



Five Colleges Learning In Retirement

Peer-led Life Long Learning in the Pioneer Valley

Amherst College - Smith College - Hampshire College - UMASS Amherst - Mount Holyoke College

September Newsletter

Inside this Issue: Fall potluck picnic another chance to socialize in person; Curriculum Committee will help you develop an idea into a seminar; the variety of topics to learn about in the fall semester and President Francie Borden talks about the invaluable connections made through LIR.

Announcements

- We welcome ten members who joined LIR this summer. A member of the Outreach Committee will be in touch with you (and perhaps already has) to answer any questions you may have.
- Although the LIR office remains closed until a new office manager is on board sometime in September, members can reach our interim office manager, Darcy Johnson, by email. Please use the new email — fclir@fivecolleges.edu. The old email address will no longer reach her! Darcy is away on vacation and will respond to emails after September 4.
- Note that some seminars have switched from in-person classes to Zoom sessions. Will You Walk Into My Parlor?, Two Norwegian Detective Novels, and Friendship will meet on Zoom. Friendship also has a new time. The class will meet on Mondays from 9:30 to 11:30 am.
- A few fall seminars still have openings. Because the registration forms on the website have not been working properly and because of the Office Manager transition, members should email fclir@fivecolleges.edu to sign up.
- COVID policy updates: some seminar venues, such as Smith, are updating their Covid protocols later this month. Your moderator will let you know if the protocols for your class have changed.



LIR Potluck Picnic at Look Park

Wednesday, September 21, 12 – 2 pm

Come rain or shine to the Dow Pavilion at Look Park(300 N. Main St., Florence) to meet or re-connect with fellow members before Fall seminars begin. Partners are

welcome.

At the gate, just mention that you're with the LIR group. Carpooling is encouraged.

- If your last name begins with **A-M**, bring a salad or main dish for 6-8 people that can easily be divided into portions
- If your last name begins with **N-Z**, bring a dessert or fruit that can easily be divided into portions
- Everything else will be provided for you
- Please note if your dish is gluten free and provide a list of ingredients if possible

RSVP by Wednesday, September 7

Are you coming to the Picnic? Just click on an answer below!

LOCATION

Look Park, Dow Pavilion

DATE AND TIME

09/21/22 12:00pm - 09/21/22 2:00pm US/Eastern

LIR Potluck Picnic

I'll Be There! Count me as one!

I'll Be There! Count us as two!

I Can't Make It

Moderators and Potential Moderators:

It's time to plan for Spring seminars

Do you have an idea for a seminar? Something you'd like to know more about?
An idea you'd like to share?

The Curriculum Committee would love to hear from you. You can simply send us your idea and we'll help you shape it into a proposal, or you can go to the 5CLIR website and click on "Help and Resources." There you will find a proposal form for seminars. Just fill that out and submit it.

Please let either Tom or Jake know that you have submitted a proposal and one of us will respond. If you have any questions, please let us know --- our email addresses are below. We look forward to hearing from you.

Many thanks,
Curriculum Committee Co-Chairs

Fall Topics Could Inspire Ideas for Spring Semester

Most of the hard work is done, the research is largely in place and what remains ahead of us in Five Colleges Learning in Retirement is an exciting and broad list of fall seminar offerings, ranging from interior design to an analysis of friendship.

The listing here may inspire ideas for new seminars in the spring.

The courses include George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, offered by Nancy Coiner and Helen Regan, and an exploration of two Norwegian novels by Gerald Goldman — Jo Nesbo's *The Redbreast* and Derek Miller's *American by Day*.

Also on the schedule are seminars on the 2022 Midterm Elections moderated by Jay Russell, a review of Bob Dylan's enormous collection by Kip Fonsh, an examination of Taboos and Moral Foundations by Rachel Borson and an examination of the roots of McCarthyism in the 1950s by Neil Novik and Tyll van Geel.

Ellen Kosmer and Betsy Siersma are joining in a seminar titled Will You Walk into My Parlor?, an exploration of Arts and Crafts period to the present, with an emphasis on how societal changes influence design.

All this is coming your way after two years of pandemic-induced adjustments from LIR's usual routines and offerings, making this Fall's list one of the broadest and most fascinating in some time.

Here's what's also on the schedule:

Idiomatic, moderated by Jessie Tropp, will explore how idioms that "lend such nuance to our conversation came into common use."

Indigenous Peoples Today, moderated by Margaret Russell and Miriam Whitney. This course will explore "today's activism of indigenous Americans in defending their sovereign rights and cultures."

