

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2026

VOLUME 1
ISSUE 1

**Farmingdale
State College**
State University of New York

**FARMINGDALE'S
INSTITUTE FOR
LIFELONG LEARNING**



FILL builds on serving adult learners while welcoming students of all ages. Rooted in Farmingdale State College's commitment to community engagement, FILL offers non-credit courses, lectures, workshops, and special events that bring people together and inspire curiosity and connection. Led by Farmingdale faculty and community members, these experiences encourage exploration, creativity, and skill development. Whether you are seeking enrichment, personal growth, or new skills, FILL provides an inclusive and welcoming environment dedicated to lifelong learning!

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FROM THE DEAN'S DESK

DR. DYLAN GAFARIAN
DIVISION OF EXTENDED AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Dear Members of the Farmingdale Institute for Lifelong Learning,

As we welcome a new year, I am filled with gratitude, pride, and genuine excitement as I write to you in this first edition of our renewed newsletter. For many of you, this program has been a cherished part of your lives for years, formerly known as the Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR), and it is with deep respect for that history that we begin this next chapter together as the Farmingdale Institute for Lifelong Learning (FILL).

This transition is more than a change in name. It reflects the remarkable growth of our community, the expanding scope of our offerings, and our enduring belief that learning is not bound by age, career stage, or credential. FILL was created to honor where we have been while boldly embracing where we are going. At its core, the spirit of ILR, curiosity, connection, intellectual rigor, and joy in learning remains unchanged. What has changed is our capacity to do even more.

In the year ahead, you will see new lectures, workshops, social events, and experiential opportunities designed to deepen engagement and spark fresh curiosity. We are expanding partnerships across Farmingdale State College, inviting faculty, researchers, students, and community experts into shared learning spaces. We are also building stronger pathways for intergenerational learning, creative exploration, and community connection, because lifelong learning is richest when it is shared.

Most importantly, FILL continues to be shaped by you. Your participation, feedback, conversations, and friendships are the heart of this program. You remind us daily that learning is not simply about acquiring knowledge; it is about purpose, belonging, and the ongoing pursuit of meaning. That is a powerful lesson for our entire campus community.

As we step into this new year, I invite you to lean into what's ahead: try something new, reconnect with familiar faces, and help us continue to grow FILL into a vibrant, welcoming home for lifelong learners at every stage. The best days of this program are not behind us; they are unfolding right now. Thank you for being part of this journey, for trusting us through change, and for continuing to inspire all of us who believe deeply in the transformative power of lifelong learning.

With warmest wishes for a healthy, fulfilling, and intellectually enriching new year,

Dr. Dylan Gafarian

Dean of Extended and Experiential Learning
Institution of Lifelong Learning
Office of Professional and Continuing Education





MEET THE FILL TEAM



TORI TANGREDI
PROGRAM COORDINATOR
INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

AGOSTINA ALFONSO
PROGRAM COORDINATOR
UNIVERSITY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL



MAGGIE FLEMING
DIRECTOR
*OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL AND CONTINUING
EDUCATION*



MEMBERSHIP

What does the annual FILL membership include?

Grants you access to an array of exciting opportunities:

- +Fascinating study groups led by knowledgeable facilitators where you can explore various subjects and delve into meaningful discussions with fellow members.
- +Inspiring guest lectures by esteemed experts from diverse fields, providing insights, perspectives on a wide range of topics.
- +Organized day trips to local attractions, museums, and cultural events, giving you the chance to expand your horizons and enjoy the company of fellow learners
- +Engaging on-campus events that foster connections, friendships and an environment of continuous growth and intellectual stimulation.

Annual Yearly Membership Fee:

An annual \$25 membership fee is required to access the diverse offerings of the Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Registration for Courses/Study Groups, Lectures & Workshops:

Registration for study groups and lectures is on a first come, first serve basis. All FILL activities are open to members only, unless otherwise noted and are subjected to availability and change. Each activity is a separate fee and can be purchased online at: <https://www.farmingdale.edu/institute-learning-in-retirement/ilr-membership.shtml>

Parking:

To obtain a FILL member parking permit for the Spring 2026 semester, please visit the University Police Headquarters on campus. Member parking is \$11 per semester. Please bring a CHECK. No cash or credit card accepted. For more information, please refer to the University Police website, email police@farmingdale.edu or call 934-420-2561 (Parking & Traffic).

