



LIRA NEWSLETTER

LEARNING IN RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION
Office of Community and Cultural Affairs – UMass Lowell
Member of Road Scholar Institute Network
Tel.: (978) 934-3135 Web: uml.edu/community/LIRA



December 2020

Vol. 27 No. 4

Zoom into the Holidays!

LIRA's Annual Holiday Party and Town Meeting



Wednesday, December 9, 2020

10 a.m. to Noon

On ZOOM: From the comfort of
your own home

Five Scholarships awarded

Bring your own snacks and enjoy
meeting with friends!



From the President

I hope this newsletter finds you healthy and happy. 2020 has turned out to be quite the year and I, for one, do not want to have to live through another one quite like it.

Our membership is up to 166 this year with 34 new members! I'd like to express my appreciation to our Publicity and Membership Chairpersons for a job well done. I'd also like to thank members who recruited their friends and neighbors to join LIRA. And to all our new LIRA members, Welcome!

Congratulations to Curriculum chairperson Bob Hanlon and the members of the Curriculum committee for assembling an informative and thoroughly enjoyable line up of classes for the Fall. I'd also like to thank our Zoom Hosts, Class Coordinators and Presenters for all their contributions during the semester. These members exemplify the importance of our volunteers who, through their generosity, keep LIRA going.

As you know, LIRA is always looking for volunteers to work on our various committees, to coordinate classes, to present, and a whole host of other activities we need to keep us going. I believe everyone has an interesting story or avocation that LIRA members would like to hear about. Feel free to contact any of our committee chairs or anyone on the executive council for more information. The list of standing committees and members is in the Fall newsletter. If everybody does a little bit, it will help keep LIRA strong and viable.

I am looking forward to seeing you (well, at least virtually!) at the Holiday Party and during the Winter Intersession. Please see the article about the Holiday Party in this Newsletter.

I think we have an interesting program lined up for the Winter Intersession. As always, Winter and Summer Intersessions are open to everyone. We encourage you to introduce your friends and family to experience a LIRA session or two in the hopes they will consider joining LIRA. I will send out a list of the Winter Intersession Zoom meetings with Meeting ID's, passcodes, and links to all the sessions which you can share with the people you'd like to invite.

*Peter Sebelius
Winter 2021*

LIRA SCHOLARSHIPS

The Scholarship Committee is indebted to LIRA members for their very generous donations to the 2020/21 Scholarship Fund. We are reviewing applications and will present five \$1500 scholarships at the holiday party in December.

A big thank you to Patty Coffey at University Relations who gave us tremendous support and help while working under difficult and remote conditions and to the UML Financial Aid Office for their continued help. We also want to recognize Peter Sebelius, who helped us with the logistics of scholarships during Covid. Last but not least, thank you to the Scholarship Committee members—Margie Berenson, Alan Kent, John Mamalis, Alan McKersie and Barbara Murch, for giving their time, expertise and help in making this a successful year.

Co-Chairs: Dee Sferinno, Janet Redman

Holiday Party Details

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this year's Holiday Party will be virtual on **Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** Because we are holding a virtual meeting, we will need to modify some of our holiday traditions.

We will not be having a raffle this year. Instead, we invite LIRA members to send a cash donation to the LIRA Scholarship Fund. To date, donations have been outstanding, eclipsing levels raised in previous years, even after accounting for the proceeds of the raffle. Great job, LIRA! If you have not yet contributed and would like to, please send your donation to our Treasurer, Steve Buccieri at 63 Abbot St, Andover, MA, 01810.

Since we are unable to collect gifts of mittens, hats, and books for Community Teamwork this year, LIRA members are requested to send cash donations. Please see Kathy Forestry's note in this Newsletter.

We will award five scholarships virtually this year, and we will invite the student recipients to address the meeting via zoom.

Bob Hanlon, curriculum committee chairperson, will introduce the Winter Intersession classes.

Additionally, we have a couple of surprise virtual presentations scheduled for the meeting.

We will email an invitation to the Holiday Party Zoom meeting which will have the meeting ID, the passcode and a link to the party. Please plan on attending.

