



2025 Spring Term
Tuesdays
2:00–4:00 p.m.
April 15 - May 20



THE SCIENCE AND HISTORY OF GEMSTONES

Presented by Carrie Wright, University of Southern Indiana

There is so much more to gemstones than sparkle. Geology instructor Carrie Wright takes us on an exploration of their geological origin, the science of their physical properties, and their role in and impact on human history, economics, and the environment. Registration required to receive the Zoom link. Recordings of sessions are available to registered participants.



April 15: Gemology Basics. What is a gem? How do gemologists study, identify, and “grade” gems? This session will cover gem classification, mineral properties, and unusual properties of some gems.

April 22: Geologic Origins of Gemstones. Covers the major earth processes that form gems, including igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks in which they can be found.

April 29: The Science and Lore of Gem Color. Examines historical classification of gems based on color, and some associated myths, legends, and superstitions surrounding gems. Also looks at the modern understanding of the causes of color in major gemstones.

May 6: Colored Stones. Focuses on the Big Three of colored stones (ruby, sapphire, and emerald), sharing famous examples in history and modern museums, as well as synthetics and simulants.

May 13: Diamonds, DeBeers, and Conflict Stones. Investigates the geologic origins of diamonds, famous diamonds, the economic history of the DeBeers monopoly on diamonds, and the conflict stone crises of the 1990s and early 2000s.

May 20: Crown Jewels and Gemstones/Jewelry Styles of the Late 18th and early 19th centuries. Explores jewelry in the collections of (mostly) European monarchs, as well as a specific look at jewelry and gemstones during author Jane Austen's lifetime in the late 1700s.



Carrie Wright has taught Geology and Environmental Science for over two decades in both college settings and to the general public. She holds masters degrees in Geology (Mineralogy focus), Science Teaching (Historical Geology focus), and English (focus on Writing to learn in the sciences) and has taught undergraduate courses in Geology at the University of Southern Indiana since 2006.

TUITION
6 Sessions
\$80.00 Members \$95.00 Non-Members

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