



COLLEGE OF PROFESSIONAL
AND CONTINUING STUDIES
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA



Life Is Learning

OLLI AT OU FALL 2026



THE GOAL OF OLLI AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Oklahoma is dedicated to promoting lifelong learning and personal growth of older adults through a variety of noncredit courses. Our courses range from one-time offerings such as “Mornings with the Professor” to longer, more specific courses like “Senior Seminars.”

OLLI at OU serves those individuals age 50+ who are curious about unique subjects and who love to learn. Our goal is to create an innovative learning environment that fosters learning through socialization of members and classroom discussion.

THE BERNARD OSHER FOUNDATION

The Bernard Osher Foundation seeks to improve quality of life through the support of lifelong learning institutes such as the one here at the University of Oklahoma. Founded in 1977 by Bernard Osher, the Bernard Osher Foundation has funded more than 100 Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes on college and university campuses all over the United States. Continued support from the Bernard Osher Foundation is contingent upon membership, so membership matters. To learn more about the Bernard Osher Foundation, visit osherfoundation.org.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

OLLI at OU has met the initial 500-member goal established by the Bernard Osher Foundation. We must continue to have a robust membership to offer as many quality programs as possible.

OLLI courses are open to anyone age 50+. Membership in OLLI is required to enroll in courses. Our members enjoy the following benefits:

- The satisfaction of supporting OLLI at OU while enjoying engaging courses from some of the university's most interesting faculty
- Being part of a social network that allows members to interact with peers of a similar age and background
- A parking tag used to attend OLLI at OU courses

PARKING DURING OLLI COURSES

A parking hang tag is required to park in any multi-purpose parking lot. A tag is included with your membership. If you are attending an OLLI course in the OCCE Forum Building, please park in the lot on the southeast side of the building.

THE ERNA JONA MACDONNELL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Erna Jona MacDonnell Scholarship Fund has been established to provide OLLI at OU memberships to age 50+ learners so that they may enroll in OLLI at OU courses. The scholarship is need-based, and awards are decided by committee. Those interested in applying for the scholarship should contact the OLLI at OU offices at (405) 325-3488 or celliot@ou.edu.

Erna embraced OLLI courses because they could increase the breadth and depth of her knowledge. No matter what someone's life experiences or education might be, OLLI courses allow members to deepen their knowledge of a familiar subject or explore an unfamiliar one.



LEAVE A LEGACY

Create a lasting impact with a gift through your estate to the OU Foundation, supporting students for generations to come.

Your planned gift today ensures OU's academic excellence remains accessible and innovative.



Contact **Jill Hughes**, Assistant VP for Principal and Planned Giving, at 405.321.1174 or plannedgiving@oufoundation.org.
Learn more at oulegacy.org.



MEET THE OU FOUNDATION PLANNED GIVING TEAM



JILL HUGHES

Asst. Vice President for Principal & Planned Giving
jillq@ou.edu | 405.250.8503



DIANA LASSWELL

Executive Director of Planned Giving
dlasswell@ou.edu | 405.310.4874



REX URICE

Executive Director for Planned Giving
daniel-urice@ouhsc.edu | 405.202.7708



ALYSHA CLARK

Director of Planned Giving
alyshaclark@ou.edu | 405.914.4947

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Fall is always a magical time on campus. The energy of new freshmen fills the air, football season is right around the corner, and OLLI members eagerly return to classrooms to reconnect with friends and learn from their favorite professors.

This year feels even more meaningful as we celebrate our 20th anniversary at the University of Oklahoma. What began in 1989 as Senior Adult Services—with just a handful of classes each semester—has grown into a thriving OLLI program, now offering more than 50 courses each term. Today, it stands as a truly unique and valued part of the OU community. I'm especially proud to have been part of OLLI at OU since its beginning in 2006. Over the years, we've shared countless milestones, built lasting connections with incredible members, and learned from outstanding faculty—all of which make our OLLI experience second to none.

As you explore this catalog, I encourage you to follow your curiosity. Try something new, step outside your comfort zone, and discover something unexpected—you might just find a new passion waiting for you.

I look forward to seeing you this fall!

— Chris

SENIOR SEMINARS NORMAN

Classes held on OU's Norman campus occur in the
Thurman J. White Forum building:
1704 Asp Ave.
Norman, OK 73072

Rooms are equipped with audio/visual systems for
class presentations and complimentary coffee and water
are provided for each class.

Parking is available with the OLLI parking pass
included in your membership packet.

SENIOR SEMINARS are four- to six-week courses that combine
the structure of traditional classes with lively, discussion-based
exploration. Whether you're diving into history, literature, or
science, each seminar offers an enriching and inspiring experience.



SENIOR SEMINARS – NORMAN

Blues Queens: The Women Who Built American Popular Music | \$60

Kyla Lewis

July 6-27, 2026 | Mondays | 11am-12pm

Before Elvis swiveled his hips or Billie Holiday broke hearts, there were the Blues Queens: bold, brassy women who ruled stages and phonographs in the early 20th century. From Ma Rainey's traveling tent shows to Bessie Smith's empire of record sales, these pioneering artists challenged social norms, built their own business empires, and left an indelible mark on American music. In this course, we'll celebrate the lives, lyrics, and legacies of the women who gave blues its voice — and examine how their songs still echo in today's music. Expect laughter, a few tears, and a whole lot of foot-tapping.

