Curiouser and Curiouser

“Curiosity is the safeguard, not the death, of the cat,” wrote Irish man of letters Samuel Beckett. It’s been proven time and time again that nurturing your sense of curiosity can safeguard your health—indeed lengthen and strengthen your life—if not make the journey more bountiful.

With a nod to curiosity and other factors that contribute to a healthy longevity, LearningLife joins forces with the University of Minnesota Alumni Association to present our inaugural webinar: Youthful Living at Any Age (page 1).

Taught by Dr. David Alter, the webinar will offer accessible and useful information that draws on ancient wisdom and brain science.

“I believe we live in a time of unprecedented potential for living well and cultivating good long-term health,” Alter asserts. But our world is evolving rapidly and new information transmits at a frenetic pace. “Therefore, to attain the benefits of what is now possible, we have to be very focused, very disciplined, and very passionate about making the kinds of choices that open the doors to good physical, mental, and lifestyle health and wellness.”

Curious? Join us January 24!

Want more? Check out Meeting the Brain (page 9) and Don’t Believe Everything You Hear About Your Health (page 18).

—Anastasia Faunce
Program Director
Webinar: Youthful Living at Any Age

Tuesday, January 24, Noon-1:30 p.m., online only, $25 ($20, UMAA and Learning Circle)

In Western culture the words “resilient,” “vibrant,” and “connected” are most often equated with youth, but these characteristics are not solely the purview of the young. In fact, there are many ways to preserve a strong memory, a healthy brain, and a vital life as we age. In this webinar (which takes place entirely online), we will explore how—whatever your age—being fully engaged in the aging process can infuse your life with the vigor and vitality long associated with being young.

Using a blend of neuroscience research, Eastern holistic medicine, and ageless wisdom about resilience, mindfulness, and stress reduction, Dr. David Alter will share a blueprint for living more joyfully—one that includes an accessible collection of lessons and exercises that encourage and strengthen our youth-sustaining capacities. He will discuss techniques to improve resilience; methods for staying curious, agile, and optimistic; and an approach to understanding the essential roles purpose and authenticity play in the second half of life.

LearningLife webinars embrace Socrates’s belief in inquiry and exchange. Webinars include both lecture and critical discussion.

Recommended: Henry Emmons and David Alter, Staying Sharp: 9 Keys to a Youthful Brain through Modern Science and Ageless Wisdom (Touchstone, 2015).

**Dr. David Alter**, PhD, University of Minnesota, is a psychologist with 30 years of experience in health psychology, neuropsychology, and clinical hypnosis, all of which he integrates into his work. A sought-after speaker, teacher, and trainer, he is cofounder of Partners in Healing, a Minneapolis-based center for holistic health. Alter is coauthor, with Dr. Henry Emmons, of Staying Sharp.

Offered in cooperation with the University of Minnesota Alumni Association.
Wine and War: Protecting France’s Greatest Treasure

Mondays, February 6, 13, 20, 27 (four meetings), 6–8 p.m., $165

This course examines the exalted yet everyday place of wine in French culture, from the late-19th century to the present day. We’ll begin with the consequences of the Franco-Prussian War and the development of the French wine industry during and after the *phyloxera* epidemic of the late 1800s. We’ll then explore the social conflicts that occurred in the vineyards of Champagne and Southern France during the years leading to WWI; the practice of imbibing in the trenches of WWI; and the impact of the inter-war years, including the wine trade and economic crisis.

Next, we’ll turn our attention to 1940, when France fell to the Nazis and the German army undertook a campaign to pillage the country’s wine bottles and crops, only to be met with fierce resistance from French wine producers who undertook daring measures to save their treasured commodity.

The final session (February 27) will be held at the University’s Campus Club where Certified Sommelier Jason Kallsen will discuss the era of globalization in the wine trade, and taste wines that reflect the regions and personalities described in the course, including Champagne, Burgundy, and Bordeaux.

