



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



September 2025

Vol. 32 No 3

LIRA Fall Convocation

Hear about the fall Schedule

Sign up for classes

**Where: On Zoom OR in person at
Coburn Hall, Room 255!**

*Parking available in the Wilder St. staff
lot, diagonally across Broadway*

When: Wednesday, Sept. 10

Speaker: Timofey Fayzullin, UML PhD student

Time: 10 a.m. - noon



From the President

Welcome to the Fall 2025 edition of the LIRA newsletter! I would like to take this opportunity to welcome each of you to the start of a new year at LIRA and to introduce myself as LIRA's new president. Whether a returning member or a member new to LIRA, I hope you will be able to join us in-person or via Zoom for the annual Convocation on **Wednesday, September 10 from 10:00 a.m.–noon** in **Coburn Hall Room 255** on the South Campus. Parking is available at the **Wilder Street Staff Parking Lot**, adjacent to Coburn Hall.

Convocation is a wonderful time to catch up with summer news, greet new LIRA members and learn about the exciting learning opportunities LIRA has planned for the fall semester. Our guest speaker will be Timofey Fayzullin, a PhD student at the Rich Miner School of Computer and Information Sciences at UMass Lowell. Timofey will speak about his area of research in the use of assistive robotics for older adults. We will also hear from LIRA's Curriculum Committee Co-chairs Jim Rutter and Simon Curry about the line-up of courses for the Fall Semester. As usual, the Curriculum Committee has developed a wonderful series of learning experiences.

Convocation is also the time to address some practical matters. UMass **Lowell Parking Hangtags** (valid September through June 30, 2026) will be available for purchase. Bring a check (\$90), car plate#, model, year, and color. Please refer to the details on parking in the newsletter. During the break, preliminary **sign-up sheets** for fall courses, along with sign-up sheets for "Class Snacks," will be available. **"Great Decisions" Foreign Policy Books** (2025) will also be available for purchase (\$25.00). Members are encouraged to meet with **LIRA Committee Chairs** to learn about ways to support LIRA's work. Strong organizations depend on active participation in and support in order to work.

I look forward to my new role as LIRA's president and am thankful for the guidance and mentoring that outgoing president Peter Sebelius has provided me over the summer. LIRA is a vibrant learning community that seeks to foster curiosity and engage its members through active learning, thoughtful discussions, and social interaction. My wife, Judy, and I have been members of LIRA since 2020, and LIRA has enriched our lives with new learning experiences, new friends, and the opportunity to be part of a wonderful community.

I hope you enjoy the fall newsletter and look forward to seeing you at the Fall Convocation on September 10 and at fall classes. To borrow travel-writer Rick Steves' advice of "Keep on Traveling," I say "Keep on Learning" with LIRA.

Best regards,

David Troughton

LIRA Convocation –

**September 10, 2025
10:00 AM – Noon**

**Coburn Hall, UMass Lowell South Campus
Parking at Wilder Street Staff Parking Lot**



Summer Fun!

Manchester Cedar Swamp Walk

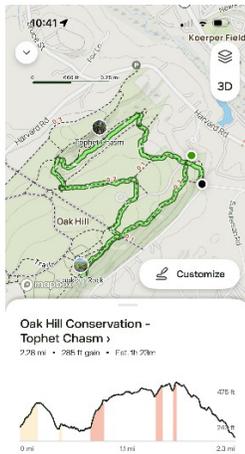


Summer Fun Continued!

Museum of Fine Arts



Geology Hike in Littleton's Tophet Chasm



On July 16, fifteen intrepid LIRA members and two guests braved the heat and humidity to be led by Bill Vales on a geology hike on Littleton's Oak Hill and Tophet Chasm. Bill described the history of stage coach paths as well as the geology of the many rocks along the way and the origin of Tophet Chasm. The area was created by both geological changes and glacial effects from several hundred million years ago to when the last glacier melted 11,000 years ago. We departed the parking lot about 10 am with stops at Tophet Chasm and interesting rock structures, arriving at Lookout Rock at 11:30. The view to the southeast was excellent, but the heat and haze prevented visibility all the way to Boston.

After the walk, many of the group went to Kimball Farms for lunch and ice cream.

Bill Vales will be making a presentation to LIRA on October 15 on glaciation and deglaciation, both in the Merrimack Valley area and around the world.

Some of the pictures:



Bill Vales explains the origins of Tophet Chasm to Marc Sheponick, Laura Boerman and Lise Zapatka



Bill Vales (r) explains the geology of Lookout Rock as Mark Sheponick, Debbie Sebelius and Lise Zapatka look toward Boston



(group picture) L-R

David Penfield, Debbie Sebelius, Joe Nelson, Celeste Nelson, Stan Powers, new member Rose O'Donnell, guests Maddie and Lily Dunn, Lise Zapatka, Bob Slezak, Laura Boerman, Judy Troughton, David Troughton, Mac Sheponick, Jan Powers, guide Bill Vales, Peter Sebelius. Missing photographer Bob Stevens



Lunch at Pickity Place

Twenty-one LIRA members made the scenic and winding trip to secluded Pickity Place in Mason, NH, for a luncheon date on Wednesday, July 23. The weather was perfect for visiting the greenhouse and gift shops, and many of us took advantage of the sunshine to take some pictures of the gorgeous flower and herb gardens before our meal. Everyone enjoyed strolling along the paths, identifying familiar plants, guessing at others. Seated at tables for 4 to 8, our group was served a refreshing chilled melon and basil soup, followed by a red, white, and blue potato salad. Guests had their choice of beef chimichurri with Spanish rice or three-cheese garden vegetable arancini as the main course, followed by an indulgent tres leches cake with fresh berries. Herbal and fruit teas and lemonades accompanied our meals. After more time spent on the lovely grounds of the cottage that served as the inspiration for Elizabeth Orton Jones' illustrations of the Little Golden Books 1948 version of Little Red Riding Hood, our group dispersed with smiles and shared memories.