Important Note for Future:

As the Farmingdale Institute for Lifelong Learning (FILL) continues to grow, we are introducing a new membership-based fee structure designed to simplify access, expand opportunities, and provide greater value to our community. Beginning this upcoming year, FILL will transition to an annual membership model that includes parking privileges and unlimited access to FILL courses, lectures, and regularly scheduled events. This change allows members to fully engage in our academic, cultural, and social programming without per-course registration barriers, encouraging exploration, connection, and sustained learning throughout the year.

Select specialty programs, trips, and premium experiences will continue to be offered at an additional cost and will be clearly identified in advance. This updated structure ensures transparency, affordability, and flexibility, while directly supporting the expansion of high-quality programming, instructors, and member services. Our goal is to create a more seamless, enriching, and accessible lifelong learning experience for every member of the FILL community.



FARMINGDALE'S INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

COURSES & STUDY GROUPS

U.S HISTORY FROM 1775 TO 1825

This course explores U.S. history from 1775 to 1825, tracing the nation's development from the opening shots at Lexington and Concord through the end of the Monroe Administration. Students will examine the American Revolution, the formation of the new republic, the drafting of the Constitution, early presidential administrations, and the political, social, and economic forces that shaped the young nation. Through discussion and analysis, the course highlights the challenges, achievements, and lasting impact of America's formative fifty years.

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
MONDAY	3/30—5/4	9:30AM—11:30AM	CAMPUS CENTER MEETING ROOM B	DR. DANIEL MARRONE	\$50

MEMORABLE MOMENTS IN SPORTS

This course will cover, through video and discussions, the most memorable moments in the history of the four major professional sports leagues and college.

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
MONDAY	3/30—5/4	11:30AM—1:30PM	CAMPUS CENTER MEETING ROOM B	DR. IRA STOLZENBERG	\$50

TECH FOR TODAY

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of computers and digital technology. Topics include computer parts, simple programs, using the internet, typing documents, making simple spreadsheets, and sending emails. The class is for beginners and gives practice to help students feel comfortable using a computer.

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
MONDAY	3/16—4/20	3:05PM—4:20PM	WHITMAN HALL ROOM B24	AGOSTINA ALFONSO	\$50

CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING FOR YOU

This dynamic course invites students to explore the intersection of creativity, critical inquiry, and innovation as tools for solving complex, real-world problems. Through the Creative Problem Solving (CPS) process, Clarify, Ideate, Develop, and Implement, students will learn how to transform imaginative ideas into actionable solutions, products, and services. Emphasizing the integration of scientific, critical, and creative thinking, the course provides a structured yet flexible framework for approaching challenges across disciplines. Students will engage in hands-on exercises, collaborative projects, and data-informed analysis to uncover how creativity fuels innovation and organizational growth.

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
TUESDAY	2/3—3/10	9:30AM—11:00AM	CAMPUS CENTER MEETING ROOM B	DR. DYLAN GAFARIAN	\$50



FARMINGDALE'S INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

COURSES & STUDY GROUPS

THE MYTH OF THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH & STATE

The program is designed to examine, from a historical perspective, the evolution of Americans' understanding of and attitudes toward the doctrine of the "separation of church and state," from colonial times to the present. The program will highlight how individuals such as Roger Williams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison, as well as the courts, legislatures, and religious institutions, have helped shape our attitudes toward the role of religion in a secular society. The objective of our discussions is not to determine the "rightness" or "wrongheadedness" of any particular point of view, but rather to understand the foundations and reasoning behind each position.

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
TUESDAY	3/10—3/31	2:00PM—3:30PM	CAMPUS CENTER MEETING ROOM B	JACK FEIRMAN	\$50

INTRODUCTION TO WATERCOLOR

Watercolor Painting workshop designed for artists of intermediate level and above. This is an open space for artists to paint freely without the structure of a guided class. Connect with fellow members, share techniques, and collaborate in a relaxed environment. Participants are encouraged to bring their own supplies for this session. Each week as a group you will decide on a topic and create your own watercolor art!

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
WEDNESDAY	3/11—4/29	9:00AM—12:00PM	CAMPUS CENTER MEETING ROOM B	SHIRELY RUBY	\$50

INTRODUCTION TO SPANISH

¡Hola Estudiantes! This Spanish Culture and Conversation course is perfect for beginners who want to review Spanish or prepare for travel. Students will build vocabulary, learn common expressions, and practice basic verb tenses while exploring music, art, and Spanish-speaking cultures. Through simple dialogue and fun activities, we'll improve communication skills in a relaxed and enjoyable environment. ¡Vámonos!