Peter Sebelius

Community Teamwork Holiday Donation

Lira has been collecting hats and books at our holiday parties to donate to Community Teamwork for many years. Since this is not possible this year and Lira wants to keep our connection with this wonderful organization, I have talked to Cynthia Perrone and we have decided on a solution. Lira members can send a check of any amount which will support their programs for seniors, children, and families. Please make checks out to Community Teamwork and mail to: **Penny Judd, 155 Merrimack Street, Lowell, Ma.01852.** In the memo line, write volunteer center and indicate you are a Lira member. As you can imagine, the need to help seniors, families, etc. is even greater than ever during this pandemic. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Kathy Forstey at k3and2@netscape.net.

Kathy Forstey

Overview of Tumultuous Civil Rights History

Distinguished University Professor Robert Farrant of UMass Lowell's History Department once again treated LIRA members to an insightful review of recent U.S. history, specifically examining the last century of the Civil Rights Movement. This four-week course started with topics from the early 20th century: the Tulsa Massacre of 1921 and the rise of the KKK. We then looked at organizations of resistance, such as the N.A.A.C.P. and the Urban League, and were introduced to important leadership figures. The course then moved to the 1930s and 1940s to look at how African Americans fared in the Great Depression and the New Deal. By the 1950s and 1960s, the Supreme Court decided on *Brown vs. the Board of Education* and passed legislation such as the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts. This was also the time of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s leadership in the Civil Rights Movement. LIRA members discussed not only the highlights, such as his "I Have a Dream Speech," but also his assassination, which we all remembered so well.

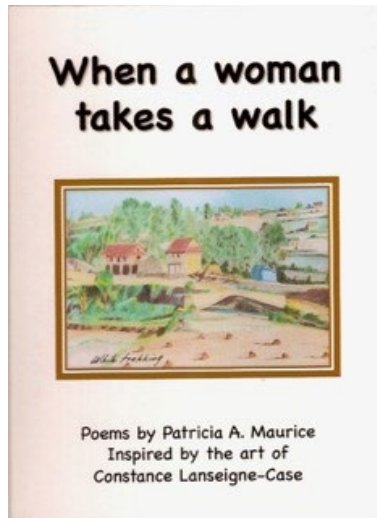
The Civil Rights Movement has not ended, but it has taken many forms with new leadership. LIRA members had many questions and comments about events of the last couple of years—particularly this year.

Coordinator Susan Lemire



LIRA on Facebook

Did you know that LIRA is on Facebook? Would you like to see some of the photos/videos from our classes? Although we haven't been together physically during the past 8 months, there are many screenshots of our virtual meetings posted there! Go to Facebook and search for LIRAatUML and while you're there, be sure to click on "Like" (thumbs up icon) at the top left of the page!



Lira Member Illustrates a Book of Poetry

Connie Lanseigne-Case, member of LIRA, a past president and first longtime chairperson of the Arts and Music Committee, began to do art in 1980 using a variety of mediums. Touring and studying abroad became her passion in 1954. Particularly memorable was teaching for Crossroad Africa, where in Gabon she met Albert Schweitzer. So many photos taken on journeys around the world are subjects in her art.

During this summer, the daughter of her friend and classmate from Lowell State Teachers College and she created "When a woman takes a walk" published by Lulu. Patricia Maurice's poetry accurately states a goal of their collaboration:

"Two women world travelers separated by nearly three decades and half a continent come together through art and poetry."

Connie Lanseigne-Case

Class Cancellations

For LIRA cancellations or messages, everyone who has email will be notified. We have a phone squad to contact those people who don't use email. When you register and pay your membership dues, look for the box to check if you need a phone call. Feel free to call me with any questions.

Judy Miller
978-256-8466



Laughing on the Outside

Our favorite psychiatrist, Dr. Arnie Kerzner, returned this fall to talk about laughter, comedians and the often tragic personal stories many successful comedians have experienced. Much like "Rouault's Clowns", they endured an inner awareness of the sadness of their existence—all the while making others laugh.

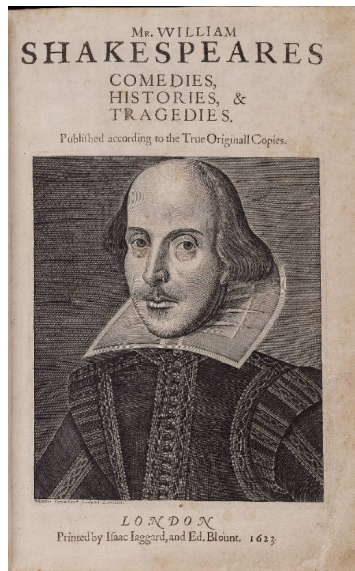
Arnie also introduced the science of Gelotology, which is the study of laughter and its beneficial effects on the body. He reinforced this scientific analysis of laughter as he showed us lots of cartoons and jokes to help us use humor to deal with our advancing age.