Required: Donald and Petie Kladstrup, *Wine and War: The French, the Nazis, and the Battle for France’s Greatest Treasure.* (Broadway Books, 2002). A $10 fee, payable at the final class, will cover the cost of wine.

**John Kim Munholland** is Professor Emeritus of the University of Minnesota where he taught courses on modern European history for 42 years. He is a frequent LearningLife instructor.

**Jason Kallsen** has been LearningLife’s lead wine instructor for more than a decade. A Certified Sommelier, Kallsen has operated Twin Cities Wine Education since 1998.

learninglife
The Internet of Things

Saturday, February 11, 9–11 a.m., $55

The Internet of Things (IoT) can be found in your home, your office, your car, your city—really, it’s everywhere around you—but what is it? How is it being used and what’s in store for the future? The IoT is the network of physical objects or “things” embedded with electronics: software, sensors, and connectivity.

It may sound like science fiction but IoT technology is already shaping how we live. Products like smart cars, streetlight sensors, medication-dispensing devices, and smartphone-controlled thermostats, already offer efficiency, safety, and comfort. With more than 20 billion connected devices projected by 2020, the IoT is one of the most exciting and fastest-growing areas of technology today.

This seminar will delve into where the IoT came from, where it is today, and where it’s headed in the future. We’ll also cover the work of Minnesota companies building the next generation of connected products.

LearningLife seminars embrace Socrates’s belief in inquiry and exchange. Seminars include both lecture and critical discussion. Tuition includes continental breakfast.

Justin Grammens, certificate, operating systems and programming languages, University of Minnesota, is the owner and founder of Recursive Awesome, an IoT analytics company that provides data through connected products. The owner of IoT Weekly News, he also is a founding partner of Lab651 and cofounder of IoTFuse and Code42. Grammens colaunched Minnesota’s Internet of Things Hack Day and is an adjunct professor at the University of St. Thomas.
Black Bear Hibernation: Healing the Human Heart

Thursday, February 16, 6–8 p.m., $55

In northwestern Minnesota a black bear hibernates, unaware that a team of researchers from the University of Minnesota’s Visible Heart Laboratory and Medtronic, Inc. are monitoring its state of inactivity. With help from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, researchers have implanted heart monitors into several bears in order to understand how they survive hibernation. The hope is that this research will benefit people who are bedridden or have heart disease.

Led by Dr. Paul Iaizzo, the Visible Heart Lab seeks to understand the behaviors and physiological parameters of hibernating black bears so it can develop “translational applications” for human medicine. People who are bedridden and suffer from muscle atrophy could benefit from a better understanding of what allows bears to emerge from hibernation fully alert and moving. This research also has the potential to protect human organs that have been deprived of oxygen, for example, a transplant organ such as a heart.

LearningLife seminars embrace Socrates’s belief in inquiry and exchange. Seminars include both lecture and critical discussion.

Paul Iaizzo, PhD, University of Minnesota; FHRS, is a professor in the Department of Surgery, the Department of Integrative Biology and Physiology, and the Carlson School of Management at the University. A principal investigator for the Visible Heart Research Laboratory, Iaizzo also is Director of Education for the Lillehei Heart Institute and Associate Program Director of Education and Outreach for the Institute for Engineering in Medicine.
Learning from Leonardo

Tuesdays, February 21, 28, March 7 (three meetings), 6:30−8:30 p.m., $130

We are all familiar with Leonardo da Vinci as an accomplished Renaissance master and prolific creator of masterpieces. Also well known is his forward-thinking integration of art and science which fed his practical and inexhaustible expression of creativity in many areas.

While da Vinci’s genius often appears inherent (and therefore, unique to him), his mindset and practice—dedication to process, commitment to intellectual and artistic production—has lessons for anyone who seeks to be more creative.

The theory of multiple intelligences put forward by psychologist Howard Gardner connects da Vinci’s genius to a modern understanding of human intelligence: that we are gifted with an almost unlimited potential for learning and creativity. Gardner proposes that we all possess multiple intelligence-related abilities: musical−rhythmic, visual–spatial, verbal–linguistic, logical–mathematical, bodily–kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal, and that we exercise these abilities to different degrees. Yet, as da Vinci exemplified, creative genius is nothing if not supported by regular practice.