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
WEDNESDAY	2/4—3/25	12:15PM—1:30PM	CAMPUS CENTER MEETING ROOM A	PROFESORA SHARI O'FLANAGAN	\$50

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

Join our monthly group to explore engaging books together. Discover diverse genres, share insights, and enjoy lively discussions in a welcoming space—perfect for book lovers seeking connection and thoughtful conversation! The books: *By Any Other Name* by Jodi Picoult (02/25), *The Secret Life of Sunflowers* by Marta Molnar (03/25), *The Lion Women of Tehran* by Marjan Kamali (04/15), *Destiny of the Republic* by Candice Millard (05/20), *The Winemaker's Wife* by Kristin Hammel (06/17)

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
WEDNESDAY	2/25—6/17	2:00PM—4:00PM	WHITMAN HALL ROOM 111	SUSAN BLAESER	\$50



FARMINGDALE'S INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

COURSES & STUDY GROUPS

INTRODUCTION TO ITALIAN

This course introduces students to the Italian language, culture, and music. Students will learn basic vocabulary, simple phrases, greetings, and everyday expressions, along with basic grammar and pronunciation. The class also explores Italian songs and music, helping students experience the language through listening, singing, and cultural context.

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
THURSDAY	2/5—3/12	1:00PM—2:30PM	CAMPUS CENTER MEETING ROOM B	AGOSTINA ALFONSO	\$50

INTRODUCTION TO GENEALOGY

Introduction to Genealogy provides students with a structured foundation in family history research, from building pedigree charts to analyzing historical records. Each week introduces essential sources, including census records, vital records, immigration documents, newspapers, and DNA testing insights. Through hands-on activities and discussions, students will learn to evaluate evidence, navigate genealogical databases, and investigate their own family histories with confidence. Class will culminate in individual presentations based on discoveries made during class.

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
THURSDAY	3/5—5/7	3:15PM—4:45PM	GLEESON HALL ROOM 119	PROF. APRIL EARLE	\$50

INTRODUCTION TO PICKLEBALL

Stay active and social while learning one of the most popular low-impact sports in the country. This pickleball class focuses on technique, game rules, safety, and enjoyment of play. No prior experience required.

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
FRIDAY	4/3—5/8	8:30AM—9:30PM	NOLD HALL AUX GYM	PROF. MAGGIE FLEMING	\$50



FARMINGDALE'S INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

COURSES & STUDY GROUPS

CURRENT ISSUES FORUM

Each week for the first hour of the class we will set an agenda and exchange ideas concerning local, national, and global issues. During the second hour the focus is on one or more larger national issues; in an effort to identify problems, generate solutions, and hopefully, clarify your position. *3/20—NO CLASS ON CAMPUS

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
FRIDAY	1/9—5/22	10:00AM—12:00PM	GLEESON HALL ROOM L100	CHET GERSTENBLUTH	\$50

MOVIE REVIEW

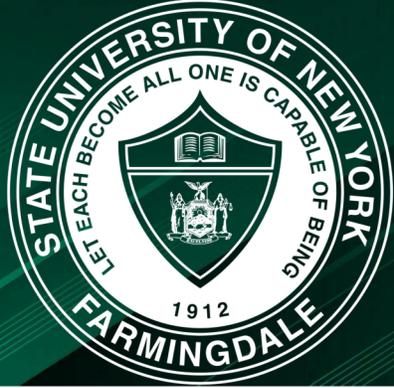
This Spring we will be presenting 8 films and following each with a lively discussion. The movies are from a variety of genres. The movies in date order are: **Chef** (2014), **Inside Man** (2006), **True Grit** (2010), **It's Complicated** (2009), **As Good as It Gets** (1997), **Ray** (2004), **Almost Famous** (2000), **The Ballad of Wallis Island** (2025)

DAY	DATES	TIMES	LOCATION	INSTRUCTOR	TUITION
FRIDAY	3/6—5/15	12:45PM—3:15PM	GLEESON HALL ROOM L111	LARRY BLAESER	\$50

DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR A NEW COURSE?

