

Adventures in Learning

Fall 2025

Course Offerings



Registration Opens Wednesday, August 6, 2025 at Noon

Registration Closes Friday, September 5, 2025



Colby·Sawyer
College

Lifelong Learning at Colby-Sawyer College



Fall 2025 Courses

Cover Photo by Joan Eaton

Most courses begin the week of September 15

Courses

Mondays

9:30-11:30 a.m.	The Belles of Broadway: A Dynamic Trio / Paul Brogan 4 weeks beginning Sept. 15 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
9:30-11:30 a.m.	The Autism Spectrum: Facts, Myths, Misconceptions & Questions / Susan Woods 4 weeks beginning Oct. 20 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
1:30-3:30 p.m.	Knitting a Fall Pumpkin Patch / Kara Gruver 4 weeks beginning Sept. 15 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
1:30-3:30 p.m.	AI Essentials: History, Ethics & Everyday Tools / Kate Lowrie and Matt Lowrie 3 weeks beginning Oct. 20 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Tuesdays

9:30-11:30 a.m.	Meadow Gardening: What It Is, Why It Matters and How You Can, Too / Suzanne Paul 5 weeks beginning Sept. 16 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
1:30-3:30 p.m.	Writing Workshop / Nancy Marashio 8 weeks beginning Sept. 16 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Wednesdays

9:30-11:30 a.m.	Mosquitoes: Humankind's Deadliest Predator / Paul Etkind 5 weeks beginning Oct. 1 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
1:30-3:30 p.m.	Excavating Richard III / Sharon Rae Paquette 8 weeks beginning Sept. 17 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Thursdays

9:30-11:30 a.m.	American Society – Today, Yesterday and Tomorrow / Peter Gunn 7 weeks beginning Sept. 18 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College
1:30-3:30 p.m.	Ashes & Empires: Volcanoes, Climate and Civilization / Scott Rappeport 6 weeks beginning Sept. 18 in the AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, 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 September 15



THE BELLES OF BROADWAY: A DYNAMIC TRIO

Paul Brogan

Mondays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

4 weeks beginning September 15

ALL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 25

From 1930 until the mid-1990s, no stars shone brighter on the Broadway musical stage than Ethel Merman, Mary Martin and Carol Channing. Combined, they gave more than 12,000 performances in hit musicals and plays. Composers like Irving Berlin and Cole Porter wrote musicals specifically for Merman because when she sang, you could understand every lyric from the top reaches of the balcony. Mary Martin brought shows like *South Pacific* and *The Sound of Music* to vivid life, while Carol Channing created immortal characters in numerous hugely successful hits. Yet, none of them achieved great fame on the silver screen, although their television appearances were many. We'll discuss why that is and how they justly became legends while watching some of their enduring work.



KNITTING A FALL PUMPKIN PATCH

Kara Gruver

Mondays, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

4 weeks beginning September 15

ALL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 10

During the course, each participant will make at least three colorful knitted pumpkins. We will start with a reminder on the basics of casting on, knitting, purling and increasing/decreasing stitches. Our first pumpkin will be made from a basic knitted rectangle, and we will progress through the four weeks to knitting stems, working in the round, and adding cables. There will be plenty of time for showcasing your individual creativity and socializing as we create.

These pumpkins are remarkably easy to make, so all skill levels are welcome. The only requirement is to be proficient with basic knitting skills (i.e., casting on and knitting/purling). Participants will get to choose and purchase the base yarn for their pumpkins and will need to come to class with appropriately sized knitting needles. Detailed instructions regarding supplies will be emailed to all participants a few weeks prior to the start of the course. Participants will be provided with patterns, stuffing and yarn for stems and veins.



Fall 2025 Courses

Courses

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THE AUTISM SPECTRUM: FACTS, MYTHS, MISCONCEPTIONS & QUESTIONS

Susan Woods

Mondays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

4 weeks beginning October 20

AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 30

The autism spectrum relates to brain development that impacts how a person perceives and interacts with others and their environment, and the possible challenges to their learning, social interactions and communication.

This four-week course will offer a deep dive into what we know about the autism spectrum, what we do not know, some of the myths and misinformation about autism, and what we still need to learn.

Through relevant research, videos, readings, resources and discussion, participants will be exposed to many aspects of what is referred to as the autism spectrum. The course will explore the history of autism, its prevalence, theories on causes, current research and approaches, and how we, as a society, promote the inclusion of individuals on the autism spectrum. The course will conclude with a panel discussion that provides an opportunity to hear the perspectives of individuals who are on the autism spectrum, as well as parents, grandparents and professionals who are connected to someone with autism.

Prior to the start of the course, participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire to collect information about their knowledge, connection to and experience with individuals on the autism spectrum. All responses will be kept confidential.



Fall 2025 Courses

Courses

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AI ESSENTIALS: HISTORY, ETHICS AND EVERYDAY TOOLS

Kate Lowrie and Matt Lowrie

Mondays, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

3 weeks beginning October 20

ALL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 20

This three-session workshop provides a practical introduction to Artificial Intelligence (AI) for nontechnical learners, covering its history, real-world applications and ethical considerations. Participants will explore AI's evolution, gain hands-on experience with accessible AI tools and engage in discussions about the societal impacts of AI.

Session 1: The Evolution of AI

- Overview of AI's history, from early computing to modern machine learning.
- Understanding key AI concepts: automation, algorithms & data-driven decision-making.
- Introduction to AI's role in business, education and creative industries.

Session 2: The Ethics of AI

- Examining bias in AI and its implications.
- Ethical concerns: privacy, misinformation and job automation.
- AI regulation and responsible AI use.
- Discussion on balancing innovation with ethical responsibility.