The Golden Age of Persians led by Jim Harvey. The seminar will look at Persia's "global hub of culture, religion, science, art and technology."

Development of Early Cities with Larry Ambs and Kathy Campbell. This seminar will look at the earliest evidence about how cities drew conclusions about social structures and everyday lives of inhabitants.

Life Along The Connecticut River, led by Kay Klausewitz and Jim Harvey, describes life along the river in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Somewhere Over the Rainbow with Michael Miller and Robert Cohen. The seminar will explore the dream of flight, from the airport with heavy planes to spacecraft, and from the courageous to the foolhardy.

Short Stories to Share led by Chuck Aulino. Following the format of the PBS program, this will involve participants reading aloud their favorites.

Great Inventions in History, moderated by Jane McMurrich, will look at “inventions, however simple, that have made particular tasks easier throughout history.”

Rationalism in American Religion moderated by Linda Honan, which “will follow the history of rational religious thought in the United States from the Revolution through the 19th Century.”

Friendship, moderated by Bobbie Reitt and Joan McKelvey, “will explore the concept of friendship in the modern Western world, using eight novels as case studies.”

Finally, all three Writing to Remember classes – red, purple and blue -- will continue this fall.

David Whitney

Council Corner

Although I could not attend the August Council meeting, I have comprehensive minutes of the meeting from the secretary, Darcy Johnson, to let you know what transpired.

The search for a new OM (Office Manager) is ongoing. Additional applications were recently received. The process has been slowed due to vacations at FCI. It seems likely that there will be a new OM around the middle of September.

It was unanimously approved that the Fall Preview will be held on Zoom.

Darcy has been doing a great job filling in as temporary OM. Membership cards have been distributed. Kathy Campbell and Larry Ambs will be analyzing the software needs of our office, in preparation for the new OM. As of this writing, we have 208 paid members.

Larry Ambs will continue as liaison to Five Colleges, Inc. (FCI) to help get things streamlined. Anne Lombard has offered to continue serving as Ombudsperson. Kay Klauswitz has agreed to stay on for another year as chair of the Nominating Committee.

The Strategic Planning Committee met weekly for most of 2022. Members were Larry Ambs, Francie Borden, Karen Furst, Darcy Johnson, Jim Lee, Michael Miller, Mindi Winter, and Tyll van Geel. Surveys indicated that most members are happy with LIR, but we are an aging group (most in their 70's and 80's), many of whom joined prior to 2016. In sum, we need new members, new moderators, and more volunteers so we can grow our membership.

Council authorized an ad hoc committee to develop a recommendation for expanding the volunteering activities that would earn a registration preference (i.e., privilege) regarding enrollment in a seminar.

Council also authorized an ad hoc committee to address the suggestion that LIR change its name.

Francie Borden, LIR president, stated that the Council needs to be active in promoting LIR, asking individuals to join and letting people know more about it. Francie will continue to ask members who are willing to help support as Zoom hosts for potential members. We need leadership on the Outreach Committee. Francie commended Kay Klausewitz and Margaret Russell for their work on this committee.

And finally, Francie reminded everyone that, with the help of Zoom, we are not confined to the Pioneer Valley for membership. Talk to your friends in Crested Butte, Colorado!

Bob Cohen

Letter from the President

Dear Fellow Learners,

Connections are on my mind these days. LIR has been an ongoing source of connections for me since a stranger approached me at a public meeting saying, “you sound like someone who would enjoy LIR. Here’s a bookmark with our web address.” The rest is history.

Like many of you, my first experience with LIR was in Writing to Remember. Writing for a deadline and for an audience gave structure to my efforts to assess my years as an educator, but more importantly, provided connections with the stories of others who lived through the same events but experienced them in vastly different ways. I treasure the gifts of these shared stories as I gain new insights into my own.

Many seminars, committees, meetings, picnics and socials later have added countless connections with new friends and colleagues, with new ways of thinking, new challenges to old ideas, and new and interesting demands on time and energy. What a fabulous recipe for a rich and rewarding life - at any age!

Learning is not just for school kids or PhD candidates, nor is it over when you get a degree or diploma. Learning is what human beings do. And there are plenty of folks out there beyond our organization who would enjoy and enrich the learning experiences we share in LIR. Let us all reach out to neighbors and strangers alike to invite them to learn about LIR and to discover the riches of life-long, peer-led learning.

Francie

PS, If you are interested in joining or helping the Outreach Committee, please let me know! at francieborden@gmail.com.

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