Drawing on the work of Martin Kemp and Michael Gelb, this course will explore da Vinci’s mindset and practice as a means to exercise (and expand!) your multiple intelligences through daily practice.

Required: Michael Gelb, How to Think like Leonardo da Vinci (Dell, reissue 2000).

Virajita Singh, assistant vice provost, Office for Equity and Diversity; senior research fellow and adjunct assistant professor, College of Design, University of Minnesota, studied architecture in India and the US.
iPhoneography: The Editing Process

Saturday, February 25, 9 a.m.–4 p.m., $140

Photographic technology has come a long way since the beloved Brownie and popular Polaroid days, and it’s now possible to both capture and create quality images using an iPhone or iPad. Heavy on vision and light on equipment, this immersion focuses on making the most of your images through editing.

To start, each participant will bring to class one image. And because sharing is one of the best ways to accelerate learning, participants will spend the morning discussing one another’s photos. As part of this process, you will be asked to talk about your objectives—what it is you hope to say though your photograph.

The instructor will then provide feedback on your image and suggest ways to strengthen your vision, technique, and approach—all with the aim of helping you grow as a photographer.

After lunch, you will work on editing your photo using only the iPhone/iPad and some inexpensive apps. You’ll see how even small alterations can significantly alter the mood or emotion of a photo. Honoring your objectives, the instructor will help you to visualize your final image and advance that vision.

By day’s end, you’ll not only have a gallery-quality photograph, you’ll have learned—through both sharing and doing—how to express your unique photographic voice.

Required: iPhone or iPad. Tuition includes breakfast and lunch.

Steven Wewerka, BA, University of New Mexico, is a freelance photographer who has worked for numerous companies, foundations, and periodicals, both in the United States and abroad. His work has appeared on the cover of Life and in the pages of Newsweek, Time, Sports Illustrated and the New York Times.
State of the State: Understanding Minnesota’s Economy

Wednesday, March 8, 1–3 p.m., $55

You may have seen the forecast of Minnesota’s economy and budget in the news, but do you really understand what it means for the state? The headlines cover the basics: whether the economy is growing fast or slow, whether the budget outlook has worsened or improved, and what the reactions and priorities of politicians are when reviewing a forecast or budget. This seminar will go beyond the headlines.

State Economist Laura Kalambokidis will explain how Minnesota’s forecasts are developed and how they impact state budgets. For example, the February 2017 forecast will outline changes in projected spending and revenues. It will also be the starting point for negotiations between the governor and legislature about the state’s two-year financial plan.

Kalambokidis also will discuss what drives the state’s economy, how the labor market is evolving, and how global economic events affect Minnesota businesses. In addition, she’ll evaluate how changing economic conditions impact the tax revenue collected by the state.

Be ready to share your own ideas about Minnesota’s economy, taxes, and spending priorities!

LearningLife seminars embrace Socrates’s belief in inquiry and exchange. Seminars include both lecture and critical discussion. Tuition includes refreshments.

Laura Kalambokidis, PhD, University of Michigan; BS, University of Minnesota, is a Professor of Applied Economics at the University. As Minnesota’s State Economist, she is responsible for producing and presenting the state’s revenue and economic forecasts. Kalambokidis was formerly a financial economist in the Office of Tax Analysis in the US Department of Treasury.
Meeting the Brain

Saturday, March 11, 9 a.m.–4 p.m., $140

In recognition of this year’s Brain Awareness Week (March 13–17), LearningLife has joined forces with the University’s Department of Neuroscience and the Brain Conditions arm of MnDRIVE (Minnesota Discovery and Research Innovation Economy Initiative) to present this unique opportunity to consider and celebrate the human brain.