Suzanne Gamache (photos by Laura Boerman*)*



LIRA Members at Work (2025-2026)

Executive Council

Officers

President, David Troughton
Vice President, Peter Sebelius
Treasurer, Alan Friedman
Secretary, Carolyn Walsh

Members-at-Large

Kirk Frazee
Margy Roeck

Standing Committee Chairs*

LIRA Past President

Peter Sebelius

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Simon Curry*
Alan Friedman
Chris Geggis
Lisa Hertel
Susan Lemire
Nancy Pitkin
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Peter Sebelius
Bob Stevens
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Laura Boerman*

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Stan Powers*

Hospitality Committee

Beverly Rudeen*
Debbie Sebelius
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Laura Boerman, Member News

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Marie-Anne Fernando
Kathy Cryan-Hicks
Stan Powers
David Troughton

LIRA Representative, UML Age-Friendly University, and Lowell Learning Cities

Nancy Pitkin*

LIRA Support Teams

UMass Lowell Website

Peter Sebelius

LIRA Facebook Chat Group

Becky Bronson
Margy Roeck

Holiday Party Auction Committee

Sheila Pariseau

Tech Team/Zoom Hosts

Steve Cerand
Marie-Anne Fernando
Lisa Hertel
Peter Sebelius
Bob Stevens

David Troughton

Book Discussion

Sheila Pariseau

Film Discussion

Marie-Anne Fernando

Great Decisions Program

Neal Berenson
Steve Cerand

* Indicates Standing Committee Chairs

In Memory

Joyce Cerand, the wife of LIRA member Steve Cerand passed away unexpectedly on May 17, 2025. Donations in Joyce's memory may be made to the Lowell Humane Society (951 Broadway, Lowell, MA 01854).

<https://obits.mckennaouellette.com/joyce-cerand>

LIRA member Shirley Jane Mitchell passed away on May 8, 2025. Memorial donations may be made in her memory to Carlisle Congregational Church, PO Box 191, Carlisle, MA 01741, attn: Financial Secretary, or online at www.carlislecongregational.org/donations.

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/shirley-mitchell-obituary?id=58440216>

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LIRA Fall Semester Course Descriptions

Most programs will be available via Zoom, other than those listed as In Person Only. For programs listed as Hybrid, the presenter will be in person in room 106 of the University Suites building at UMass Lowell, and the program will also be available via Zoom. The presenter will be remote for all programs labeled Zoom only. Please check your email for the weekly program announcement, and for any last-minute changes or additions.

*** denotes LIRA member.**

"Masterworks of American Art"

Mondays 9/15 – 10/6 10 a.m. – noon (Hybrid)

Monday 10/20 1-3 p.m. (Hybrid)

Continuing this Fall we will complete the video course "Masterpieces of American Art". Some of the highlights for the fall are works by artists from the Hudson River School. We will also be introduced to ExPat painters such as James McNeill Whistler and Mary Cassatt. Coming into the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century we will learn about Thomas Eakins and the later works of Winslow Homer. Along this timeline, we will be introduced to many lesser-known painters of the period.

You don't need to have attended the first session to enjoy this second part of the course.

*Facilitator: Bev Rudeen**

20th Century History of the KKK

Monday 9/22 1-3 p.m. (Hybrid)

Presenter: UML Professor Bob Farrant

The Ku Klux Klan reemerged across the United States in the early 20th century. Fueled by the Great Migration of Black people and high levels of Catholic and Jewish immigration from Northern Europe and Eastern Europe, the Klan grew dramatically in numbers in the Midwest. They also had strongholds in New England states, including Maine and Vermont. At its height in the 1920s, the Klan had a staggering six million members nationwide, held a well-publicized march through the streets of Washington, D.C., and was instrumental in getting Congress to pass highly restrictive

immigration legislation. Led by D. C. Stephenson, judges, prosecutors, ministers, governors, senators, and future Supreme Court justices and presidents claimed membership. But at the peak of his influence, Madge Oberholtzer brought Stephenson and the Klan down. Learn about the rebirth and fall of this hate-filled organization.

*Coordinator: Susan Lemire**

Brainstorming Session
New LIRA class/field trip ideas
Monday 10/6 1-3 p.m. (Hybrid)

Did you ever brainstorm at work? Well, we are going to facilitate another session. This is a chance for anyone in LIRA to come and help think up ideas for new classes/field trips for our members. There is no such thing as a bad idea; everything will be considered! Come to University Suites or Zoom in and tell us what you want to learn about or what places you would like to visit.

