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UCALL

**UNION COLLEGE
ACADEMY FOR
LIFELONG LEARNING**

Our UCALL mission is to provide opportunities for intellectual development, cultural stimulation and social interaction for adults through courses, excursions and special events.

SPRING 2023



TUESDAYS

The Place Beyond the Pines II: Local Historians Present Schenectady County's Past

APRIL 4, 11, 18, 25, AND MAY 2

9:30 TO 11:30 A.M. (ZOOM)

Local historians, **Denis Brennan** (Town of Niskayuna), **Bill Buell** (Schenectady County), **Beverly Clark** (Village of Scotia), **Chris Leonard** (City of Schenectady) and **James Schaefer** (Town of Rotterdam), with guest presenters **Michael Davi** and **Ellen Apperson Brown**, will again present local history as a reflection of the lives of ordinary—and extraordinary—local people. Week 1 "Fraternal and Social Organizations: Service to the Community:" The villages, towns and city in Schenectady County were more than individuals seeking personal or family success; many community organizations were created to promote civic improvements, celebrate common philosophies and organize social events. Week 2 "The Healing Arts:" Medical treatment is certainly not a modern concern only. Disease and physical ailments were constant companions of development and progress. These presentations will examine the growth of medical societies, hospitals and treatments, as well as medical providers who left a mark on Schenectady County. Week 3 "When the Frontier Moved West:" U.S. history can be understood as the serial conquest of frontiers. In truth, as the American frontier moved west of Schenectady, change altered Schenectady's life and character, creating new challenges and new energy. Week 4 "Beyond Schenectady: Influence Outside its Borders:" The second smallest county in New York State has exerted an impact beyond its county lines that is certainly worthy of recognition and celebration. Week 5 "Cast of Characters:" No town or community that has been in existence for as long as the towns of Schenectady County is without significant, influential and unique personalities. This session will identify several of those who qualify.

COORDINATOR: BOB SALTZMAN

Covert Operations and the CIA

APRIL 4, 11, 18, 25, AND MAY 2

12:30 TO 2:30 P.M. (HYBRID)

This course will explore various actions and operations engaged in by the CIA in third-world countries during the Cold War era. **Tom Lobe**, senior lecturer in Union's Political Science Department, is an expert on the CIA. Tom will present an overview of the agency; its underpinnings in clandestine wartime activities; how and why its activities are considered essential in a democratic society; and how the agency has related to the policies of various presidential administrations. **Andy Morris**, associate professor in Union's History Department, will discuss U.S. involvement in the ouster of Mossadegh in Iran; the installation of the Shah on the throne; and how that action led eventually to the establishment of the Islamic Republic and Iran's current posture toward the United States. **Elena McGrath**, assistant professor of history at Union, will discuss U.S. activities in Latin America, including the Guatemalan coup in 1954, the overthrow of Allende in Chile in 1973, and actions relating to Che Guevara in Bolivia. **Brian Peterson**, associate professor of history at Union, will explore U.S. clandestine activities in Africa. Tom Lobe will return to give an overview of CIA activities in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam era.

COORDINATOR: HARRY WILLIS

WEDNESDAYS

Modern Science for Lifelong Learners: Planetary Science, Cosmology and Quantum Mechanics

APRIL 5, 12, 19, 26, AND MAY 3

9:30 TO 11:30 A.M. (HYBRID)

Weeks 1, 2, 3: Union College Professor **George Shaw** will discuss diverse aspects of planetary science, including a display of 19th century geological illustrations, exploration of Mars and oceans under ice on the moons of Jupiter and Saturn. During week 4, retired GE scientist **Dr. Michael Adler** will review aspects of modern cosmology. How the universe was created, its size, whether it had a beginning, how it has evolved, whether it will last forever, and whether there are other universes. During week 5, retired prize-winning GE physicist **Dr. James Bray** will explain the current talk about quantum theory, including increases in R&D spending in quantum computers, quantum communications and quantum sensing. Quantum effects are often counter-intuitive and complex. Science fiction literature uses the words without a good physics basis. This talk will give a beginning picture of what's going on.