The day will include lectures, illustrated presentations, video screenings, and brains-on activities led by four of the University’s finest neuroscience researchers and educators. Topics include: *The Three-Pound Universe in Your Head; How Does the Brain Do That?; How We Make Decisions and How Those Decisions Go Wrong;* and *Bending and Mending the Brain, or Pinpointing the Causes of Brain Disorders and Discovering New Treatments.*
From learning about the molecular- and network-level building blocks of the brain to peering into the future of neuroscience, the day is certain to be a sensory feast of and for the mind!

Tuition includes breakfast and lunch.

A project of the Dana Foundation, Brain Awareness Week (BAW) is the global campaign to increase public awareness of the progress and benefits of brain research. In 2016, BAW partners hosted 800 events in 43 countries and 40 states.

Janet M. Dubinsky, PhD, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is a Professor of Neuroscience at the University of Minnesota where her research examines subcellular changes in neurons that may signal the presence and severity of neurodegenerative diseases. Dubinsky is a nationally recognized neuroscience educator and chair of the University’s Neuroscience Outreach Committee.

Timothy Ebner, MD, PhD, University of Minnesota, is the Max E. and Mary LaDue Pickworth Endowed Chair in Neuroscience and head of the Department of Neuroscience at the University. Ebner also is chair of the leadership team for the Brain Conditions arm of MnDRIVE. One goal of his research is to reveal the brain signals that allow people to learn, make, and refine movements; another is to understand how those signals are disrupted in movement disorders.

A. David Redish, PhD, Carnegie Mellon University, is a Distinguished McKnight University Professor of Neuroscience at the University of Minnesota whose research interests include the brain systems responsible for decision-making behavior. This provides a framework for understanding how decision-making processes can go awry, such as with addiction or other psychiatric disorders.

Patrick Rothwell, PhD, University of Minnesota, is an Assistant Professor of Neuroscience at the University where he also is a neuromodulation scholar for the Brain Conditions arm of MnDRIVE. One goal of his research is to identify the causes of brain conditions such as autism and drug addiction in order to develop treatment therapies.

Offered in cooperation with the Department of Neuroscience and MnDRIVE Brain Conditions.
American Indian Philosophies

Mondays, March 20, 27, April 3 (three meetings), 6:30–8:30 p.m., $130

*Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.*

—Chief Si’ahl (Seattle)

The belief that all things connect has proven to be true for the philosophies of the indigenous people of North America, as their worldviews have been shaped, in part, by European influence and modern society. The complex history of the native people is forever bound to the influence of initial European contact—in both opposition and cooperation—and continues to evolve with the ideals of modern time.

While the past may be challenging and controversial, reflection remains critical to understanding the native people’s resistance and survival. Through the introduction of the philosophical thought and spiritual beliefs of the American Indian people, you will examine numerous topics, including native medicines, ceremonies, governance, ecology, humor, and tribal histories. From this exploration you will learn how native beliefs are often at odds with modern society, and how these beliefs have been formed and altered by external influences both past and present.

**Alex Ghebregzi** is a teaching specialist in the Department of American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota. For the last 35 years he has lived among the Dakota and Ojibwe Nation of Minnesota and is a member of the Miccousuki tribe. Ghebregzi’s study of global indigenous philosophy includes the Sami people of Norway, Sweden, and Finland; the Maori people of New Zealand; and many first Nation people of Peru and Mexico.
Located on the Mediterranean Sea between the Italian and Balkan peninsulas, and situated at the mouth of the Po and the Piave rivers, Venice is known as the Bride of the Sea, the Queen of the Adriatic, the Floating City, and the City of Masks.

Built over centuries, this small site of architectural beauty, art, and craft has also been known as a place of formidable economic and naval power, political and religious turbulence, and great dynastic families (not to mention the rise-and-fall intrigue associated with their respective reigns). Traditionally known as the Most Serene Republic of Venice, the city and its people were shaped, in part, by threats from the Ottomans, the French, the Austrians, Germanic tribes, plagues, and more.