*Coordinator: Peter Sebelius**

Fierce Females: Women in Art
Monday 10/20 10:00 a.m. - noon (Hybrid)
Presenter: Jane Oneail

Women have long been the subject of art, often depicted as nothing more than objects of desire. How do images of women change when women become the creators? This program examines the history of women in art in general and then explores the lives, careers and works of several major women artists from the Renaissance to the twentieth century, including Artemisia Gentileschi and Mary Cassatt.



Image: Artemisia Gentileschi. *Self-Portrait as the Allegory of Painting*, 1638-9. Collection of the British Royal Trust.

*Coordinator: Marie Voltaire**

How Clean is Clean? Dispelling myths around disinfection, sanitization, and household cleaners

Monday 10/27 10:00 a.m. - noon (Hybrid)

Alex Symko and Tatyanna Moreland Junior from the Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI) will educate you on common myths and misconceptions around sanitizers and disinfectants and what ingredients you should watch out for in common household cleaners. This will be the first part of a two-part series that will be followed by a hands-on laboratory demonstration that will have you making your own do-it-yourself cleaners.

*Coordinator: David Troughton**

Taking the mystery out of DIY cleaners - what does and doesn't make an effective household cleaner

**Wednesday 10/29 10:00 a.m. - noon at TURI lab Boot Mills
(In Person Only)**

Alex and Tatyanna from TURI will be leading a hands-on demonstration that will take the knowledge you gained from the first part of this presentation series and apply it to a laboratory setting. This hands-on activity will show you how to make some effective and safe DIY cleaners for your home using commonly available ingredients! You will also be given a tour of TURI's lab facilities and get a chance to meet our lab staff. Close-toed shoes and pants are required; personal protective equipment such as lab coats, safety goggles, and gloves will be supplied on site.

*Coordinator: David Troughton**

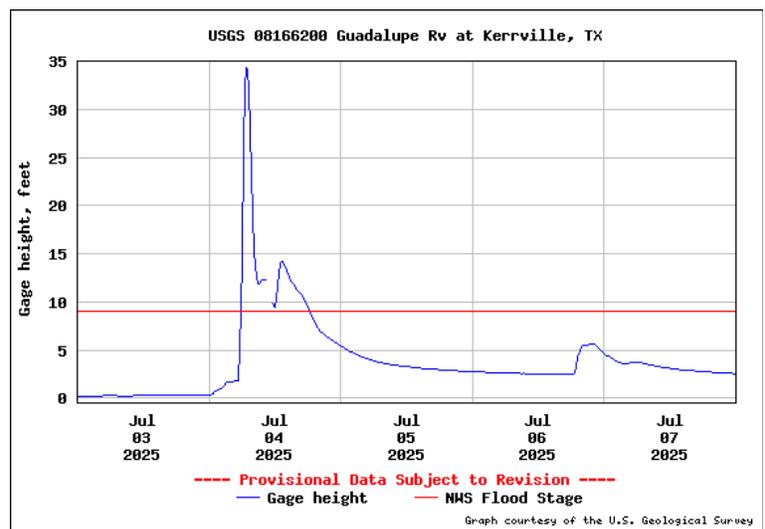
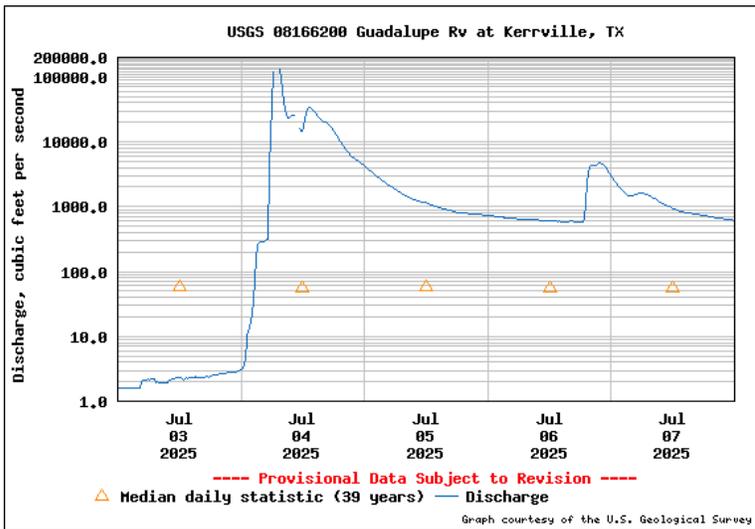
Hydrology

Monday 10/27 1-3 p.m. (Hybrid)

Presenter: Roy Socolow, retired USGS

This presentation will provide a description of the nationwide and Massachusetts statewide Streamflow Monitoring Networks operated by the U.S. Geological Survey. Information will include a brief history of the need for streamflow monitoring stations, types of equipment used, and improvements in streamflow measurement techniques, data recording, and data dissemination technologies throughout the years. Various photos and data graphs will aid in demonstrating how a stream gauge operates and the wide variety of rivers and flow patterns in Massachusetts.