Danger, Desire and Deceit: Never Enough Noir | \$60

Betty Robbins

July 7-August 11, 2026 | Tuesdays | 1-4pm

Sinister and sexy, film noir's fascination for viewers has maintained its power since the early days of WWII. From Billy Wilder's 1944 classic "Double Indemnity" with Fred McMurry's chump insurance investigator to the Coen Bros' torrid Texas roadhouse neo noir "Blood Simple," audiences can't seem to get enough of titillating femmes fatales and their seductive power over mystified, often miscreant males. This summer course will feature six films, including classic, neo-, and retro noir, with a different one running before class each day. We will discuss how the featured directors play with noir's defining tropes to achieve their unique styles. We will mull over questions about why we have a near obsession with film noir. Do we agree with film critics and scholars about noir's compelling power? Why has noir lasted through 80 years of history? Have cultural changes now negated noir's appeal?

Is it 2026 or 1984? Ask George Orwell | \$20*Betsy Ballard*

July 8 and 10, 2026 | Wednesday/Friday | 1-3pm/8am-7pm

“Who controls the past, controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.” Winston Smith, the main character of George Orwell’s 1984, a classic of dystopian fiction, feels the brunt of that statement. This is a special OLLI course taught in a format that has never been done in our program. This will include one open informational meeting (July 8, 1-3 pm) and a second participatory and/or listening session (July 10, 8 am-7pm). At the July 8 session, Dr. Ballard will introduce Orwell and 1984 and answer questions/facilitate class discussion. On the July 10 session, 1984 will be read aloud in a nonstop marathon. OLLI students can sign up to read portions of the novel or just come and listen to it being read aloud. A large-print edition of the novel will be available and will be used by all readers. Please join us for this unique performative experience. We plan not to stop until we reach the end.

Martial Arts and American Culture | \$60*Coleman Patterson*

July 8-29, 2026 | Wednesdays | 10-11:30am

Martial arts have shaped American culture in ways many people don’t realize. From classic films and television shows to community programs, fitness trends, and everyday confidence, these traditions have influenced how Americans move, imagine, and tell stories. This course offers an enjoyable, accessible look at that cultural journey, designed especially for lifelong learners. Over four weeks, we will explore how martial arts developed worldwide and found a home in the United States. We will look at well-known figures such as Bruce Lee, Chuck Norris, Jackie Chan, and Michelle Yeoh, and discuss how their work helped introduce new ideas about movement, discipline, and storytelling. We will also examine the growth of martial arts schools, competitions, and training programs across the country, along with the role that martial arts continue to play in today’s media and popular culture. Each session includes short presentations, film clips, demonstrations, and guided conversation. Participants will also have the option to try simple, low-impact movement activities such as basic hand techniques, stretching, balance exercises, and gentle self-defense concepts. These activities are always optional and designed with comfort and safety in mind. By the end of the course, participants will have a deeper appreciation for how martial arts became part of American life and why they continue to inspire people of all ages. No experience is required. Just bring your curiosity and enjoy the exploration.

Understanding U.S. Immigration: Pathways, Policies, and People | \$60*Elle Shroyer*

July 9-30, 2026 | Thursdays | 1:30-3pm

Curious about how immigration to the United States really works? This four-week seminar offers a clear, balanced, and accessible overview of the U.S. immigration system, designed especially for lifelong learners through Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Together, we will explore the many ways people legally enter and remain in the U.S., including common visa types (tourist, student, work, and family-based), green cards, and pathways to citizenship. We'll also discuss what happens when visas expire, how overstays occur, and the realities of enforcement and deportation processes. In addition, we'll examine key topics shaping today's conversations, including asylum seekers, refugees, border policies, and the meaning of terms like "Dreamers" (DACA recipients). Throughout the course, we'll separate myth from fact and provide historical context to better understand how current policies evolved. Each session will include time for questions and respectful discussion, helping participants engage thoughtfully with a complex and often emotional topic. The goal is not to advocate a particular viewpoint, but to equip you with accurate information and a deeper understanding of the systems, terminology, and human experiences involved. Whether you're looking to stay informed, support your community, or simply better understand the headlines, this course will provide clarity, context, and confidence as you navigate one of today's most important issues.

Beyond Beloved: Toni Morrison's Later Works | \$60*Kyla Lewis*

July 10-August 14, 2026 | Fridays | 2-3:15pm

This course invites readers to journey through the second half of Toni Morrison's extraordinary literary career, exploring six of her most provocative and ambitious works: *Paradise*, *Tar Baby*, *Jazz*, *Home*, *Love*, and the short story *Recitatif*. As a continuation of a previous course centered on Morrison's earlier novels, this class delves into the evolving themes, narrative structures, and moral complexities that define her later writing. These texts wrestle with questions of belonging, displacement, community, gender, and the lingering scars of history. From the haunting chorus of voices in *Paradise* to the rhythmic experimentation of *Jazz* and the enigmatic racial ambiguity of *Recitatif*, Morrison pushes the boundaries of form and perspective. Each work challenges readers to confront what is left unsaid, what is forgotten, and what is remembered. Through guided discussions, we'll consider how Morrison constructs stories that are at once deeply personal and profoundly political. No prior participation in the first Morrison course is required; new and returning students alike are welcome. Participants should be prepared for thoughtful engagement and open conversation as we continue exploring the legacy of one of America's most powerful literary voices. ***Class will NOT meet on August 7**

Rethinking Museums Through Indigenous Perspectives | \$60*Laura Phillips & Deji Duggar*