This course offers artistic and philosophical engagement with Venice and looks at its impact on world culture. Philosopher Charles Taliaferro will highlight the ideas that shaped Venetian culture and its success as a center of East-West trade. Artist Jil Evans will survey the paintings of Venice and the artists who launched a new direction in painting, one giving precedence to color and light. The instructors also will reflect on contemporary Venice: the city’s drive to protect itself from the ravages of tourism, and its fragile existence as a floating city.

Tuition includes breakfast and lunch.

Jil Evans is an artist and writer who has exhibited and published her work internationally. Her paintings are held in numerous private and public collections, including those of the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Walker Art Center.

Charles Taliaferro, PhD, Brown University; MTS, Harvard University, is Chair of the Philosophy Department at St. Olaf College and the author/editor of more than 20 books, including The History of Evil in Antiquity (Routledge, 2017).
This course delves into three seminal works that explore the racial conundrum of our United States. Bold, innovative, canonical—these are books by authors who refuse easy answers and trendy solutions. Rather, they shine the light of their respective talents on the essential questions as to why skin color exerts such a huge, destructive shadow on American culture.

We’ll begin with *The Bluest Eye* (March 30), the virtuosic debut of Nobel- and Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Toni Morrison. A powerful examination of our obsession with beauty and conformity, the book poses commanding questions about race, class, and gender.

On April 20 we’ll discuss Ta-Nehisi Coates’s National Book Award-winning memoir *Between the World and Me*, which Morrison calls “required reading.” This #1 *New York Times* bestseller is the winner of numerous awards, and Coates, a correspondent for *The Atlantic* and a MacArthur fellow, is often referred to as “the single best writer on the subject of race in the US.”

Claudia Rankine’s poetry collection, *Citizen: An American Lyric* (May 18) was named One of the Best Books of 2015 by *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *Slate*, NPR, and others. Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, PEN Open Book Award, NAACP Image Award, and a finalist for many other prizes, *Citizen* has been called “groundbreaking,” “audacious,” and “a masterwork” that “throws a Molotov cocktail at the notion that reduction of injustice is the same as freedom.”


**Toni McNaron** is professor emerita of English at the University of Minnesota where she was the recipient of five awards for outstanding teaching, including the College of Continuing Education’s Distinguished Educator Award.
Bohemian Rhapsody: Puccini’s La Bohème

Tuesdays, April 25, May 2 (two meetings), 6:30–8:30 p.m., $85

First performed in 1896, Giacomo Puccini’s La Bohème has retained its place as the most frequently performed opera in the world for nearly a century.

With a libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, the story is set in Paris and based on Henri Murger’s novel Scènes de la Vie de Bohème.

The title derives from the story’s heroine, the seamstress Mimi, who keeps company with a rootless Latin Quarter community of “Bohemian” artists and intellectuals, including her lover, Rodolfo.

And while there’s plenty that celebrates the tight-knit group surviving on high-spirited hijinks and dreams, the opera also portrays how bleak the lives of the Bohemians could be, and the portrayal of Mimi’s death endures as one of the most heartbreaking operatic scenes ever created.

Tickets to the Minnesota Opera’s production of La Bohème are not included in tuition. However, registered participants will receive information about receiving a 20 percent discount on tickets to the performance of their choice.

Daniel Freeman, PhD, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, has taught courses in music history at the University of Minnesota and the Smithsonian Institution. Considered the world’s leading historian in the field of 18th-century Czech music, Freeman is both a musicologist and pianist. His most recent book is Mozart in Prague (Bearclaw Publishers, 2013).
When Nebraska newspaper editor and Secretary of Agriculture J. Sterling Morton founded Arbor Day in 1872, his idea was simple—set aside a special day for tree planting. Today, countries throughout the world celebrate Arbor Day. In the United States, the holiday typically takes place on the last Friday in April, though this date can vary based on a state’s climate and a planting season.