Because of the recent flash flooding tragedies in Texas and other southeastern US states, this presentation will also include a brief discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of flood warnings provided by the National Weather Service and various flood mitigation measures and structures in Massachusetts and other states



Coordinator: Bob Stevens*

History of the Labor Movement in Lowell and the Merrimack Valley

Monday 11/3 10:00 a.m - noon (Hybrid)

Presenter: UML Professor Bob Farrant

Lowell, MA, has an incredibly rich labor and working-class history. From the Irish immigrants who helped build the city to the young women who worked in its early mills, the city has been a center of organization, walkouts, and movements for improved working conditions. By the 1850s, the "Mill City" was one of the country's leading industrial centers. The work was arduous, consisting of 12-hour days, six days a week. The "mill girls" rebelled. In 1845, many came together to form one of the first unions of working women in the United States, the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association. They produced a newspaper, *The Voice of Industry*. New unions formed in the early 20th century, including those organized by the Industrial Workers of the World and the American Federation of Labor. In the 1930s, a series of sometimes violent strikes led to the organization of unions supported by the Congress of Industrial Organizations. In the aftermath of the Second World War, mills closed, and fewer workers in Lowell labored in textile mills than had in 1840. Since then, the workforce and labor unions have undergone significant changes.

*Coordinator: Susan Lemire**

Richard F. Caris Mirror Lab

University of Arizona (Tucson)

Monday 11/10 1-2:30 p.m. (Zoom Only)

Docent-led *virtual* tour

On June 23, 2025, the first images from the NSF-DOE Vera C. Rubin Observatory were released. This amazing imagery shows cosmic phenomena, from distant stars and galaxies to asteroids whizzing through the Solar System, at an unprecedented scale.

One key to the immense power of the Rubin Observatory is its 8.4-meter (27-foot) telescope mirror, which gathers and focuses the light from the heavens. One of the most perfect optical surfaces ever created, this mirror was fabricated at the Richard F. Caris Mirror Lab of the University of Arizona, the only facility of its kind in the world. It uses the "spin-casting" method for making telescope mirrors, in which glass is loaded into a heat-resistant mold in an oven and spun to create the optimal mirror structure and curved shape.

LIRA will be taking a 90-minute *virtual* tour of the Mirror Lab to see the unparalleled technology and revolutionary processes used to make the next generation of telescopes that will explore deep into outer space.

*Coordinator: Alan Friedman**

The Origins of the Boston Accent
Tuesday Sept. 16 10 a.m. - noon (Hybrid)
Presenter: Antoine Trombino-Aponte

This lecture explores the historical origins and unique linguistics of the Boston accent, from its evolution starting in the colonial period to its role in forming our identity today. An analysis of historical events, literature, and media is combined to characterize the dialectical features of New England speech, and ultimately answer several critical sociolinguistic questions: What quirks and terms have remained popular while others have been forgotten? How does this distinguish us from other English speakers around the world? Come learn the science behind talking like a New Englander.

Our speaker has an academic focus on English historical linguistics, including archaic language texts & translation, folk myth & culture, rhetorical & creative composition, and music & poetry.

*Coordinator: Peter Sebelius**

Understanding the Mysteries of Human Behavior
Tuesdays 9/30 - 10/28 10:00 a.m. - noon (Hybrid)

Have you ever wondered what makes people behave the way they do? If so, then join award-winning Professor Mark Leary of Duke University in this fascinating video course. You will learn about this and more:

- Why are we happy?
- Where does personality come from?
- How can siblings be so different?
- Why do we have trouble controlling certain behaviors?
- What does our self-esteem do?
- Why do we forget?

To understand human behavior is to better understand ourselves and the people around us.

*Facilitator: Bob Hanlon**

Recent Projects in Astronomy **Tuesday 9/30 1-3 p.m. (Hybrid)**

This presentation will describe some recent projects in astronomy. Included will be three topics that are important for furthering the understanding of the universe around us.

- The Transiting Exoplanet Satellite Survey (TESS).
- Osiris Rexus, the mining of an asteroid for discovery of material content (e.g. water, precious metals, organics, etc.).
- Adaptive optics: taking the blur out of images from ground-based telescopes.

Also included in the presentation will be information on the Vera Rubin Observatory in Chile, which has been in the news.

*Coordinator: Bev Rudeen**

Water Challenges at Home and Abroad **Tuesday 10/28 1-3 p.m. (Hybrid)**

Presenter: Dr. Betsy Reilley, former Director of the MWRA

Join Dr. Betsy Reilley for an engaging presentation exploring her firsthand experiences with water supply and water quality issues in diverse regions—from remote communities in Kenya and Nicaragua to right here in Massachusetts. Drawing on fieldwork and community projects abroad, Dr. Reilley will share photos and stories that highlight the global challenges of providing safe, reliable water.

The talk will transition to domestic water concerns, focusing on the growing complexity of water quality in the United States. Key contaminants such as lead, PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances), pharmaceuticals and personal care products (PCPPs), microplastics, cyanotoxins, and the effects of climate change will be discussed. Locally, Betsy will discuss the issue of combined sewer overflows; what they are, why they happen, and what it means to the environment. Betsy will explain the sources of these pollutants, current scientific understanding, media coverage, and what it all

means for communities—especially those in Massachusetts and the Lowell area.

Coordinator: Chris Geggis*

Understanding The Global Economy

Tuesday Nov 4 10:00 a.m. - noon (Hybrid)

Presenter: Michael Carbone

What makes economies grow? Why do prices rise? How does one country's slowdown ripple through the rest of the world?

This course is designed for intellectually curious people who want to understand the real forces shaping today's global economy—without needing a background in economics or finance.

