace the cry of "No Kings!" by 1776?

Continued on next page.

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Gordon Hall, Sawyer Center, Colby-Sawyer College
Maximum number of participants: 90

April 23: The Declaration of Independence — Its Meaning Today – Peter Gunn
Today, the United States of America remains an unfinished, but inspired work in progress. We face the generational test of how we can move the U.S. closer to fully realizing the promise of the Declaration of Independence. Our progress depends on how we interpret and apply the ideals of the Declaration. Will "all men [sic] are created equal" mean that people should simply enjoy equal opportunity or equitable outcomes? Will "liberty" ensure only personal autonomy, or will it also promote community? Will we constrict "consent" in the name of fair elections, or will we expand access to the ballot in the name of free ones? And what of the role of government — will it provide law enforcement, courts and jails to keep us "secure," or will the community provide to everyone the education, healthcare and the infrastructure necessary for all Americans to fully pursue happiness?

April 30: Paintings at a Revolution — Depicting the American Revolution – David Click
The Declaration of Independence and the war for independence are viewed by Americans today as the founding events that shaped the country we live in. From the time of The Revolution, artists have depicted the founding of the Republic as both heroic and virtuous. Artists such as Charles Wilson Peale, John Trumball and Gilbert Stuart and others provided artistic interpretations of the Declaration of Independence, the Founding Fathers and the war for independence with images that resonate with us today. Using classical models and working in the grand style of European painters, these early American artists created an American cultural identity and shaped our remembrance of the American Revolution. In this concluding session, we will look at how early American artists shaped the views of The Revolution that we still share today.

View on ProClass

Courses *Courses begin the week of April 13*

READY TO REGISTER?

Registration opens on ProClass on Wednesday, March 4, at noon.

You can view all of the course details and learn more about the study leaders any time by visiting **https://reg139.imperisoft.com/ail/Search/Registration.aspx.**

If you haven't yet created a ProClass account or renewed your AIL membership, you can use the link above to manage your membership and registrations, as well as browse current offerings.

If you need technical assistance with this process, **click here** for a step-by-step guide.

If you run into any unanticipated challenges in the process, feel free to email (adventures@colby-sawyer.edu) or call the office (603-526-3434) for further assistance; we are happy to help!