July 15-August 5, 2026 | Wednesdays | 1-3pm

This senior seminar invites participants to explore how museums have shaped — and continue to shape — our understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, and living communities. Together, we will reflect on how museum practices emerged from Euro-Enlightenment ways of seeing and organizing the world, and how Indigenous scholars, artists, and cultural leaders are offering powerful alternatives. A key idea we will examine comes from Métis scholar David Garneau, who describes museums as rooted in scopophilia — a drive not only to look, but to penetrate, classify, translate, and possess. In this framework, stories become text, relationships are made static, and belongings are transformed into artefacts. Understanding this legacy helps explain why many museums struggle today with representation, accountability, and care. I am a settler scholar whose ancestry is mostly Irish. My role in this seminar is to facilitate learning from Indigenous voices and Indigenous-led institutions, guiding discussion and reflection rather than speaking on behalf of Indigenous Nations. Using case studies, visual examples, and group conversation, we will explore Indigenous worldviews, storytelling practices, and contemporary approaches to cultural stewardship in museum contexts. The seminar includes interactive sessions and a shared visit to the First Americans Museum, followed by a guided discussion. No prior background is required — just curiosity and openness. Participants will leave with a deeper appreciation of how museums are evolving, how Indigenous perspectives continue to reshape cultural spaces, and how thoughtful engagement can lead to richer, more inclusive ways of understanding the past, present, and future. **July 29, 2026, class will be on a field trip via chartered bus to the First Americans Museum*

Race Records: How Black Music Changed America Before Motown | \$60*Kyla Lewis*

July 30-August 20, 2026 | Thursdays | 11am-12:15pm

Long before Berry Gordy launched Motown, another revolution was underway — one pressed into grooves of fragile 78 rpm records and sold under the label “Race Records.” In the 1920s and ‘30s, these recordings brought Black voices into homes across America, shaping everything from jazz to rock & roll. Join us as we explore the birth of this industry, the rise of blues and jazz pioneers, the surprising popularity of recorded sermons and gospel, and how these records laid the foundation for rhythm & blues and beyond. Hear rare recordings, meet the colorful characters behind the music, and discover how “Race Records” changed American culture forever. No musical expertise required — just curiosity and a love of great stories and songs. **Class will NOT meet on August 6*

Friends of the Fred: Exploring the Collections of the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art | \$60*Jeremy Hessman & Heather Arnett*

August 5-26, 2026 | Wednesdays | 9:30-11:30am

Friends of the Fred is a four-week guided exploration of the permanent collections at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art. From Impressionism and modernism to Native and Southwestern art, this course offers structured, in-depth engagement with the museum’s history and key collections. Each session combines focused gallery exploration with facilitated discussion, helping participants build confidence, gain context, and deepen their appreciation for the works on view. No prior art background required — just curiosity and a willingness to look closely.

Hideous Progeny: Frankenstein and Wuthering Heights from Page to Screen | \$60

Trevor McMichael

August 5-September 9, 2026 | Wednesdays | 1:30-3:30pm

Two of the 19th century's most famous novels—Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847)—continue not only to be read and admired by audiences near and far, but also to be reimagined on the silver screen. In this seminar, we will read these famous texts and examine the fascination that drives their continued retellings and remediations (especially since both novels feature complex narrative structures that are difficult to translate into film). While we will watch an array of clips and examples of how these novels have been transformed into films, we will mainly focus on the two most recent adaptations: Guillermo del Toro's 2025 *Frankenstein* and Emerald Fennell's 2026 *Wuthering Heights*. These films have been both beloved and panned by critics, and we will certainly discuss our individual reactions. Our seminar will not, however, question whether these adaptations are “good” or “bad” per se, but more compellingly, what about these narratives appeals to 21st-century audiences; why and in what ways these adaptations have changed the source texts (sometimes quite radically); and why our culture feels compelled to continue retelling, and refilming, these particular stories. Use whichever copies of the novels you prefer but be sure to access the 1818 edition of *Frankenstein*; we will discuss how to watch the films in the seminar. By the start of our first meeting, please read Volume I (chapters 1-7) of *Frankenstein*, which we will discuss that day.

Arsenic, Silk, and Sex | \$60

Paul Bell & Dane McDowell

August 20-October 1, 2026 | Thursdays | 10-11:30am

Throughout history, in China, France, and everywhere else, guileful women excelled at games of the throne. Using their intelligence and sex appeal, they seduced the emperor or the king to gain influence over his decisions and raise their own status, weighing heavily on the arts, industry, politics, and courtly life. For centuries, including to the present day, dreadful scandals were covered up at Chinese palatial and French royal courts. Historians have decrypted lurid stories where concubines and favorites conspired, murdered, or died in mysterious circumstances. Thus, it is our utmost pleasure to bring back to life historical episodes about outrageous, dangerous, and...delightful women. *Cherchez la femme!* *Class will NOT meet on September 17

The Modern Short Story: Joseph Conrad | \$60

Chris Carter

August 21-September 25, 2026 | Fridays | 1:30-3pm

In this course, we will read three short stories by one of the greatest figures in modern world literature. Joseph Conrad achieved the remarkable feat of rising to literary prominence while writing in his third language. Proficient in Polish and French before he turned to English, Conrad nonetheless became a master of English prose—indeed, a writer of “paradox and riddle.” Through this achievement, he profoundly altered the course of modern fiction.

We will study two of his finest short stories, written at the height of his career: “Amy Foster” and “The Secret Sharer.” We will also read “An Outpost of Progress,” often regarded as a precursor to Conrad’s famous novella *Heart of Darkness*, notable for its early and incisive critique of European colonialism.

Our discussions will range from themes closely connected to Conrad’s own multilingual and expatriate life—such as modern isolation, alienation, and the challenges of communication—to the themes through which he made his greatest global impact, including colonial oppression, postcolonial resistance, and the moral ambiguities surrounding both.