We'll explore the foundational principles and big-picture trends that influence how countries grow, trade, borrow, and adapt.

Topics include:

- What drives long-term economic growth in different countries?
- How global trade works—and what happens when it breaks down
- What inflation really is, what causes it, and how it's managed
- Why do currencies rise and fall, and how exchange rates impact global flows
- The role of central banks and government spending in managing economies
- How aging populations, automation, and global institutions shape the future

Through clear explanations, real-world examples, and engaging discussion, you'll come away with a deeper understanding of how the world economy works—and why it matters.

Coordinator: Doug Roeck*

Pawtucket Farm

Wednesday 9/17 10:00 a.m - noon (Trip)

Join the Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust (LP&CT) on a tour of Pawtucket Farm Wildlife Sanctuary (PFWS), formerly known as Rollie's Farm. PFWS is a collaboration between LP&CT, Mass Audubon, and Mill City Grows.

Participants will get to walk the 22-acre former tree farm's newly built All Person's Trail (accessible, one-mile) and see the implementation of community-based vision and planning. Jane Calvin, LP&CT executive director, will lead this walk. Come prepared for the weather, but please save the rain date of Oct. 3 (10-12) in case of stormy weather.

Parking is very limited on site. We highly recommend carpooling.

*Coordinator: Nancy Pitkin**

Two Nineteenth-Century Lowell Mill Girls in Life and Death: Barilla Adeline Taylor and Louisa Maria Wells

Wednesday 10/1 1-3 p.m. (Hybrid)

Presenter: UML Professor Briget Marshall

Barilla Adeline Taylor (1828–1846) and Louisa Maria Wells (1818–1886) worked in Lowell's cotton mills and are buried in Lowell Cemetery. Their gravestones—one small and one large—suggest very different trajectories of their lives. This talk will dive into the biographies of these two "mill girls," exploring their family trees and learning about their lives through evidence found in personal letters and legal documents. We will also learn about the history of Lowell Cemetery and the "Garden Cemetery" movement to understand attitudes towards grief and memorialization in nineteenth-century Lowell.

*Coordinator: Susan Lemire**

Developing robotic systems to enhance interactions with humans in shared tasks at home

Wednesday 10/8 10 a.m. – noon (Hybrid)

Presenter: Professor Maru Cabrera

Professor Maru Cabrera has submitted an NSF Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) proposal, which includes LIRA member volunteer participation. She will detail her proposal, summarized below, in this class. Collaborative service robots are becoming increasingly popular to deploy in home environments for tasks ranging from housekeeping to healthcare. These systems show incredible potential to have a positive impact on quality of life, particularly for users with motor disabilities or declining cognitive abilities. However, deploying these robots in human environments presents significant challenges such as safety concerns, user acceptance, and transparency in decision-making processes, particularly when any decision may impact the shared vision between collaborators towards what following actions are needed to complete the shared task. There needs to be a dynamic adjustment to multiple aspects of collaborative work between robot and human if we aim to include a broader range of human users, such as those with motor or cognitive impairments: robots reasoning about the human's capabilities and involvement in a given step of a task, explanation of what robot actions will be taken based on the current state of the task and the human collaborator, and selecting a degree of proactiveness towards the next set of actions needed to complete the task collaboratively.

*Coordinator: Peter Sebelius**

William Faulkner

Wednesdays 10/8, 10/15, 10/22 1-3 p.m. (Hybrid)

Presenter: Tony Szczesiul

UML Professor Anthony Szczesiul will once again offer a three-week book discussion for LIRA members on Oct. 8th, 15th and 22nd. This year's book will be William Faulkner's "The Sound and the Fury," a book that is considered one of the key novels of the 20th century. The book has been praised for its innovative narrative technique and has been selected by the Modern Library as one of the 100 best novels of all time. It is one of *The Atlantic's* Great American Novels of the past 100 years.

*Coordinator: Susan Lemire**

Glaciation and Deglaciation of Massachusetts Middlesex County Area and a bit beyond

Wednesday 10/15 10:00 a.m. - noon (Hybrid)

Presenter: Bill Vales

Bill Vales will discuss the processes of continental and alpine glaciation. The focus of the presentation will be on the New Hampshire White Mountain area, Cape Cod, and the area in between (that's us). The discussion will largely focus on what you can see from a drive or walk around the areas we cover. Pictures will be shown of all the areas we discuss.

Bill will talk about both the erosional and depositional structures that cover the landscapes we see every day. In the White Mountains we will discuss the shapes of the peaks, glacial notches, erratic boulders, stoss and lee topography, glacial eskers (rivers of sand), glacial potholes, glacial marks (striations, polish, gouges and chatter marks) and other structures. As we move to Middlesex County, we will learn about glacial structures such as erratic boulders, drumlins, eskers, kames, river system formation and soil composition. Moving to Cape Cod, we will address the formation of the cape, including Cape Cod Bay, terminal moraines, coastal bluffs, sand dunes and other related artifacts.

We will discuss the effects of sea level rise and fall related to glaciation, how glaciers are formed and the results of the increased weight of the ice on the land, as well as the removal of that weight when the ice melts. We will review the evidence for the formation of glaciers and how understanding glaciers adds to understanding climate change.