The Farmingdale Institute for Lifelong Learning (FILL) is built on the interests, expertise, and creativity of our community. If you have an idea for a new course, lecture, workshop, or experience you would like to see offered, we invite you to share it with us. Whether you are interested in teaching, co-facilitating, or simply proposing a topic you are passionate about, your input helps shape the future of FILL programming.

Our team reviews course ideas on a rolling basis and works collaboratively with members, faculty, and community experts to develop engaging, high-quality learning experiences. To submit an idea or start a conversation, please reach out to the FILL team. We look forward to building new opportunities for exploration and connection together.



FARMINGDALE'S INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING LECTURE SERIES

FINANCIAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION—MANDA KRISTAL

The lecture explores financial abuse and exploitation, explaining what it is, how it occurs, and who is most at risk. It will highlight common warning signs, real world examples and practical steps for prevention, support and reporting. The session aims to raise awareness and empower individuals and professionals to recognize and respond effectively to financial harm.

DATE	TIMES	LOCATION	TUITION
FEBRUARY 12TH	11AM—12PM	BUSINESS BUILDING ROOM 120	\$10

UNDERSTANDING THE SUPREME COURT—JAMES COLL

This lecture will examine the evolving role of the U.S. Supreme Court in American history. Our objective will be to get a better sense of how the Court works, how it deals with (or fails to deal with) controversial issues and how the "least dangerous branch" has secured its unique place in the American constitutional structure.

DATE	TIMES	LOCATION	TUITION
FEBRUARY 26TH	11AM—12PM	BUSINESS BUILDING ROOM 120	\$10

HAUNTED THEATRES ON BROADWAY—ROBERT VIAGAS

Each night after the applause dies, the curtain falls, the audience vanishes, the cleaners dust and the lights are killed, great theaters become dark and silent places. But not always quite empty. That's when the theater ghosts make their entrance and strut and fret their hour upon the shadowed stage, illuminated only by the ghost light, the solitary lamp that is required to burn through the night on every Broadway stage. Many of the busiest theaters continue to be just as busily haunted by spirits, some with well-known names and histories.

DATE	TIMES	LOCATION	TUITION
MARCH 12TH	11AM—12PM	BUSINESS BUILDING ROOM 120	\$10

AI: HOW IT AFFECTS POP CULTURE—PROF. MIKE BERREL

We've all grown up with AI as a movie villain or comic relief sidekick. But what happens when those stories shape how we actually think about technology? This talk looks at the gap between Hollywood's imagination and the reality of AI, why that disconnect matters for our future, and how we can start asking smarter questions about the tools we're building.

DATE	TIMES	LOCATION	TUITION
APRIL 16TH	11AM—12PM	BUSINESS BUILDING ROOM 120	\$10



FARMINGDALE'S INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

SOCIAL EVENTS & DAY TRIPS



WINE & CHEESE TASTING

Enjoy a relaxed evening of wine and cheese pairings. Sip, snack, and connect with others in a friendly, social setting.

DATE

FEBRUARY 3RD

TIMES

4PM –6PM

LOCATION

WARD HALL
GREAT ROOM

CONNECTIONS & CHEMISTRY GAME NIGHT

A fun, Valentine's-themed game night where friends and couples see how well they know each other. Lighthearted questions and laughs guaranteed!

DATE

FEBRUARY 17TH

TIMES

4PM –6PM

LOCATION

WARD HALL
GREAT ROOM

BINGO!

Join us for a classic bingo night full of fun and friendly competition. Grab a card, listen for the calls, and enjoy a relaxed, social evening.

DATE

MARCH 24TH

TIMES

4PM –6PM

LOCATION

WARD HALL
GREAT ROOM



FARMINGDALE'S INSTITUTE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

SOCIAL EVENTS & DAY TRIPS

TRIVIA NIGHT

Test your knowledge at a fun, social trivia night! Play in teams, enjoy friendly competition, and tackle questions from pop culture, history, and more. No pressure just laughs and good company.

DATE

APRIL 7TH

TIMES

4PM –6PM

LOCATION

WARD HALL
GREAT ROOM

PAINT A POT

Spend a low-key evening painting flowerpots to celebrate spring. All supplies provided come relax, get creative, and take home your own handmade pot.

DATE

APRIL 21ST

TIMES

4PM –6PM

LOCATION

WARD HALL
GREAT ROOM

COURSE AUDITING:

Fee for Class: \$50 for Fall or Spring Semester Plus the \$25 Membership fee

Participants will only be allowed to audit one class per term. Registration is by approval from Professor only. At this time no activity fee courses are to be audited without paying the additional fee.