All in all, Arnie's class was educational and entertaining.

The Faces of the American Revolution: Portraits by John Singleton Copley

Art Historian, Mary Woodward, delivered a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the life and work of Boston's own John Singleton Copley. We learned about Copley's life and times as well as his evolution into the iconic artist we know and love today. Interspersed throughout the presentation were beautiful images of Copley's best-known works, including the iconic portraits of Paul Revere and Henry Pelham and the magnificent Watson and the Shark. We are fortunate that we can easily enjoy many of Copley's paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

Diane Baker



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How to Read and Understand Shakespeare

This past fall LIRA lifelong learners spent a semester investigating the greatest English playwright in history. We watched sixteen lectures by *The Great Courses* lecturer, Marc C. Conner. Professor Connor is from Washington and Lee University and is now Chancellor at Skidmore. He made Shakespeare come alive for each of us. We listened to his presentations on eight of Shakespeare's comedies, tragedies, and history plays.

Included were *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Macbeth* and *The Merchant of Venice*. Our facilitators Bev and Kim Rudeen also included clips from movies and theater performances to enhance the lectures. Our class was small, but we had plenty of great discussions on each play.

We are looking forward to finishing this *Great Courses Lecture* series next spring. We will learn about *Hamlet*, *Measure for Measure* and *The Tempest*. Please join us for the spring semester of "How to Read and Understand Shakespeare".

Beverly Rudeen

Norman Rockwell: Inclusion, Exclusion and Evolving Views on Race

This Fall, we were pleased to welcome Jane Oneail, Founder and President of Culturally Curious. Jane led an informative and timely discussion about Norman Rockwell's long career and how his views on inclusion and exclusion in America were reflected in his work. We learned that Rockwell's illustrations on the subject of race were restricted during his long association with the *Saturday Evening Post*, but once his career became established independently, he felt he had more freedom to express his views. His famous painting of little Ruby Bridges, "The Problem We All Live With", and the haunting "Murder in Mississippi" were just two examples we discussed. Jane accompanied her talk with images of Rockwell's works, many of which are displayed at the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge.

Diane Baker

Frank Talty Guides Us Through Election Process

Prof. Frank Talty again guided us through the election process, with help from Prof. Joshua Dick, of UMass Lowell, the Director of its Center for Public Opinion and Prof. Robert Alexander of Ohio Northern, expert on the Electoral College. Professor Talty came to us over Zoom from Florida, which was another potential swing state.

Over the four sessions, we learned about the constitutional basis for our elections. We looked at polling, comparing 2016 to 2020. Prof. Dick noted the differences he thought there were between 2016 polling and 2020. We learned about the different polling types and how they were rated and examined both Presidential polls and those for Senate.

Prof. Alexander took us through the procedures for electing Electors to the Electoral College as well as the schedule leading up to the College's vote on Dec. 14.

Along the way, there were many questions given the unusualness of the year, from Covid to new voting procedures to the President's claims of fraud.

The last class was on the Thursday following the general election, and the result was still not declared. Frank agreed to do one more class, to be held on Nov. 19. Although the AP has now called the race for Biden/Harris, President Trump has yet to concede as of the time of this writing. Thus, we look forward to more insights from Prof. Talty in this unusual election year.

Sally Coulter

Directory Changes

A member directory was emailed to all members in October. Please correct the following:

Joan and Bill (William) Bernstein's phone number
Cell: 603-930-8268 Home: 978-710-5250

If you didn't receive a directory or your information has changed, please email Jeri Durant: jeridurant@gmail.com



Cybersecurity

This fall, LIRA members learned about Cybersecurity and personal safety on the Internet. Starting with a description of the Stuxnet virus, its delivery method and the devastating effect it had on the Iranian centrifuges it targeted, we continued with an overview of computer viruses and malware and how they infect our systems. We learned about the architecture of the Internet and how it was never really designed to be safe—only fast and reliable. In the final session, we learned how to protect ourselves from most hacking attacks by simply making it a little more difficult to break into our networks and systems than our less diligent neighbors—so that the bad actors just move on to easier targets.