The schedule for the course is as follows:

- August 21: “Amy Foster” (1901)
- August 28: “Amy Foster” (continued)
- September 4: “An Outpost of Progress” (1897)
- September 11: “The Secret Sharer” (1910)
- September 18: No class
- September 25: “The Secret Sharer” (continued)

There are no prerequisites for this course. Although it is the seventeenth in my series on modern literature, this is a new course featuring mostly new material. At the beginning of the first class, each student will receive a packet of readings containing our first story, “Amy Foster,” along with supplementary background materials.

For the second and third stories, students will be asked to purchase *The Secret Sharer and Other Stories* (Penguin Classics; ISBN 978-0-141-39700-9) from any bookstore of their choice or online at Amazon. ****Class will NOT meet on September 18***

Florence: The Birthplace of The Renaissance and Much More | \$60*Emanuela Pecchioli*

August 21-September 11, 2026 | Fridays | 4-5:30pm

Florence is one of the most celebrated cities in the world. Known as the birthplace of the Renaissance, it is the place where we can follow the artistic and cultural developments that led to masterpieces such as Michelangelo's David and Botticelli's Birth of Venus. These works were not the product of chance. For about two centuries, Florence experienced an extraordinary concentration of artists, thinkers, and writers—an energy that remains unique in history. The Renaissance was a broad cultural movement that touched every part of society, from art and architecture to philosophy, science, and daily life. But Florence is far more than its Renaissance treasures. It is a vibrant, modern city visited by millions each year, not only for its museums and monuments, but also for its fashion, cuisine, festivals, and long-standing traditions. For example, did you know that Italian fashion was born in Florence? And while many people have heard of Bistecca alla Fiorentina (the Florentine-style T bone steak), how many know what Lampre Dotto is? In this course, we will explore Florence together through lectures, audiovisual materials, and interactive activities. Whether your interests lie in art, history, food, fashion, or simply discovering a beautiful city, Florence has something to offer you.

Billionaires Own the Media, But They Don't Own Us | \$60*Cal Hobson*

August 24-September 21, 2026 | Mondays | 1-3:30pm

Not yet. Artificial intelligence may change that, too. Federal tax policy, weighted heavily in favor of the top 10th of 1% of all taxpayers (almost entirely men), has delivered on a gold platter the annual streams of disposable tax return revenue to the Bill Gates of America. They then reinvest the bonanza in the markets, buy more land with a castle, temporarily rent the third trophy wife, or pursue a new venture that is even more intriguing and promising than the others mentioned: Artificial Intelligence (AI). It appears to be the new heavyweight factor in the world of economics, education, certainly national defense, including ever more deadly and effective drones, the environment, health initiatives, and now, long overdue, the subject of a fall 2026 OLLI course. Frankly, that's because the letters a and I, when combined and implemented, will soon be more dominant and domineering in our lives than anything or anyone I can think of, with the possible exception of grandchildren. The two best things about this seminar are, first, enrollees will hear from a raft of new guests steeped in the world of AI, which I readily admit is a complete mystery to me. Second, like OLLI's IOS course, what is learned in the confines of our forum building conference room could and should be of significant help to each of us as we conduct both the routine and complex activities life throws our way. I may even learn to turn on my own computer without Eva's help. ***Class will NOT meet on September 7**

Poetry Club | \$60*David Anderson*

August 26, September 30, October 28, November 25, 2026

January 27, February 24, March 31, April 28, 2027 | Wednesdays | 5-6:30pm

The Poetry Club will specialize in the close analysis of English verse. Each month, we will discuss a specific poem from English literary history, focusing on one or more short poems. We will begin with a brief discussion of the poet in question and will guide the group through an analysis of the work.

The Poetry Lab | \$60*Silke Feltz*

August 26-October 7, 2026 | Wednesdays | 2-4pm

Writing and reading poetry is not only reserved for dusty libraries but can be understood as a very lively and social act. Poems entertain, heal, and help us by reminding us of our own vulnerability and shared humanness. In fact, poetry communities range widely from informal word sanctuaries that share the human experience every week to poetry billboards that call for social activism to restorative writing groups that facilitate poetic expression in prisons. This workshop is designed for everyone who is poetry curious! You don't need to be a published poet or know how to write a sestina. If you are intrigued by the written and spoken words and would like to develop a writing rhythm that fosters creativity and introspection, then this workshop is for you! We will discuss how poetry can heal communities while, at the same time, building our own poetry community in class. We will write and read and listen and practice what Dylan Thomas refers to as "what makes your toenails twinkle." Moreover, you're invited to join a (voluntary) field trip to the local bookshop with an open mic! ****Class will NOT meet on September 16***

Constitutional Rights: Their Past, Present, and Future | \$60*Michael Smith*

September 1- 22, 2026 | Tuesdays | 10am-12pm

This course provides an outline of selected U.S. Constitutional rights, including their development over time and their current treatment by the courts. Each class presents a distinct constitutional right, situating it in the country's history and highlighting core contours of the right's protection. From there, the class turns to key U.S. Supreme Court decisions in the Court's prior term that affect these rights. The course explains these complex disputes and how they impact existing rights protections. Along the way, we clarify oversimplified or inaccurate coverage of the cases and predict how the Court and other political actors might treat these rights in the future. The rights covered in this course include First Amendment free expression rights, Second Amendment rights to keep and bear arms, Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable searches and seizures, and the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause.

Mark Twain Dissents | \$60*Dan Snell*

September 1- 29, 2026 | Tuesdays | 1-3pm

This course explores Mark Twain's disruptive tendencies in both his writing and public speaking. Focusing especially on his outspoken opposition to imperialism, we will examine how Twain challenged war, empire, and moral complacency through satire, essays, and lectures.

Week 1. War and not: Civil War, Crimean War, Spanish American, the Boxer Rebellion.