Session 3: AI in Everyday Life

- Hands-on exploration of user-friendly AI tools, including:
 - ChatGPT – AI-powered chatbot for writing and research.
 - DALL·E – AI-generated image creation.
 - Grammarly – AI-driven writing assistance.
 - Google Lens – AI-powered visual recognition.
- Interactive exercises: using AI tools for productivity and creativity.
- Discussion of the future of AI and how to stay informed about emerging technologies.

Participants will gain a foundational understanding of AI, its ethical challenges and practical ways to integrate AI tools into daily life responsibly.



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MEADOW GARDENING: WHAT IT IS, WHY IT MATTERS AND HOW YOU CAN, TOO

Suzanne Paul

Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

5 weeks beginning September 16

AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 20

This course will explore ecological landscaping/sustainable horticulture and advocate for reimagining traditional gardening methods through the lens of meadow ecology. It will focus on fostering natural ecosystem processes to create resource-rich wildlife habitats and providing the conditions for our plantings to thrive. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of using native plants, the promotion of natural succession, the importance of water infiltration, and the ways to improve nutrient cycling both above and below ground.

The real aim is to develop flourishing yard-sized ecosystems that support diverse wildlife while bridging our landscapes for the health and wellness of the broader environment. Fall is the ideal time to start building meadow gardens or developing existing gardens with wildlife in mind, and participants are encouraged to begin designing and creating one during this lecture and discussion course.

In addition to the five scheduled sessions, participants will have the opportunity to take part in two or three local field trips (no additional cost). These optional outings will include visits to private properties as well as a local perennial farm, offering a chance to explore topics from the course in a real-world setting.



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WRITING WORKSHOP

Nancy Marashio

Tuesdays, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

8 weeks beginning September 16

AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 12

Writing Workshop provides a challenging but supportive environment in which participants determine and pursue individual writing intentions. The goal of the workshop is to help you best say what you want to say.

Weekly writing in and out of class is the cauldron for experiencing the four elements of writer, writing process, writing product and responding. Each writer will be asked to read their piece aloud and to direct our discussion by giving us particular questions or concerns they have about their piece. Each participant will act as an interested and lively responder for the work of every writer in the class. Our comments will begin by focusing on strengths and on what is working; then we can make suggestions about what might help improve the piece. You, as the writer, always determine what is or is not best for your writing.

Participants will experience a variety of strategies, behaviors, habits and attitudes, so they can choose those that help them improve. Uncertainty and ambiguity are part of the work, but remember that we are all in this together.



MOSQUITOES: HUMANKIND'S DEADLIEST PREDATOR

Paul Etkind

Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

5 weeks beginning October 1

AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 30

Throughout the course of human history, historically significant events such as wars are looked at through examinations of significant leaders, often generals, admirals and/or influential political and thought leaders. This course will examine one of the most – perhaps *the* most – influential “actor” on human history: the mosquito. Drawing from a large documentation base that is rarely used in traditional history courses and investigations, we will examine the battle between humanity and mosquitoes for domination of the world, including how humankind and mosquitoes have influenced each other in surprising ways since hominins entered the historical record.



EXCAVATING RICHARD III

Sharon Rae Paquette

Wednesdays, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

8 weeks beginning September 17

AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 20

There is a phrase attributed to Winston Churchill that says, “History is often written by the victor.” In this course, we will attempt to excavate the true legacy (as much as possible) of the English man and king we know as Richard III, the last of the Plantagenet kings and the last king of England ever to be slain in battle.

If we were to read only Shakespeare’s play, *Richard III*, we would believe Richard to be Machiavellian; a villain who usurped the crown from his nephew and proceeded to kill this same nephew and his younger brother; an immoral, manipulative, violent and cruel human being. Is this portrayal just, however, or merely Tudor propaganda?

Join me over the next eight weeks as we sift through evidence brought to light by Shakespeare, filmmakers, novelists, archaeologists, scientists and historians who, along with the Richard III Society, have worked at excavating Richard’s true historical legacy. Be prepared to listen, watch, discuss and maybe even do a little digging of your own!



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AMERICAN SOCIETY – TODAY, YESTERDAY AND TOMORROW

Peter Gunn

Thursdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

7 weeks beginning September 18

AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 20

Let's study American society and talk about it as thoughtfully as possible. Most contemporary events both reflect a specific historical context and influence the future development of American society. This course offers a chance to consider some important dimensions of our economic, social and political culture. For example, we will look at globalization, technology and populism – and how each relates to our sense of American identity. Each week we will read a short article and use it as a basis to explore American society from our foundations to the future of current challenges.



ASHES & EMPIRES: VOLCANOES, CLIMATE & CIVILIZATION

Scott Rappeport

Thursdays, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

6 weeks beginning September 18

AIL Classroom, Lethbridge Lodge, Colby-Sawyer College

Maximum number of participants: 30

The American writer, historian and philosopher William Durant once noted, "Civilization exists by geological consent, subject to change without notice." In this course, we will learn what scientists and historians currently know about the climatic impacts of massive volcanic eruptions since the last Ice Age, and how those climatic impacts have may have dramatically altered the course of human civilization. This course is intended for individuals who are fascinated by the intersection of history, climate and geology.

Through lecture and Q & A, we will explore the scientific basis of abrupt climate alteration associated with massive volcanic eruptions, as well as how eruption type, magnitude, geographic location, season and zonal winds amplify or diminish these effects. We will also learn about major climate forcing functions and how scientists are able to determine past climatic conditions. Selected case studies of significant massive volcanic eruptions and their resulting climatic effects on human history will be discussed. For example, a massive volcanic eruption may have initiated the introduction of the Justinian Plague into Europe in 536 CE, while others in the 13th and again in the 15th centuries may have ushered in and sustained the major climate event known as the Little Ice Age.