Hacking, we learned, is a continuously evolving activity which requires constant vigilance and upgrades to our protection systems.

Peter Sebelius

Member Spotlight

We would like to re-instate the "Member Spotlight" feature of the newsletter and need your help! Sheila Pariseau has graciously agreed to write the column, and we are looking for a few more people to be part of a "spotlight committee." This might involve one or two virtual meetings during the next few months to determine the exact purpose of this column and how we should select people. If you are interested in being part of this committee, please email me: beckybronson241@gmail.com.

Becky Bronson

Coming Soon to a Theater near You

The LIRA film discussion group for the Intersession!

Have you missed going to the movies? The LIRA Film Discussion Group is the answer. The film discussion group meets once a month on selected Fridays. The series will continue focusing on topics that celebrate social diversity which is related to the activities of the new LIRA Diversity Group. You will learn about cultures, ethnicities, and minorities through film discussion

For the intersession starting in January, we have scheduled two movies. We will publish where to find these movies from the library or streaming services and their trailers to have you screen them before discussion.

Do you have a favorite film about diversity that you would enjoy leading and discussing with some great friends? Let me hear from you as Marie-Anne and I are planning for the Spring. To be a leader is easy and we are here to help. Come have some fun with us!

Carol Valcik valcikca@gmail.com

Marie-Anne Fernando ma.dewarren@comcast.net



The next newsletter will be out on March 1, 2021; the deadline for news items is **February 15, 2021**. Please remember that coordinators are now responsible for getting someone to write an article about their program if you want something to appear in the newsletter. Articles may be submitted at any time before the deadline. Any format is acceptable, but if you have Microsoft Word and can use Verdana Font, size 10, that is preferred. Please email articles to: becky.bronson@penfield.fm

Becky Bronson

Newsletters on Website

The newsletter comes out four times a year on the first day of the following months – March, May, September and December. Everyone can read the newsletter online if you have access to a web browser. Those members that do not have email will have a hard copy sent to them automatically. At the time of this writing, the print services at the university are closed so those members that requested a hard copy will not be receiving one.

The on-line newsletter is just like the printed one only better - it's in color! This policy will help us save substantial printing and mailing costs to the university as well as a few trees.

The website for the newsletter is:

www.uml.edu/community/LIRA/newsletters/

Member News

Simone Allard was recently hospitalized and is now recovering at home. We wish her a speedy recovery. If you would like to send her words of encouragement, her address is 55 Kent Lane, Nashua, NH 03062.

Jeri Durant

Simone was responsible for the “Member News” portion of this newsletter and will likely not be able to continue in that role. We are currently looking for a LIRA member to take that on. This is an important way for LIRA members to stay connected! If you have been a LIRA member for a while and this is something you would be willing to do, please email me:

beckybronson241@gmail.com

Becky Bronson



Edith Nourse Rogers

In a three-week mini program, Dr. Patricia Fontaine explored the life of Representative Edith Nourse Rogers from Lowell, Massachusetts. Congresswoman Rogers had been a volunteer with the American Red Cross from 1917 to 1922, and she saw first-hand how badly the returning soldiers from World War I were treated by the Federal Government. She was determined that would not happen after World War II and championed the GI Bill of rights through Congress. She also was a thorn in FDR's administration. She graduated from Rogers Hall, on Rogers Street, that is now a senior citizen home. Her name according to some was Edith "Nurse" Rogers because of all the help she gave to GI's.

Along the way, Dr. Fontaine also taught us that "Uncle Sam" was a REAL person from Mason, New Hampshire.

Thank you, Dr. Fontaine, for another wonderful presentation to LIRA. And, yes, when your book is published, we will be buying it!

Nancy Pitkin

Gone Virtual: Historic New England in the 21st Century

Melinda Huff, Operations Manager of the Historic New England Museum, took LIRA members on a virtual tour through some of the 37 properties maintained by the museum. She introduced LIRA members to properties in five New England states, walking us through lavish rooms, beautiful gardens, unique structures and verdant meadows. We learned about the history of each property as well as distinctive architectural features and preservation efforts. Melinda also talked about the enormous impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the museum industry and on Historic New England properties in particular. She discussed several interesting, out-of-the box ideas that have been implemented to raise revenue and ensure that guests can enjoy the properties safely. A few of the properties are close by and could be potential LIRA field trips once the pandemic is finally in our rear window!

