



Course Descriptions, Fall Term 2026

➔Monday, 10:00 – Noon: TLC Fall Term Lecture/Discussion Series

CANCELED. THERE WILL BE NO CLASS MONDAY MORNING, SEPT 21ST:

September 21: George Faison on *The Conjunction of Poet Phyllis Wheatley and John Singleton Copley*

September 28: Lyn Mattoon on *Reality As We Know It*

October 5: Douglas Cooper on *The Parents Circle*: Centuries of intractable conflict, death, hatred, and revenge and the story of The Parents Circle: a group of Israelis and Palestinians demanding peace and reconciliation, often at great personal risk.

October 12: Jane Strong on *"Horses and Warriors from All Walks of Life"*

October 19: Larry Rand on *Adventurist Entrepreneur: Leigh Hunt*

Podcast: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/the-big-strategy-podcast/id1741661089?i=1000742488607>.

Various Instructors: September 21 – October 19 at Noble Horizons (5 sessions)

➔Monday, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: Near Death Experiences

Near death experiences are described as "profound metaphysical experiences associated with death or impending death" by Dr. Raymond Moody, whose research brought the existence and descriptions of these experiences to public attention with his book *Life After Life* in 1975. This class will be an introduction to NDE's and a chance to share your own or a friend's NDE experiences as well as a discussion of how an NDE can change a person's life and attitudes.

Instructor: Lyn Westsmith: September 21 – October 12 at Geer (4 sessions)

➔Tuesday, 10:00 AM – Noon: Concert Masterworks: Romantic Era Contrasts: Franz Liszt and Johannes Brahms

Join us as we continue to investigate some of classical music's masterpiece compositions. We will examine two works in depth with renowned Professor Robert Greenberg of *The Great Courses* and San Francisco Conservatory fame. We start with the romantic era's "shredding" pianist and "punk" Franz Liszt (100 years ahead of his time). Our second subject is the third "B" of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms fame. He continues our study of the classical concerto form. As well as humorous lectures and learning we will watch some definitive performances of the works discussed.

Instructor: John Robinson: September 22 – November 10 at Geer (8 sessions)



➔Wednesday, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: Artificial Intelligence in Our Lives Today

This course comprises 4 sessions. We will begin with a viewing of a documentary that details dramatic recent developments in artificial intelligence. We will talk about how AI is infused in our daily lives and discuss large language models, what they are and how we can use them. A guest speaker who is involved in creating AI agents will join us to discuss how AI can make our lives better. The final session will be a discussion of everything from AI ethics, policy and our personal experiences with this fast-changing and transformative technology.

Instructor: David Oliver: September 23 – October 14 at Noble Horizons (4 sessions)

➔Thursday, 10:00 AM – Noon: James Joyce's *Dubliners*

Beginning in 1904, James Joyce wrote a series of stories about Irish middle-class life in Dublin. The resulting story collection, entitled *Dubliners*, was published only after Joyce had spent years resisting publishers' rejections (1914). *Dubliners* quickly captured the interest of readers and writers world-wide and today is recognized as one of the great literary achievements of the 20th century.

Called "epiphanies", the stories are grouped by periods of life (Childhood, Adolescence, Maturity, and Public Life). The political, religious, and economic hardships prevalent in early 20th century Ireland serve as a backdrop, but it is Joyce's realistic portrayals of people in Dublin that make the stories come alive. In the six meetings of this study group, we will read and discuss 12 of the 15 stories in *Dubliners*, focusing on themes and issues that characterize and cut across the different stories. In the last session, we will discuss the last story, *The Dead*, and watch a film adaptation of the story (1987, directed by John Huston).

We will be using the Norton Critical Edition of *Dubliners* (2006, ed. Margot Norris). To facilitate discussion of the stories, membership is limited to 14.

Instructor: Joanne Carlisle: September 24 – October 29 at Geer (6 sessions)

➔Friday, 10:00 AM - Noon: Literature as Social Protest: The Case of Anna Seghers

The German novelist Anna Seghers (1900-1983) began her career during the rise of the Nazi party. As a Jew, a member of the Communist Party, and a writer of fiction with an antifascist edge, she suffered persecution and arrest in her native country. Escaping to Paris in the 1930's, she continued her literary critiques of fascism, until she was forced to flee the Nazi occupation of northern France. By means of a harrowing escape through Marseilles, she was able to settle in Mexico in 1942, where she eventually made a name for herself as a two-time winner of Germany's highest literary prize. In her novels, she exhibits a keen eye for the plight of oppressed people, as well as a blend of vivid social realism and modernist literary style.



In *The Seventh Cross* (1942), she paints a vivid picture of the struggles of an escapee from a Nazi concentration camp as he interacts with diverse segments of German society in his efforts to avoid recapture. In *Transit* (1944), we experience the agonies of a group of expatriates in Marseilles as they fight the knot of bureaucratic hurdles preventing their sailing to freedom from Nazi capture, much as Seghers herself did. Both of these novels read like thrillers, but they are infused with a sardonic wit and a sympathy for humans of varying persuasions striving to live life under stressful conditions. Although an abridged version of *The Seventh Cross* was widely read and adapted to the screen in the United States at the time, Seghers' work is little known here today. We'll read (in translation!) and discuss these two novels and consider the life experiences of the woman who wrote them. In addition, we'll watch film adaptations of the two novels and consider the broader question of how to make effective use of serious literature in the service of social causes. Class membership is limited to 15.

Instructor: Addison Stone: September 25 - November 6 at Geer (7 sessions)

➔Tuesday, 1:00 – 3:00 PM: Documentary Films on Tragic Figures

"Tragic figures in history define themselves through immense personal suffering, betrayal, or unjust downfalls despite their monumental contributions. These individuals often fought for the greater good, only to be crushed by the society they served, leaving legacies that demand profound historical reflection." This course will use documentary films to examine the tragic lives of Fyodor Dostoevsky, Ludwig Beethoven, Edgar Allan Poe, Nikola Tesla, Oscar Wilde, Virginia Wolfe, Edith Piaf, George Gershwin, and Sylvia Plath.

Instructor: Larry Rand: September 29 – November 17 at Geer (8 sessions)

➔Wednesday, 10:00 AM – Noon: Conversation Class

The forum for this class of open discussion was suggested by a TLC member, and it has served as a vigorous exchange of opinions on current events and anything that is of interest to a class member. We use news articles, podcasts, videos, and more as vehicles for conversation and debate. Given the events that are occurring this summer and will continue into the fall, we will have much to discuss. We welcome class members of different opinions. The only thing we hope *won't* happen is having everyone agree!

Instructor: Larry Rand: September 30 – November 18 at Noble Horizons (8 sessions)