Now, 145 years later, Morton’s idea is as important as ever. Not only do trees clean our water and cool our homes, trees also grow fruit, provide natural beauty, and sustain our environment. But people aren’t the only ones who benefit—so do bees, butterflies, birds, and other pollinators.

Declining pollinator populations (particularly bee and monarch populations) have been a pressing concern for many years, and trees may be one of the solutions to boosting pollinator numbers and helping them to thrive.

In this course, urban forestry professor and researcher Gary Johnson will share how to identify which trees and shrubs attract and fuel all kinds of pollinators, as well as where to position these woody-stemmed perennials so they provide maximum benefits in the landscape.

Participants should be prepared to walk outdoors for a portion of each session.

**Gary Johnson**, Professor, Urban and Community Forestry, University of Minnesota, is Chair of the Minnesota Shade Tree Short Course. His research includes stress disorders, diseases, risk assessment and management, preservation, root systems, and nursery tree production. He is the recipient of the Arbor Day Foundation’s Frederick Law Olmsted Award for his outstanding contribution to tree planting, conservation, and stewardship.
From Ideation to Creation: 3D Printing

Saturday, April 29, 9 a.m.—4 p.m., $140

You’ve read about it, you’ve seen it on the news, maybe you’ve even benefited from one of its products—an action figure, hearing aids, chocolate, a prosthetic duck foot. (Yes, you heard right.) But what exactly is 3D printing? How does it work? And how does it affect our day-to-day lives?

The use of 3D printing for prototypes and finished products is certain to become a disruptive technology. From large, industrial printers to DIY models bought at home-improvement stores, 3D printers are intriguing to both businesses and individuals alike. (Oh, and the industry has quadrupled to the tune of $4.1 billion in the last five years.)

This course will look at the basics of 3D printing (or additive manufacturing)—its key terms, technologies, the processes that are changing the way companies develop and create objects, and how these could shape our lives in the near future. There will be an examination of the process from ideation to creation with live 3D printer demonstration.

We’ll conclude with case studies that explore the key ethical, economical, and societal considerations of the world of replication—a world that is already revolutionizing everything from construction to pharmaceuticals.

Tuition includes breakfast and lunch.

**Derek Mathers** is an adjunct faculty member in the University of Minnesota’s College of Continuing Education, where he teaches the Big Ten’s first course dedicated to 3D printing and additive manufacturing. As Director of Advanced Applications Development at Worrell, he specializes in the use of 3D printing for medicine.

**David Busacker**, a recent University of Minnesota Industrial and Systems Engineering graduate, is a client solutions consultant at SGK, Inc. He recently become an adjunct faculty member for the College of Continuing Education’s 3D printing and additive manufacturing course.
The Unusual Suspects: Obscure White Wines

Mondays, May 8, 15, 22 (three meetings), 6:30–8:30 p.m.
Coffman Memorial Union, Campus Club, East Bank campus, $130

Vin blanc, vino blanco, vinho branco, vino bianca: what better time than spring to explore the world of white wine? But we aren’t talking about the usual suspects—Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Grigio, Riesling, Chardonnay.

It’s common to gravitate toward these reliable standbys, be it out of convenience, price point, or even to avoid the intimidation and uncertainty that can go hand-in-hand with something lesser known. But did you know there are 9,996 more varietals to discover?

Join sommelier Leslee Miller on an excursion into the world of esoteric, yet quaffable whites made from some of these more obscure varietals, including Treixadura, Assyrtiko, Grillo-Müller Thurgau, Scheurebe, and more.

As you sip through this vino venture, you’ll learn about wine-label interpretation and the ins and outs of tasting. You’ll also expand your knowledge of grape varietals and international wine-growing boundaries.

No wine experience is necessary. A $40 fee, payable to the instructor at the first class, will cover the cost of wine for all sessions.