Week 2. Women in charge: Joan of Arc, suffrage, anti-slavery

Week 3. God of the Bible and not

Week 4. Little girls and big girls

Week 5. Punditry and death, legacy

OLLI Discussion Group | \$0*Chris Elliott & Tina Henderson*

September 9-December 9, 2026 | Wednesdays | 10-11:30am

Join us on Wednesday mornings for a relaxed, weekly Discussion Group just for OLLI members who want to talk about what's happening in the world. It's a space to share ideas, feelings, and concerns—and to learn from each other through open conversation. This isn't a typical OLLI class with a set curriculum or a faculty leader. Instead, you and your fellow members guide the discussion and choose the topics. Come for the fellowship, stay for the thoughtful exchange!

Senior Investing | \$60*Matt Branstetter*

September 15-October 6, 2026 | Tuesdays | 2-4pm

Investing can feel complicated, especially when planning for or living in retirement. This four-part seminar series is designed to make important financial topics easier to understand in a clear, comfortable learning environment. Matt Branstetter will lead four two-hour sessions covering:

- The basics of investing, including stocks, bonds, and mutual funds
- How retirement plans work, including saving before retirement and managing income during retirement
- Understanding Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)
- How annuities or life insurance may help address retirement income gaps
- Building a well-rounded portfolio
- Important considerations in estate planning and the role of alternative investments

Matt Branstetter has been an independent investment advisor for 35 years. He presents complex topics in straightforward language, using real-world examples and an engaging, interactive style. Questions are encouraged, and participants can expect an open and respectful discussion throughout the series. Matt is not a CPA or an attorney. While tax and estate concepts will be discussed for educational purposes, no specific tax or legal advice will be provided. Matt remains an active advisor; however, no specific investments will be discussed or offered for sale during this seminar series.

Fables From Around the World \$60*Giuseppe Grispino*

September 23-October 14, 2026 | Wednesdays | 4-5:30pm

This course examines the global tradition of fables as brief narrative forms that convey moral, political, and philosophical ideas across various cultures. Students will explore how fables travel, transform, and adapt through different languages, religions, and historical periods. The course will focus on key themes such as animal symbolism, power and politics, pedagogy, satire, and the relationship between oral and written traditions. Through close reading, comparative analysis, and discussion, students will gain insight into how this seemingly simple narrative form has influenced ethical thought and cultural exchange worldwide.

This is Thailand | \$60*Paul Chambers*

September 24-October 29, 2026 | Thursdays | 1:30-3:00pm

Thailand is a country with a rich culture, enormous beauty, varied geography, ethnic diversity, and colorful history, which has remained one of the most relatively stable countries of Asia. This course is a survey of Thailand: its people, traditions, past-and-present, monarchy and military, relations with other countries, and poverty. The course also looks at traveling in Thailand and living there. Who are the Thai people, and why are there so many migrants in Thailand? Why is Buddhism so prevalent among Thais? Why was Thailand never colonized? Who is Thailand's king today, how powerful is he, and what about the military? What are some of the country's most beautiful beaches and mountains? This course examines these and other questions. It is structured as follows: Session 1—People and Culture of Thailand; Session 2—History of Thailand; Session 3—Foreign Relations of Thailand; Session 4—Monarchy and Military in Thailand; Session 5—Traveling and Living in Thailand; Session 6—Thailand's Future?

The Twilight Zone Had Westerns?!? | \$60*Luann Waters*

September 24-October 22, 2026 | Thursdays | 1:30-3:30pm

Over its five-year run, *The Twilight Zone* became one of the most influential television series of all time, largely because of creator and head writer Rod Serling, who wrote 92 of the show's 156 episodes. This seminar examines Serling's creative vision alongside that of other notable writers through close viewing and discussion of 10 selected episodes. Members will watch and analyze seven episodes written by Serling, along with one episode each by Montgomery Pittman, Earl Hamner Jr., and Robert Enrico. Discussions will focus on storytelling, themes, casting choices, and behind-the-scenes production insights, providing a deeper understanding of how the series was created and why it continues to resonate. Each two-hour class session will include screening two 30-minute episodes, followed by guided discussion, questions, and commentary.

Fascinating Islands (Part 2): Spitsbergen, South Georgia, New Zealand and the Galapagos | \$60*Ken Johnson*

September 28-October 19, 2026 | Mondays | 10-11:30am

Islands range in size from Greenland, the largest island (823,000 miles²), to small, unmapped rocky islets that barely jut out of the water. Islands can be parts of continents that have been rifted or raised up by tectonic activity (such as Greenland and Spitsbergen), can result from volcanic activity (Galapagos and Hawaii), can be built up from reefs (Bermuda and atolls), can result from glacial activity (Long Island and Martha's Vineyard), or can be barrier islands (Cape Hatteras and Padre Island). Always critical to the formation or disappearance of islands is the rise or fall of sea level: islands appear or enlarge as sea level drops, and they become smaller or even disappear as sea level rises. Following a very brief discussion of the origin of islands, we will explore in depth the origin, history, and culture of four fascinating islands: Spitsbergen (Svalbard) ("Land of the Midnight Sun"), South Georgia ("Land of Rock, Ice, Penguins, and Shackleton"), New Zealand ("Land of the Māori and Southern Alps"), and the Galapagos Islands ("Land of Darwin and Giant Tortoises").

A Brief History of Computing | \$60*Art Mansky*

September 30-October 28, 2026 | Wednesdays | 10:00am-12:00pm

Remember when we would learn about a new topic by either looking it up in the encyclopedia on our bookshelf or driving to a library to get a book or two on the subject? We would receive mortgage, utility, and department store bills in the mail, then write paper checks and send them back. Preparing for a multi-state car trip included buying paper maps for each state and planning the route that looked best. Just within our lifetimes, computers have drastically changed our everyday experiences and profoundly impacted society worldwide. This course explores the history of computing – the people and the devices – including the 5,000-year-old abacus, the slide rule and other mechanical calculators of the 1600-1800’s, the room-sized computers of the 1950’s, the minicomputers of the 1960-1970’s, the personal computer of the 1980’s, and the more recent developments of the laptop, cell phone, internet, and artificial intelligence (AI). No technical knowledge is necessary or expected.