SPRING 2026:

Request to Audit a Spring 2026 class is now open!

All auditing requests for Spring 2026 will be verified with the chairs/instructors before they are processed. Auditors will be put into the section(s) they requested if their requests have been approved by the instructor/chair and pending availability of open seats. As long as these criteria are met following the end of Add/Drop, auditors will receive a confirmation email and payment link.

Refer to the [Spring 2026 schedule](#) to view the course offerings on the FSC website and email us at ilr@farmingdale.edu with your audit request.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Beginning Fall 2026, the Farmingdale Institute for Lifelong Learning (FILL) will be implementing a revised auditing process designed to provide greater clarity, consistency, and access for our members. A predetermined list of courses approved for auditing will be released prior to each term, allowing members to preview and identify courses of interest in advance.

While members will be able to review the approved audit course list ahead of time, registration for audited courses will continue to occur only during the official add/drop period, and will remain subject to space availability and instructor approval.

This updated process will allow us to better align audit opportunities with academic scheduling and ensure a high-quality experience for both our members and faculty partners.





MAILED– IN REGISTRATION PROCESS

This paper registration form provides members with an additional way to register for FILL courses, lectures, and events. In addition to our online registration system (which accepts credit cards), members may choose to register by mail using this form. Mail-in registrations are **check only**. This form cannot be used for Course Auditing at this time.

All mail-in registrations are processed based on **space availability** and in the order received. If you notice space is available online for a program, but space is no longer available by the time your mailed form is received, your check will **not** be deposited and your registration will **not** be processed.

Once your form has been reviewed, you will receive an **email confirmation** indicating whether your registration was successfully processed or placed on a waitlist.

If FILL receives a *bad check* and it must be returned to the member, an additional \$25 fee will be applied. Additionally, if a bad check is received, the contributing member will be flagged and only money orders or certified bank check will be accepted hence forth.

Complete this registration form and mail it back with a check payable to:

Farmingdale State College

Mail to:

Farmingdale State College
ATTN: Farmingdale’s Institute for Lifelong Learning
2350 Broadhollow Road
Farmingdale, New York 11735

REGISTRATION FORM

MEMBER INFORMATION

MEMBER STATUS: **NEW** (TO SPRING 2026) **RETURNING** (FROM FALL 2025)

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

DATE OF BIRTHDAY: MONTH _____ DAY _____

CHECK #: _____

SELECTION FORM

COURSE SELECTION (SELECT ALL THAT YOU WISH TO REGISTER FOR)

SELECT	COURSE NAME	TUITION
<input type="checkbox"/>	U.S HISTORY FROM 1775 TO 1825	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	MEMORABLE MOMENTS IN SPORTS	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	TECH FOR TODAY	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING FOR YOU	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	MYTH OF SEPARATION OF CHURCH & STATE	\$50
FULL	INTRO TO WATERCOLOR	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	INTRO TO SPANISH	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	INTRO TO ITALIAN	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	INTRO TO GENEALOGY	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	INTRO TO PICKLEBALL	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/>	CURRENT ISSUES FORUM	\$50
FULL	MOVIE REVIEW	\$50

LECTURES AND WORKSHOPS SELECTION (SELECT ALL THAT YOU WISH TO REGISTER FOR)

SELECT	COURSE NAME	TUITION
<input type="checkbox"/>	MANDA KRISTAL	\$10
<input type="checkbox"/>	JAMES COLL	\$10
<input type="checkbox"/>	ROBERT VIAGAS	\$10
<input type="checkbox"/>	PROF. MIKE BERREL	\$10
<input type="checkbox"/>	CERTIFIED CPR TRAINING	\$30

SOCIAL EVENT SELECTION (ONE FEE OF \$20 FOR ALL EVENTS., SELECT ALL THAT YOU WISH TO REGISTER FOR)

SELECT	COURSE NAME	TUITION
<input type="checkbox"/>	WINE & CHEESE TASTING	\$20
<input type="checkbox"/>	CONNECTION & CHEMISTRY GAME NIGHT	
<input type="checkbox"/>	BINGO!	
<input type="checkbox"/>	TRIVIA NIGHT	
<input type="checkbox"/>	PAINT A POT	

TOTAL SELECTIONS	TOTAL TUITION