Leslee Miller is a dually certified sommelier through the International Sommelier Guild and the Court of Master Sommeliers. She is the sole owner of the wine-consulting firm, Amusée.
Don’t Believe Everything You Hear About Your Health

Tuesday, May 9, 6–8 p.m., $55

Health news regularly includes medical advice about how to treat, prevent, and protect yourself, but can you believe what’s reported? To substantiate such advice, you need to examine the claims and analyze the evidence. Industry watchdog HealthNewsReview.org has long challenged health claims and helped the general public gather accurate and balanced information about the tradeoffs involved in making health care decisions.

Through the site, publisher Gary Schwitzer and his team educate consumers about how to evaluate health news found in journalism, advertising, marketing, and public relations releases. HealthNewsReview.org also has fostered public dialogue about health care interventions by providing resources such as the ten essential criteria for evaluating claims about treatments, tests, products, and procedures.

In this seminar, Schwitzer will discuss the positive and negative influence of media messages on the public’s understanding of health news, but more, he’ll explain how to read between the lines.

LearningLife seminars embrace Socrates’s belief in inquiry and exchange. Seminars include both lecture and critical discussion.

Gary Schwitzer, adjunct associate professor, School of Public Health, University of Minnesota, has taught health journalism workshops for the National Institutes of Health, the Association of Health Care Journalists, the National Cancer Institute, and MIT. The publisher of HealthNewsReview.org, he has been honored for his contributions to medical communication by the Informed Medical Decisions Foundation and the American Medical Writers Association.
The Only Way to Win is Not to Play: Philosophical Perspectives on Peace and War

Wednesdays, May 10, 17, 24 (three meetings), 2–4 p.m., $130

Is war “natural”? Are we always self-interested and drawn to compete with one another if there are spoils to be gained? Why do we fight? Is there a genetic basis for violence? Must law and order be imposed rigidly to keep violence in check?

Or are we naturally peaceful and go to war only when we have lost our way? Has competition for resources and hyperbolic misunderstanding of the world’s religions and cultures caused us to forget the harmony of the first people?

Whether in the blood of reality or the fantasy of virtuality, today we seem to be locked in perpetual conflict. But after 100 million war deaths in the 20th century, there is strong evidence that we are becoming more peaceful. Violence is no longer easily tolerated. War is increasingly an illegitimate means of solving disputes between people and societies.

The Romans thought of war as always glorious—to soldier and empire. But we now apply moral terms to conflicts. If some wars are morally necessary, unnecessary wars are morally reprehensible. Can there be a “just” war? If yes, what would make it so? And is peace merely an absence of war, or is it a state of equality, autonomy, and human flourishing?

With wise words from Plato, Margaret Mead, Sigmund Freud, Barack Obama, and more, this course examines philosophical perspectives on peace and conflict, including what our conflicts say about us and what can we do today to achieve a more peaceful tomorrow.

Joel K. Jensen, PhD, University of Colorado, Denver; MA, University of Colorado, Boulder, is a professor of philosophy at North Hennepin Community College, where he teaches courses in ethics, logic, peace, and the environment. He is the author of There Exists an X, X is a Sandwich (Sandwich Bar Press, 2012).
The Ford Century in Minnesota

Saturday, May 20, 9–11 a.m., $55

For nearly a century, the Ford Motor Company had a major presence in Minnesota. It began with the sale of “Fordmobiles” in a St. Cloud bicycle shop. Then came the production of Model Ts at the world’s tallest automobile plant in Minneapolis and a three-story structure in St. Paul—both still standing, yet both rendered functionally obsolete after the development of the assembly line.

These closures led Henry Ford to build the Twin Cities Assembly Plant on a 125-acre site in St. Paul overlooking the High Dam on the Mississippi River, which allowed for navigation and hydroelectric power. The plant would go on to manufacture millions of cars, trucks, tractors, and military vehicles and transform the lives of many Minnesotans.

Join historian Brian McMahon as he shares Ford’s affinity for the “Viking farmers” of the state, and the company’s transformation through cultural changes and events such as the Depression, the rise of the United Auto Workers Union, World War II, women in the workforce, competition from imported cars, globalization, outsourcing, and finally, the closing and demolition of the Twin Cities Assembly Plant in 2011.