Diane Baker

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???? Member News

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(Looking to fill this position...)

LEARNING IN RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION
University of Massachusetts Lowell
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Winter Intersession 2021

LIRA's 2021 Winter Intersession, given between semesters, offers retirees and those semi-retired a sample of LIRA's almost year-round program and friendly community. All Winter Intersession programs are open to the General Public.

Intersession programs will run from 10:00 a.m. to noon and will be presented on Zoom.

JAN. 6: My Life and Art: Angela Ales



We welcome artist Angela Ales whose artistic process has been both the means of searching for spiritual and philosophical meaning in her life, as well as the act of recording this search. Throughout this journey, recurring symbols and icons have solidified into her personal language. Most recently, her sociopolitical experiences as a Latin American immigrant and female artist have come to the forefront of her inner dialogue and coalesced as a central theme of her artistic voice. This search has come together through introspection and allowing for the subconscious to speak. Automatism has been crucial and has been the vehicle for this exploration.

Coordinator: Lisa Hertel*

JAN. 13: New England Witches Before Salem: Bridget Marshall

Bridget Marshall will discuss her research on Massachusetts witchcraft trials before Salem, focusing on the cases of Mary Parsons of Northampton in 1656 and 1674 and Mary Webster of Hadley in 1683. Both cases are notable for the ways they defy many of our assumptions about who was accused of witchcraft and how such trials proceeded, ideas often based on popular knowledge of the events of the Salem Witch Hysteria in 1692. Come hear about the woman they called "Half-Hanged Mary"!

Bridget is an Associate Professor in the Department of English

Coordinator: Susan Lemire*

JAN. 20: 125 Years of Innovation and Education at UMass Lowell: Marie Frank

In celebration of the 125th anniversary of the University, this talk will highlight some well-known—and not so well-known—people and events that shaped the institution's rich history.

Coordinator: Suzanne Gamache*

JAN. 27: The Role of Combustion in a Green Future: Noah Van Dam



Combustion of legacy fossil fuel energy sources has been, and is still, a leading source of global energy for both power generation and transportation. It is also one of the leading sources of airborne pollutants such as oxides of nitrogen, which can create smog and acid rain, particulates, which can have negative effects on human pulmonary health, and carbon dioxide and methane, both of which are major factors in climate change. More and more individuals, businesses, and governments are moving towards cleaner and greener forms of energy. However, in the future we will no longer be able to rely on a single energy source for all our energy and transportation needs. We will learn about how combustion of renewable, carbon neutral fuels, might fit into the future energy picture, and current research being done to make that a reality.

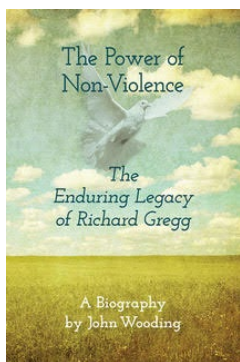
Coordinator: Nancy Pitkin*

FEB. 3: Presidential Politics in the Year 2020: Jonathan Lemire

Jonathan Lemire, White House reporter for The Associated Press and MSNBC political analyst, will talk about the experience of covering the presidency of Donald Trump, the 2020 campaign, and the challenges faced by the incoming administration of President-elect Joe Biden. Jonathan covered the day-to-day drama of Trump's 2016 campaign, his norm-shattering presidency, his impeachment and the 2020 campaign reshaped by the coronavirus pandemic. Having traveled internationally and domestically with President Trump, Jonathan spent Election Night—and the days that followed—in the AP's Washington bureau as the votes were tabulated and the race called. He is now covering the presidential transition and will report on the Biden administration. Additionally, he is a regular on such MSNBC programs like "Morning Joe," "Deadline: White House with Nicolle Wallace" and "The 11th Hour with Brian Williams."

Coordinator: Susan Lemire*

FEB. 10: Nonviolent Resistance: Gandhi, King and the Story of Richard Gregg: John Wooding



Join UMass Lowell Professor Emeritus John Wooding as he talks about his new book "*The Power of Non-Violence—The Enduring Legacy of Richard Gregg*". Richard Gregg was a twentieth century pacifist and social philosopher. His work on voluntary simplicity and the value of living in harmony with nature was one of the first attempts to integrate sustainability and peaceful living. He was among the first Americans to study with Gandhi in India and later wrote the book "The Power of Non-Violence" which influenced leaders of America's civil rights movement. Members are encouraged but not required to read the book prior to this talk. It can be purchased at <https://www.loompress.com/store/the-power-of-non-violence>.