*Coordinator: Bob Stevens**

Political Polling and Elections

Wednesday 10/29 1:30 -3:30 p.m. (Hybrid)

Presenter: UML Political Science Professor Rodrigo Castro Cornejo

Political polling is a central feature of elections and is widely used to understand and explain public opinion. In a democracy, the views of citizens are expected to guide government activity and public policy, making public opinion a central concern in the study of democratic politics.

This class examines public opinion in contemporary politics. We will explore how to conceptualize and measure public opinion, where opinions "come

from,” the nature of opinions on several salient issues, and their impact on elections. We will also address the various challenges facing survey research, including rising non-response rates, the use of new survey modes (e.g., online vs. telephone surveys), and respondents’ behavior when taking surveys (for example, do people lie to survey researchers?).

*Coordinator: Susan Lemire**

Cyrus Dallin Art Museum in Arlington **Wednesday 11/5 10:30 - noon (Trip)**

Discover the art and life of the celebrated American sculptor, educator, and Indigenous rights advocate, Cyrus Dallin, at the only museum in the country solely dedicated to sharing his legacy. It is a small house museum. The cost is \$10.00 per person for the museum—and we will have a docent lead tour. Check out their website for additional information! Next to the museum is a large municipal parking lot that uses the parking app “PayByPhone”. It is \$0.50 per hour for unlimited time.

611 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA 02474

We can carpool from Hanford’s Chelmsford at 9:45 am



Coordinator: TBD

Foreign Policy Association presents Great Decisions Thursdays 9/18 - 11/6 (except 10/2) 10:00 a.m. - noon (Hybrid)

The mission of the Foreign Policy Association today, as it has been for over 100 years, is to serve as a catalyst for developing awareness, understanding, and informed opinion on U.S. foreign policy and global issues. Through its balanced, nonpartisan programs and publications, the FPA encourages citizens to participate in the foreign policy process. FPA's Great Decisions program has flourished over the past 60 years into a multi-dimensional global studies program, adapted to multiple formats, including informal discussion groups, public lectures and formal secondary and university courses. Published annually by FPA, the Great Decisions briefing book highlights eight of the most thought-provoking foreign policy challenges facing Americans today.

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Great Decisions class is facilitated by us, the participants. We are looking for volunteers to facilitate two of the fall topics. If you are interested, we can provide tutoring in putting together a presentation and presenting it. Our engagement can be as light or as heavy as you would like, based on your needs and comfort zone. We are also offering an opportunity to "shadow" one of us as we put our presentations together.

If you have any interest or would like any follow-up information/discussion, please contact:

Neal Berenson @ 978-376-1071 or nberenson@comcast.net

Steve Cerand @ 508-958-4319 or scerand@hotmail.com

Great Decisions FALL 2025 Topics

AI and American National Security: 9/18 and 9/25

Author: Kori Schake

Great Decisions Presenters: Carol Valcik*, Kirk Frazee*

The AI revolution is the leading edge of a larger high-tech revolution which promises to transform the world. Experts argue that international cooperation is needed to expand the opportunities these new technologies hold while protecting societies from their dangers. What are the key policy debates in this area, and what are the opportunities and limits on global AI rules of the road? How will the AI revolution impact American national

security? What are the policy options to secure the benefits of AI and guard against its dangers?

India: Between China, the West, and the Global South: 10/9 and 10/16

Author: Josh Busby

Great Decisions Presenter: Neal Berenson* (looking for an understudy to work with)

India is an emerging major power in world affairs, occupying a pivotal position between China, the United States, and the Global South. Its population size, economy and geographical location ensure that it will be an influential voice in debates and political struggles over global order. What are India's choices and opportunities for regional and global leadership? How will it maneuver between China and the United States, and what is its role as a voice of the Global South? What opportunities exist for Washington to work with India?

American Policy in the Middle East: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead: 10/23 and 10/30

Author: Daniel C. Kurtzer

Great Decisions Presenter: TBD (this could be you!)

The war in Gaza has brought the region to a crossroads. What are the possible outcomes of the war, and how might the United States use its influence to shape a long-term settlement that leaves both Israel and the Palestinians in a better position? How might Arab states in the wider region be brought into a settlement? What are America's interests in the Middle East and how can it advance them?

Competition, Cold War or Conflict: Navigating US-China Relations in Tense Times: 11/6

Author: Thomas J. Christensen

Great Decisions Presenter: Steve Cerand*TBD

Washington's relations with Beijing have reached an ominous low ebb. Both American political parties have identified China as the country's preeminent geopolitical changer and in the eyes of many, a systemic threat. What is driving this deterioration of Sino-American relations, and what are America's strategic options in the face of Chinese power and ambition?

Coordinators: Steve Cerand and Neal Berenson**

Information and Cyber Security

Thursdays 9/18 - 11/6 (except 10/2) 1-3 p.m. (Hybrid with Remote Presenter)

Presenter: Samuel J. Curry: Chief Information Security Officer for Zscaler

The confidentiality, integrity and availability of data and services are not luxuries but, in a digital age, necessities. Beyond basic cyber literacy as a consumer, understanding how network security works, the essentials of cryptography, principles of access control, fundamentals of information security and the intersection with physical security matters to all of us. Computing is ubiquitous, powerful and cheap, and as such it's important to understand how it is used, the trends and how it is abused in particular and by whom.