How the West Was “Not” One | \$60*Betty Robbins*

October 6-November 10, 2026 | Tuesdays | 1-4pm

In a New York Times interview with Larry McMurtry dated September 28, 1996, the famed storyteller said, “The Code of the West is dead.” McMurtry was wrong. Blood relations, cattle, land, and oil money still ruled. Culture wars hadn’t filled the vast expanses of the West or altered central values — or prejudices. Today, however, with B&Bs, space camps, and celebrity and billionaire fetishistic ownership of the West, McMurtry’s remarks prove to have been prophetic. The West of John Ford and George Stevens is, indeed, dead. Its appeal, however, lives on. The fraught and Fashionable Frontier of Taylor Sheridan may bear little resemblance to the Old West, but we still thrill at the suspense of Gary Cooper watching the clock tick off the minutes to the showdown with Frank Miller’s gang and wince with guilty pleasure as Barbara Stanwyck takes down power dynasties. This course will screen six westerns, four from 70s Hollywood productions that reflect America’s changing socio/political scene and two from our most recent postmodern filmmakers. We will compare the Code of the West with the values it preserves, rejects, and revises in the work of innovative new filmmakers. Character, setting, and conflict will be key topics of discussion. Running before class will be a classic western to consider in contrast to the feature for the day.

A Look at the Architectural History of the Mediterranean | \$60*Dave Boeck*

October 6-27, 2026 | Tuesdays | 9:30-11am

This course explores the architectural traditions of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, emphasizing their foundational role in the development of Western architecture. Students will examine major architectural styles, construction materials, and the social, political, and functional purposes of building within these civilizations. Through visual analysis and multimedia resources, the course highlights the enduring influence of Mediterranean architecture on Western cultural and historical development. Learning Outcomes Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify and describe key architectural styles and structural features of ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman architecture.
- Analyze the relationship between architecture and the social, political, and religious contexts of Mediterranean civilizations.
- Compare architectural materials and construction techniques used across Egypt, Greece, and Rome.
- Interpret architectural works through visual analysis of buildings, plans, and monuments.
- Explain the influence of Mediterranean architectural traditions on later Western architectural developments.

The Birth of Opera | \$60*Eugene Enrico*

October 14-November 6, 2026 | Wednesdays & Fridays | 1-3pm

This seminar traces the emergence and early development of opera from its humanist origins to its international spread in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Through close study of representative works, members will examine four pivotal moments in operatic history: Italian Humanism and the early Florentine experiments culminating in Monteverdi's *Orfeo*; the rise of commercial opera in Venice and its expansion to European capitals, explored through *The Coronation of Poppea*; new stylistic currents in France and Restoration London, with special attention to Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*; and the flourishing of Italian opera in London as exemplified by Handel's *Giulio Cesare*. The unit emphasizes musical style, dramatic structure, historical context, and performance practice, offering students a foundational understanding of how opera emerged as a major European art form.

Protest & Propaganda: A History of Social Critique in Song | \$60*Thomas Conner*

October 16-November 13, 2026 | Fridays | 11am-12:30pm

For many years on other campuses, within Communication and Media Studies departments, I taught a popular course called Music as Social Action; this would be a distilled version of that. The course surveys American popular music as a medium for ideological and political communication — essentially a history of American protest songs. Students first sift through some basic scholarships on “propaganda songs,” learn to recognize “socially conscious” music across genres, and evaluate its effects as both the transmission of information and a meaning-making ritual. We then listen to and examine a variety of music genres — folk, rock and roll, blues, soul, hip-hop, glam, disco, punk, and more — in order to explore the contested relationships with changing social and political contexts during the post-WWII era of recorded popular music, namely political identity, race relations, gender and sexuality, and neoliberal commoditization. This exploration is rooted not only in my own cultural studies-related research but also in a previous career as an arts journalist and music critic (thomashconner.info), in which I wrote a great deal about native Oklahoma songwriter Woody Guthrie and his legacy, the result of a yearlong fellowship at Columbia University during which I read the contents of the Woody Guthrie Archives (then located in Manhattan).

OKLAHOMA HOUSE OF MUSIC

The Oklahoma House of Music is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that brings some of the best musicians on the planet to Oklahoma, primarily Norman, to interact with the community, give talks, masterclasses, private lessons, performances, and even have meals with donors and supporters. To date, the Oklahoma House of Music has had roughly 100 guests since 2020, with over 50 GRAMMY® winners in addition to Oscar, Tony, Emmy, Pulitzer, BAFTA, Latin Grammy, and Juno winners. From famous names like Paul Shaffer, Christian McBride, Cory Wong, Steve Smith of Journey, to the “unknown” names that make your favorite artist sound the way they do, like David Cook, the musical director and pianist for Taylor Swift, Nikki Glaspie, the drummer for Beyonce, Philip Lassiter, the 11x GRAMMY®-Winning band leader for Prince, Ariana Grande, Hamilton the Musical, and dozens of others.

All events are free and open to the public, but supporters truly get to know these artists as they’re here for two days and get to eat, hang out with, and genuinely become friends with these superstars. The biggest supporters additionally get to help pick the artists, allowing them to meet their personal music heroes.

