***The SUNY Cortland Brooks Museum***

***is pleased to announce the 2025-2026 lecture series theme***

***The Culture of Turmoil***

*All lectures begin at 4:30 pm in Moffett 115 on the date noted*

*A reception to welcome speakers (4:00-4:30) will be held for each talk in the Brooks Museum (Moffett 116).*

***Tokie Laotan-Brown***

*(Adjunct Lecturer, Cultural Studies, SUNY Cortland)*

***Patricia Martínez de la Vega Mansilla***

*(Lecturer, Modern Languages, SUNY Cortland)*

***Nimisha Muttiah***

*(Associate Professor, Communication Disorders & Sciences, SUNY Cortland)*

***Immigration: Confusion, Uncertainty…Fear***

***Wednesday, September 24, 2025***

*In the last year, immigration has become a concept that touches almost everyone who lives in the United States. The current political discourse has initiated chaos, not only in headlines, but in the daily lives of individuals, their families (whether they immigrated long ago or recently), friends, colleagues, employees, students, and many others around them. In this redefinition of “The United States,” residents are often forced to consider the people they have long known, or just met, in terms of: “where are you really from?”; or “how long have you been here?”; or “how did you get here?”. This has naturally provoked intense anxiety and fear among those who entered illegally. However, legal residents and naturalized citizens have also begun to experience confusion, uncertainty, and even fear. The presenters, who hail from three separate continents, will reflect on the impact of this American “new normal” with particular reference to their own experiences and those around them.*

***Hon. Kevin Kuehner***

*Justice, New York State Supreme Court*

***Divorce Court: Managing Chaos with Order***

***Wednesday, November 12, 2025***

*In New York state, a legally binding marriage can be unilaterally dissolved in court. Only the New York State Supreme Court has jurisdiction to grant a divorce. Since 1980, reforms have made divorce less costly and courts no longer require proof of the cause for divorce. Custody decisions are now focused on the child’s right to have a relationship with both parents. Revisiting financial decisions made during the marriage is largely prohibited.  Discussing the divorce or other parent with children is prohibited. While these reforms have improved the process, they can unintentionally cause emotional disconnection. Parties often feel alienated when told their personal grievances “don’t matter," which can lead to confusion, frustration, and disengagement. An approach which integrates empathy and education—in which lawyers and judges acknowledge these feelings and explain the system’s evolution—can help litigants understand and accept the process, leading to better outcomes and more constructive resolutions.*

***Joseph Anthony***

*Assistant Professor, Political Science, SUNY Cortland*

***U.S. Politics in Turmoil: New Era or Same Old Story?***

***Wednesday, March 25, 2026***

*Many scholars see the recent polarization in U.S. politics as rivaling the nation’s most divided periods, including the Civil War. Additionally, the scope of executive power—i.e., the Presidency—has expanded in ways that stretch many of the norms and expectations set by previous precedent. The integrity and structure of elections in the U.S. are under attack in ways not seen before in the modern political era. Finally, the role of the U.S. in the global political landscape appears to be changing as political leadership increasingly calls for more isolationist and quid-pro-quo policies with traditional allies. Are these challenges to the U.S. political system new or just part of the natural ebb and flow of democratic processes? Can the U.S. democratic experiment withstand the modern challenges facing it? What lies ahead for the oldest democracy in the world? Most importantly, what can everyday people do to help shape U.S. democracy into a more effective and representative system? This Brooks lecture will dive into these key topics and questions.*

***Jill Murphy***

*Associate Professor, Health, SUNY Cortland*

***The Love Recession***

***Wednesday, April 8, 2026***

*Our society is experiencing a decline in various aspects of interpersonal connection and additional public health challenges. Examples of these include decreased dating and romantic relationships, declining birth rates, worsening mental health outcomes, rising drug overdose incidents, issues of accessing healthcare, and increasing political polarization. These interconnected issues can be viewed as part of a broader “Love Recession.” This talk will explore the "Love Recession" by drawing upon epidemiological data, tools, and models, including using a socio-ecological approach to explore how individual behaviors are shaped by family, community, and societal factors. By understanding how these layers interact and influence health outcomes, we can identify opportunities for intervention.  Despite the challenges facing our world, there is hope if we can build stronger connections, improve health, and work toward reversing the “Love Recession.”*

*The lecture series is sponsored by a grant from Cortland Auxiliary Services and the Cortland College Foundation*