This course will go into the following: core principles of information security such as CIA, least privilege, least function, defense in depth, SOD, MFA, DAC, MAC, RBAC, authenticity and more; identity and access management; network security and cloud security; incident response and forensics; producing and code security, physical security, privacy, business continuity and disaster recovery; cryptographic techniques and tools; security controls, governance, compliance, risk management, security awareness and more. It will also look at how security is changing in the face of new technological disruptors, such as post-quantum computing and AI agents.

The course will also include an understanding of the culture of cybersecurity, from "white hats" to "black hats"; red teams and blue teams; various "actors" on the stage; and the economics of cybersecurity.

The course is based on material that is commonly needed for C2 and CISSP proficiency and on undergraduate and graduate-level courses taught by the professor.

*Coordinator: Simon Curry**

Film Discussions

10 a.m. - noon

(Zoom only)

Friday 9/26 - The French Connection. Discussion lead: Kirk Frazee*

Friday 10/24 - My Cousin Vinny. Discussion lead Marie Tada-Gleason*

Friday 11/21 - Babette Feast. Discussion lead Carolyn Walsh*

Friday 12/19 - TBD

Book Discussions

10 a.m. - noon

(Zoom only)

Friday 9/19 - King: a Life by Jonathan Eig, 2023, 669 pages.

Discussion leader: Karen Naka*

Friday 10/17 - Tell Me Everything by Elizabeth Strout, 2024, 326 pages.

Discussion leader: Steve Buccieri*

Friday 11/14 - The Women by Kristin Hannah, 2024, 471 pages.

Discussion leader: Susan Lemire*

Friday 12/12 - James by Percival Everett, 2024, 302 pages.

Discussion leader: Bob Hanlon*

LIRA/Chelmsford Library Series

Registration Required (on Library website)

Friday 9/5 10 a.m Rationing for Victory: The Role of OPA in WWII America

This presentation explores the critical role of the Office of Price Administration (OPA) in managing rationing, price controls, and public behavior on the American home front during World War II. Through a detailed timeline, historical documents, and firsthand recipes and reactions, it examines how the U.S. government mobilized citizens, regulated scarce resources, and fought inflation—one coupon, token, and regulation at a time. Discover the paper trail of policy, enforcement, and everyday adaptation in a nation at war.

Friday 10/3 1 p.m. “The Tell-tale HEART:” Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Partial Reversal

Presenter: Anastasia O’Malley

Friday 11/7 1 p.m. An Overview of Condominium Rules and Enforcement Practices

Presenter: Scott Erickson

LIRA 2025 Fall Semester Calendar

Zoom Only in Red

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
September 8	September 9	September 10 10 am to Noon Fall Convocation	September 11	September 12
September 15 10 am to Noon Masterworks of American Art	September 16 10 am to Noon Origins of the Boston Accent	September 17 10 am to Noon Pawtucket Farm (trip)	September 18 10 am to Noon Great Decisions 1 to 3 pm Information and Cyber Security	September 19 10 am to Noon Book Discussion <i>King: A Life</i> Jonathan Eig
September 22 10 am to Noon Masterworks of American Art 1 to 3 pm 20 th Century History of KKK	September 23 Rosh Hashanah No Classes	September 24 Rosh Hashanah No Classes	September 25 10 am to Noon Great Decisions 1 to 3 pm Information and Cyber Security	September 26 10 am Noon Film Discussion <i>The French Connection</i>
September 29 10 am to Noon Masterworks of American Art	September 30 10 am to Noon Understanding the Mysteries of Human Behavior 1 to 3 pm Recent Projects in Astronomy	October 1 10 am to Noon Executive Council Meeting 1 to 3 pm Two 19 th Century Lowell Mill Girls in Life and Death	October 2 Yom Kippur No Classes	October 3 1 pm Chelmsford Library Series <i>The Tell-Tale Heart:</i> <i>Cadiovascular disease</i>
October 6 10 am to Noon Masterworks of American Art 1 to 3 pm Brainstorming Session New class/field trip ideas	October 7 10 am to Noon Understanding the Mysteries of Human Behavior	October 8 10 am to Noon Robotic Systems for Humans at Home 1 to 3 pm William Faulkner Book Discussion	October 9 10 am to Noon Great Decisions 1 to 3 pm Information and Cyber Security	October 10