Coordinator: Suzanne Gamache*

FEB. 17: Atlanta's 'Great Decisions' in Civil Rights: Lynn Tyndall*

Atlanta, Georgia has a unique place in American Civil Rights history. From the 1950s when Jim Crow laws prevailed, through the 1960s when Martin King, Jr. called Atlanta home, and into the 70s when public

schools finally became integrated, Atlanta's solution to strife was growth. Then, as many of the core Civil Rights leaders (John Lewis, Julian Bond, Andrew Young and others) claimed the city's political power in the 1970s, the Modern Conservative movement sprouted in the suburbs with the election of congressional representative Newt Gingrich in 1979.

A native Atlantan, Lynn will focus on some defining leadership moments that carried the city through the chaos into acceptance and opportunity for some of our best and brightest.

Facilitator: Bruce Magnuson*

FEB. 24: River Hawk Scholars Academy: Mathew Hurwitz

The River Hawk Scholars Academy promotes academic success and fosters active campus engagement for full time, first-year UMass Lowell students who identify as first-generation college students. The academy offers students early move in and a special orientation that introduces students to campus resources as well as ongoing events and programming. Currently, the academy serves over 300 first-year students across all six colleges. It has a mentoring program that connects students one-on-one with faculty, staff members, and adults in the workforce.

Join River Hawk Scholars Academy director, Professor Matthew Hurwitz, and Provost Julie Nash as they describe the Academy, and meet students who will describe how the Academy has made a difference in their lives.

Facilitator: Peter Sebelius*

Book Discussion Group

Coordinator: Sheila Pariseau*

Two Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Jan. 20, Feb. 17

Jan. 20, 2021: *Black Wave: Saudi Arabia, Iran and the forty-year rivalry that unraveled culture, religion and collective memory in the Middle East* by Kim Ghattas

Discussion Leader: Lynn Tyndall*

Feb. 17, 2021: *On the Plain of Snakes: a Mexican Journey* by Paul Theroux

Discussion Leader: Steve Buccieri*

Film Discussion Group

Coordinator: Carol Valcik*

Two Fridays, 10 a.m. to noon: Jan. 15, Feb. 19

The following films can be checked out from the library or streamed for viewing prior to the discussions:

Jan. 15, 2021: *Green Book*

Discussion Leader: Jim Rutter*

Feb. 19, 2021: *Finding Forrester*

Discussion Leader: Marie Gleason-Tada*

*Indicates LIRA member

LIRA's Winter 2021 Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
January 4	January 5	January 6 10 am to Noon My Life and Art Angela Ales	January 7	January 8
January 11	January 12	January 13 10 am to Noon New England Witches Before Salem Assoc. Prof. Bridget Marshall	January 14	January 15 10 am to Noon Film Discussion <i>Green Book</i>
January 18	January 19	January 20 10 am - Noon 125 Years of Innovation and Education at UMass Lowell Marie Frank Book Discussion 1 to 3 pm Black Wave: Saudi Arabia... <i>Kim Ghattas</i>	January 21	January 22
January 25	January 26	January 27 10 am to Noon The Role of Combustion in the Green Future Noah Van Dam	January 28	January 29

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
February 1	February 2	February 3 Presidential Politics in the Year 2020 10 am to Noon Jonathan Lemire	February 4	February 5
February 8	February 9	February 10 10 am to Noon Nonviolent Resistance: Gandhi, King and the Story of Richard Gregg Prof. Emeritus John Wooding	February 11	February 12
February 15	February 16	February 17 10 am to Noon Atlanta's 'Great Decisions' in Civil Rights Lynn Tyndall Book Discussion 1 to 3 pm On the Plain of Snakes... <i>Paul Theroux</i>	February 18	February 19 10 am to Noon Film Discussion <i>Finding Forrester</i>
February 22	February 23	February 24 River Hawk Scholars Academy Prof. Matthew Hurwitz & Provost Julie Nash	February 25	February 26
		MARCH		
March 1	March 2	March 3 10 am to Noon Town Meeting	March 4	March 5