COORDINATOR: JIM COMLY



Opera Returns

APRIL 5, 12, 19, 26, AND MAY 3
12:30 TO 2:30 P.M. (HYBRID)

Josef Schmee, the K. B. Sharpe Professor Emeritus at Union College, presents operas from the mainstream of the repertoire. In week 1, "The Marriage of Figaro" is our subject. Mozart succeeded with this opera to offend the aristocracy. At fault was not his music, but the subject of servant against master. Some date Mozart's economic decline to this opera. Week 2 discusses Beethoven's only opera, "Fidelio." This opera became a multi-year project resulting in several versions. Just as in the "Fifth Symphony," the subject is liberation from tyranny. Verdi's first success was "Nabucco," the opera for week 3. Verdi's life-long concern was the freedom of Italy from foreign powers. In "Nabucco," he uses the subjugation of Israelites in Babylon to help his cause. Puccini's "Il Trittico" packages three vastly different shorter operas into one evening. In week 4, we cover "Il Tabarro" (The Coat), the darkest of the three. This opera matches the spirit of the times, in which conflicts of individual relationships are depicted with mind-stirring modern harmonies. Our last will be "Salome," the opera that put Richard Strauss on the operatic map. Closely based on a stirring play by Oscar Wilde, it shows the calamitous progression of the psyche of a youthful princess. Each one of these operas reflects concerns of its time of creation. Each one holds nuggets of truth for our time.

COORDINATOR: JIM COMLY

THURSDAYS

Madness and the Mad in Russian Literature

APRIL 6, 13, 20, 27, AND MAY 4
9:30 TO 11:30 A.M. (IN-PERSON)

What is madness? What is the relationship between madness and genius? Is madness a disease of the mind, soul or body? Where is the connection between imagination and insanity? What does it mean to be "sane" and "normal?" In this seminar-style course, Union College's **Kristin Bidoshi** and **Anastasia Pease** will explore interpretations and representations of madness in the context of nineteenth and twentieth century Russian culture and history, through an analysis of literary and artistic works. Various literary and historical madmen and women, and their problems of passion, desire, obsession, pain and torment, will be discussed. The course will be conducted as a combination of lectures and class discussions. Participants should read and be prepared to discuss Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*, and a selection of short works by Pushkin, Gogol, Dostoyevsky, Garshin, Chekhov and Nabokov. In order to allow for an active discussion, registration will be limited to 25 UCALL members.

COORDINATOR: LINDA DOYLE

The Other America: Latin America

APRIL 6, 13, 20, 27, AND MAY 4
12:30 TO 2:30 P.M. (HYBRID)

Five distinguished professors will talk to us about historical, socioeconomic and cultural aspects of Latin America, the "Other America." This large area is home to more than 650 million people, descendants of original Amerindians, African slaves and European immigrants. Professor **Walt Little** will present different Mayan textiles and discuss the role they play today in political debates related to identity and economy. Professor **Kenneth Aslakson** will bring to life the first Latin American Declaration of Independence, that of Haiti in 1791, the Slave Revolt. Brazilian music reflects influences of European, African and Amerindian musical expressions. Professor **Tim Olsen** will take us on a trip through the unique Brazilian musical world. Professor **Lorraine Morales Cox** will help us to understand and appreciate visual arts from the period, post-independence (c. 1800) through post-revolution (c. 1950). Professor **William Garcia** will discuss main trends in film production in Latin America in the new millennium, an industry that generates \$3 billion a year in the box office. He will introduce us to LA cinema, highlighting aspects of film history, aesthetics, issues of representation and the challenges of producing movies that can reach global audiences.

COORDINATOR: WILLY LUND

Established in 1988, Union College Academy for Lifelong Learning (UCALL) is a welcoming and inclusive membership organization for adults who enjoy learning. UCALL offers two semesters of courses (fall and spring), plus a four-week winter session. Our courses cover a wide range of topics and are presented by volunteers from the UCALL membership, Union faculty and community leaders. All courses are non-credit with no exams or pre-requisites.

Pop-up lectures and special events are offered throughout the year.

UCALL is open to all who want to learn with their peers, regardless of formal education. Benefits of UCALL membership include: participation in UCALL courses and special events; engage in volunteer opportunities; e-newsletter subscription; tuition waiver to audit one Union College undergraduate course (based on availability); borrowing privileges at Schaffer Library; and access to Union events including films, exhibits, concerts and lectures.

Spring 2023

Spring courses will be offered in several formats: in-person only, Zoom only, and hybrid (a combination of in-person and Zoom). Most Zoom sessions will be recorded for later viewing. Due to unforeseen facilities constraints this term, hybrid courses may be switched to Zoom delivery only.

In-person classes will take place on the Union College campus. For the latest policies regarding Covid-19, please visit www.union.edu/where-you-are/covid-19-updates.

MEMBERSHIP FEES AND TUITION:

- > Annual membership fee (September–August) is \$75 per person.
- > Tuition is \$45 per course.

Financial assistance is available for membership and course fees. Please contact UCALL Director Valerie D'Amario at (518) 388-6675. All requests are confidential.

Registration for spring term courses opens at 9 a.m. on Feb. 28. Register and pay for membership and courses online: www.union.edu/ucall. For more information, or to register over the phone, please call (518) 388-6072.

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Debbie Catharine, *Administrative Assistant*

OFFICE HOURS
Monday-Thursday
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

UCALL Pop-Up Lectures and Special Events will be announced in upcoming e-newsletters.