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p>October 13 Indigenous Peoples Day</p> <p>No Classes</p>	<p>October 14 10 am to Noon Understanding the Mysteries of Human Behavior</p>	<p>October 15 10 am to Noon Glaciation of MA Middlesex County Area 1 to 3 pm William Faulkner Book Discussion</p>	<p>October 16 10 am to Noon Great Decisions 1 to 3 pm Information and Cyber Security</p>	<p>October 17 10 am to Noon Book Discussion <i>Tell Me Everything</i> Elizabeth Strout</p>
<p>October 20 10 am to Noon Fierce Females: Women in Art 1 to 3 pm Masterworks of American Art</p>	<p>October 21 10 am to Noon Understanding the Mysteries of Human Behavior</p>	<p>October 22 1 to 3 pm William Faulkner Book Discussion</p>	<p>October 23 10 am to Noon Great Decisions 1 to 3 pm Information and Cyber Security</p>	<p>October 24 10 am to Noon Film Discussion <i>My Cousin Vinny</i></p>
<p>October 27 10 am to Noon How Clean is Clean? 1 to 3 pm Hydrology</p>	<p>October 28 10 am to Noon Understanding the Mysteries of Human Behavior 1 to 3 pm Water Challenges</p>	<p>October 29 10 am to Noon Taking the mystery out of DIY cleaners (Trip) 1:30 to 3:30 pm Election Polling</p>	<p>October 30 10 am to Noon Great Decisions 1 to 3 pm Information and Cyber Security</p>	<p>October 31</p>
<p>November 3 10 am to Noon History of the Labor Movement in Lowell and the Merrimack Valley</p>	<p>November 4 10 am to Noon Understanding the Global Economy</p>	<p>November 5 10:30 to Noon Cyrus Dallin Art Museum (trip)</p>	<p>November 6 10 am to Noon Great Decisions 1 to 3 pm Information and Cyber Security</p>	<p>November 7 1:00 pm Chelmsford Library Series Condominium Rules</p>
<p>November 10 1 to 2:30 pm Richard F. Caris Mirror Lab Docent-led virtual tour</p>	<p>November 11</p>	<p>November 12</p>	<p>November 13</p>	<p>November 14 10 am to Noon Book Discussion <i>The Women</i> Kristin Hannah</p>

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
November 17	November 18	November 19	November 20	November 21 10 am to Noon Film Discussion <i>Babette Feast</i>
November 24	November 25	November 26	November 28	November 28
				December 12 10 am to Noon Book Discussion <i>James Percival</i> Everett
				December 19 10 am to Noon Film Discussion TBD

**LEARNING IN RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION/ UMASS LOWELL
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS
LOWELL, MA 01852 [LIRA Webpage](#)**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____ Date of Application _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ CELL _____ EMAIL _____

SPOUSE/PARTNER NAME _____

SPOUSE/PARTNER CELL _____ EMAIL _____

- In the event of class cancellation LIRA will send email to all members.
If you do NOT use email check here to request a telephone call. Phone _____
- LIRA distributes the Newsletter by email.
If you do NOT use email check here to request a paper copy. Paper _____
- Are you a graduate of UMass Lowell? _____ What year/degree _____
- Is this a renewal? _____ If yes, the following questions may be omitted

How did you learn about LIRA?

Professional work/experience

Brief Educational Background

Special fields of study, interests, hobbies, etc

What experiences, work background or skills would you be willing to share with LIRA?

LIRA membership dues are \$145 (\$240 for couples) for the year July 1-June 30 payable by Aug. 15. Half-year LIRA membership dues for new members only are \$85 (\$145 for couples) for Jan. 1- June 30 payable between Jan. 1 – April 30 only. *All new Membership applications received after April 30 will be for a full year's membership, which will start on July 1.*

A portion of your membership fee will be tax-deductible and will benefit our student scholarship fund.

For additional information see our [LIRA Webpage](#)

By submitting this application you grant permission for LIRA to use your image for promotional purposes.

Designations:

- Individual Full-year Membership \$145
- Couple Full-year Membership \$240
- New Membership Individual Half-Year \$85
- New Membership Couple Half-year \$145

Amount of Membership Selected:

\$.00

When the application is processed you will receive additional LIRA information including current programs and parking directions.

Please return Application (or apply online with a credit card) with check payable to UMass Lowell, memo line LIRA, and mail to:

Office of Alumni and Donor Relations
45 Lawrence Drive
Lowell, Ma 01854

May 2023

Parking Hangtags

Please read the following carefully. LIRA parking permits for 2025-2026 will be **valid for 10 months**, September 2025 through June 2026. LIRA will not have any on-campus programs in July and August 2026.

Please fill out the parking permit form below along with a \$90 check made out to UMass Lowell and **bring it to the Convocation on September 10th**. Parking hang tags can only be issued to members that have paid their dues and have completed the vehicle information form. No one, other than those with a handicap permit, will receive a University issued parking permit without a payment of \$90.

You have 3 options if you cannot make it for the Convocation:

- If you fill out this form **with a check made out to UMass Lowell for \$90** and mail it along with a stamped, self-addressed **legal-sized** envelope to: Peter Sebelius, 20 Draycoach Dr., Chelmsford, MA 01824 **BEFORE** September 10, he will return a hang tag to you.
- You may have a friend bring a filled out form and check to the Convocation and get a hang tag for you.
- You can go to the UCAPS office located at 220 Pawtucket St, Lowell, MA 01854, entrance on Salem St. This is the same place that you get your photo ID. Do this after you have paid your membership dues for the year.

IF YOU HAVE HANDICAPPED PARKING, PLEASE WRITE YOUR PLATE NUMBER AND DATE OF EXPIRATION ON THE FORM. Your parking will be free, but you will not be able to get your hangtag unless you have **ALL** this information.

Additional copies of the application form will be available at the Convocation.

**LEARNING IN RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION (LIRA)
UML Parking Permit – Registration Form**

LIRA MEMBER AND VEHICLE INFORMATION (Required): *[Please Print]*

Last Name

MI

First Name

Mailing Address: _____

(Street, P.O. Box, City/Town, State, Zip Code)

Telephone Number: _____

Handicap Permit #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

VEHICLE INFORMATION:

Year	Make	Model	Color

License Plate Number

State

UML PARKING PERMIT NUMBER: _____