LearningLife seminars embrace Socrates’s belief in inquiry and exchange. Seminars include both lecture and critical discussion. Tuition includes continental breakfast.


**Brian McMahon** is a trained architect who has lectured and written extensively on industry, urban history, and architecture. He has been awarded research grants from the Minnesota Historical Society, the Minnesota Labor Interpretive Center, the Ramsey County Historical Society, and the Minnesota Sesquicentennial Commission. His most recent book is *The Ford Century in Minnesota.*
Hot on the heels of our popular *Meeting the Brain* immersion, LearningLife again joins the University’s Department of Neuroscience, the Udall Center of Excellence for Parkinson’s Disease Research, and MnDRIVE Brain Conditions to explore forays into mending the human brain. This immersion offers the opportunity to learn, firsthand, about the University’s groundbreaking research and promising new treatments for a host of brain conditions and diseases.

Following introductory remarks by Dr. Jerrold Vitek, four of the University’s finest neuroscience researchers will highlight their brain-mending discoveries aimed at elucidating and alleviating some of our most devastating brain conditions. Topics include: *Identifying and Understanding the Source of Forgetfulness in Alzheimer’s Disease; Lighting the Way to New Epilepsy Treatments; Neurobiology of Drug-induced Brain Changes and Addiction;* and *Brain-mending in Parkinson’s Disease and Movement Disorders: Past, Present, Future.*

Tuition includes breakfast and lunch.

**Scott Cooper**, MD, PhD, Columbia University, is an Assistant Professor of Neurology at the University of Minnesota where he also is a clinical neurologist, co-leader of the clinical core for the Udall Center of Excellence for Parkinson’s Disease Research, and a Neuromodulation Scholar for MnDRIVE Brain Conditions. His research focuses on developing neuromodulation therapies for Parkinson’s symptoms that resist available treatments.

**Esther Krook-Magnuson**, PhD, Georgetown University, is an Assistant Professor of Neuroscience at the University of Minnesota where she also is a Neuromodulation Scholar for MnDRIVE Brain Conditions. Her lab works to improve understanding of neuronal networks in health and brain-based disorders, including identifying circuit elements capable of inhibiting seizures.

**Sylvain Lesné**, PhD, Université de Caen, is an Associate Professor of Neuroscience at the University of Minnesota where he also is an Institute for Translational Neuroscience Scholar and the Associate Director of the N. Bud Grossman Center for Memory Research and Care. His research goals are to identify the cause of memory impairment in Alzheimer’s disease using cellular and mouse models, and to develop new treatments for the disease.
Mark Thomas, PhD, University of California, Los Angeles, is an Associate Professor of Neuroscience and Psychology at the University of Minnesota, where he also is the Director of MnDRIVE Optogenetics. His research team is working to find a neural “switch” that can turn off relapse behavior in order to help people in recovery from addiction to stay abstinent.

Jerrold Vitek, MD, PhD, University of Minnesota, is a McKnight Professor and Head of the Department of Neurology at the University. He also is Director of the Neuromodulation Research Center, leads the Udall Center of Excellence for Parkinson’s Disease Research, and is a leadership team member of MnDRIVE Brain Conditions. World leaders in neuromodulation and deep-brain stimulation therapies, Vitek and his team are dedicated to developing deep-brain stimulation therapies; this research is often conducted in partnership with Minnesota companies such as Boston Scientific, Medtronic, and St. Jude Medical.

Offered in cooperation with the Department of Neuroscience, the Udall Center of Excellence for Parkinson’s Disease Research, and MnDRIVE Brain Conditions.
Timely topics. Lively discussions.

Best of Class: Can We Feed the World Without Destroying It?
February 2, 7 p.m.

Dr. Jason Hill, Associate Professor, Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering, College of Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resource Sciences; Resident Fellow, Institute on the Environment

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**On the Cover:** *Falcon Heavy Rocket and Dragon Spacecraft* courtesy of SpaceX.

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