Follow us on all popular social media @OklahomaHouseofMusic, and visit our website at OklahomaHouseofMusic.org. Email Eric Walschap at e@ou.edu for questions or major donations and partnerships.

Streaming Wars: An Introduction to Using Spotify and Apple Music | \$5*Chris Elliott & Josh Tassinari*

October 19-26, 2026 | Mondays | 10-11:30am

Would you like access to over 100 million songs at your fingertips—or to create the perfect playlist for a road trip, dinner party, or just everyday listening? This special OLLI course shows you how.

In this two week class, instructors Josh and Chris will guide you through the two most popular music streaming platforms in the world: Spotify and Apple Music. In week one, Josh covers Spotify—how it works, how to find your favorite songs, albums, and artists, how to create playlists, and tips for improving sound quality. In week two, Chris walks you through the same process using Apple Music. No prior experience with streaming services is required. Whether you're brand new or looking to use these apps more confidently, you'll learn how easy it is to enjoy music from virtually any generation on your phone or computer. This course also serves as a perfect lead into the Oklahoma House of Music class, where you'll put your new skills to use by creating (with Josh's and Chris's help) a playlist of GRAMMY® songs discussed in Eric Walschap's course.

The GRAMMY Awards' History, Influence, Process, and Behind the Scenes | \$60*Eric Walschap*

November 9-December 14, 2026 | Mondays | 10-11:30am

The GRAMMY® Awards are widely regarded as the highest honor in music—but why? This course offers a behind the scenes look at The Recording Academy and the GRAMMY® Awards, exploring how they began, how nominations and voting really work, and why the award holds such unique prestige compared to other national and international music honors. Led by an active GRAMMY® voting member, professional musician, and music professor, participants will gain insider insight into the submission process, the competitive path to nomination, the realities of Academy voting, and the cultural and professional impact of winning. The course also addresses frequently asked questions, including industry politics, evolving definitions of “good music,” surprising wins (including the Beatles’ 2025 award), and the mechanics behind the three phases of GRAMMY® voting. When possible, the course will highlight GRAMMY® winners and nominees appearing at OLLI through the Oklahoma House of Music partnership series, sharing firsthand stories of working with or alongside legendary artists such as Michael Jackson, Prince, Taylor Swift, Beyoncé, and Paul McCartney. Participants will also have the rare opportunity to see—and hold—an authentic GRAMMY® trophy.

The Vietnam War Era | \$60*Jay Casey*

October 19-November 30, 2026 | Mondays | 1:15-2:45pm

The OLLI Vietnam War Era course will explore the origins of the Vietnam War, how the United States waged the war, the impact of the war on American society and culture, and the meaning of the United States defeat in Vietnam. The course will also examine some of the legacies of the Vietnam War, including both historical and public memory in the ensuing decades, as well as messaging regarding the war since the withdrawal of U.S. forces in 1973. Artifacts in the form of both interwar and postwar media, music, film, first-person accounts, and material culture will be part of the course.

Women Who Kill: The Story Continues | \$60*Susan Sharp*

October 20-November 10, 2026 | Tuesdays | 10am-12pm

In a prior course, we examined some of the reasons why women kill their partners, based on the role of intimate partner violence. In 2024, Oklahoma passed the Oklahoma Survivors Act, allowing the court to consider a history of abuse as a mitigating factor in these cases, potentially reducing sentences. The law also allowed women currently serving sentences to possibly have their sentences reduced. By the end of the class, only one woman had been resentenced. This course will examine cases that have unfolded since that time, analyze how the law has been applied in practice, and consider potential legal developments and current challenges. We will also explore how other states are addressing similar issues and evaluate areas where Oklahoma's approach—and, more broadly, survivor-centered legislation—may need improvement.

Cassatt, Eakins, and Home: Shaping American Art, 19th-Early 20th Century | \$60*Dan Kirchhefer*

October 21-November 11, 2026 | Wednesdays | 1-3pm

The life and works of three noted painters of American realism from the 19th century, Mary Cassatt, Thomas Eakins, and Winslow Homer, will be discussed. We will study their paintings, along with their revolutionary use of printmaking, pastels, watercolor, and photography.

The Fats Waller Story | \$60*Marvin Beck*

October 22–November 12, 2026 | Thursdays | 10am–12pm

Thomas “Fats” Waller was a legend in his own time—an unforgettable performer, a gifted composer, and one of the true originals of American music. A pioneer of Swing Jazz in the 1930s and 1940s, Waller was the first jazz musician to gain international fame. Classically trained, he moved effortlessly between piano and pipe organs, blending remarkable musicianship with humor, joy, and an unmistakable personal style. His songs hold their own alongside those of George Gershwin, Cole Porter, and Irving Berlin, and his influence can be heard in the work of Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Erroll Garner, and many others. This four week seminar invites participants to explore the life, music, and legacy of Fats Waller within the rich cultural backdrop of the Harlem Renaissance. Through guided listening, film clips, and lively discussion, members will experience Waller’s recordings, performances, and major contributions to the early history of jazz. The course will feature plenty of music, rare film footage, and historical context, and will conclude with a viewing of the original cast production of *Ain’t Misbehavin’*, the Tony Award–winning 1978 musical built around Waller’s songs. By the end of the seminar, members will have a deeper appreciation for Fats Waller’s creativity, influence, and enduring place in American music and culture.

Making Sense of the 2026 Election: Candidates, Pollsters, and Scholars | \$60*Cal Hobson*

October 26-November 16, 2026 | Mondays | 1-3:30pm

In previous classes, forgive me for my verbosity, especially about my political advisers who hang out at Ruby's Cafe in Purcell. I'll try to be more circumspect (which is a fancy word meaning less jabber) from me and more wise wisdom uttered by our guests. As I pen this course material to you, hoping you'll participate this fall in what will be my 75th OLLI seminar, be aware that today's date is March 10th, 2026. The United States and Israel have just attacked Iran. The price of oil has shot up to \$119 dollars a barrel. President Donald Trump's polling approval is 38%. And, perhaps most importantly to some, OU's 2027 football recruiting class is ranked #1 by two sports publications. Conversely, and most sadly, Governor Kevin Stitt, in his eighth and final year in office, never quite delivered on his top ten promises for Oklahoma. Turns out they truly were just aspirational. Anything but aspirational will be the contents of this seminar. Candidates for office, pollsters, pundits, provocateurs, incumbents, former winners, and some losers will all drop by the forum building to be heard, quizzed, congratulated, and even consoled. If you enroll, you'll get all this and more, including a four-session, ten-hour tour de force of talk and thought, for just \$60 bucks.

Exploring Modern Germany | \$60*Chris Sartorius*

October 29-November 19, 2026 | Thursdays | 1:30-3:30pm

This course will explore modern Germany to gain an appreciation of how it has developed into Europe's leading power. We will investigate the country's modern history (post-World War II), its government, economy, foreign policy, and current/emerging internal and external security challenges. We will also journey to several of Germany's many cities and small villages to gain insights into the country's natural beauty and the dynamism of its people. Please join us for a fun, informative look at Germany, its prospects, and how you can make the most of a future visit to this amazing country.

Using Art and Music to Express Creative Thinking | \$60*Dave Boeck*

October 30-November 20, 2026 | Fridays | 9:30-11am

Bruce Goff often compared architecture to frozen music. In his design studios, he would play various musical styles to encourage his students to incorporate them into the design outcomes of their drawings. Many people saw this process as helping him encourage his students to “design outside the box.” In this class, we will incorporate various artistic media such as pencil, pen, crayon, color pencil, and possibly watercolor, into the drawing process, using form and texture, and color and sound, with two people working together to create abstract art incorporating all these into the final solution. By working with abstraction, we will avoid the stress of trying to draw realistic images and focus on enjoyable interactive learning. **Members may be required to purchase art supplies for class.*

The Great Books of Italian Literature | \$60*Giuseppe Grispino*

November 4-December 2, 2026 | Wednesdays | 4-5:30pm

This course offers a rich and engaging survey of Italian literature from the Middle Ages to the present. It introduces major authors, historical contexts, literary movements, and cultural themes that have shaped Italy’s literary tradition. Through selected readings (in English translation), guided discussion, and multimedia resources, participants will explore how Italian writers have reflected and shaped ideas about love, power, faith, identity, politics, and modernity. No prior knowledge of the Italian language or literature is required.

Conversations with Great Minds | \$60*Allen Hertzke*

November 10-December 1, 2026 | Tuesdays | 1-2:30pm

Hear from great minds discussing timeless ideas. Greek and Roman thinkers of antiquity profoundly shaped Western civilization and remain influential today, not only in the United States but around the world. In this class, the instructor will provide crucial historical context on each featured thinker, then will allow them to speak for themselves in conversation with class members (but class members can just listen if they wish). Here are the thinkers featured for each week:

- Socrates on the nature of the Good
- Aristotle on justice and the best forms of government
- Thucydides on the tragedy of international relations
- Cicero on the balanced Republic

British Invasion | \$60*Clive Mander*

November 24-December 15, 2026 | Tuesdays | 10-11:30am

The British Invasion introduces the major British artists and musical trends that rose to international popularity during the 1960s. The course provides an overview of key sounds, styles, and cultural influences that shaped this period and examines how British music impacted popular culture and modern music traditions.



MORNINGS WITH THE PROFESSOR – NORMAN

Enjoy a relaxed, one-time session with an instructor as they share insights on topics that they are passionate about.

It's a unique opportunity to explore new ideas, ask questions, and engage in thoughtful conversation in a welcoming setting.

Lincoln's Faith Journey | \$5

David Sabatini

July 28, 2026 | Tuesday | 9:30-11am

Abraham Lincoln - arguably our greatest president. Was he a man of faith? In Lincoln's famous Second Inaugural, he wrestles with God on the toll of the Civil War, quoting the Bible four times. Yet, in his youth, Lincoln mocked preachers; as a young man, he was labeled an infidel, and as an adult, he never joined a church, saying he would join any church whose sole creed for membership was Christ's admonition to love the Lord your God with all your heart and to love your neighbor as yourself. In his youth, Lincoln encountered backwoods preachers who relied on emotion rather than intellect. In Springfield, the pastor who comforted his family when their son died had published an intellectual treatise defending faith; Lincoln valued their dialogue. President Lincoln regularly attended church, reportedly observing mid-week prayer sessions from a private side room to avoid being a distraction. Many observed him reading the Bible as president, and Lincoln commented that prayer was often his only comfort during his tumultuous presidency. Was Lincoln a man of faith? While some suggest it was merely a political ploy, others suggest that Lincoln transitioned from antagonist to skeptic to seeker and ultimately to faith.

Rembrandt and the Dutch Republic | \$5*Allison Palmer*

September 8, 2026 | Tuesday | 9:30-11am

Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) was a prolific Dutch Baroque painter and printmaker who maintained one of the most important workshops in Amsterdam in the mid-1600s. His artistic output was large and varied, and his influence was profound. We will examine key examples from throughout Rembrandt's life to trace his artistic development and influence.

The Tragedy of Beatrice Cenci | \$5*Betty Robbins*

September 9, 2026 | Wednesday | 9:30-11am

In 1599, at the gates to the Castel de San Angelo, the Vatican beheaded the twenty-two-year-old daughter of Francesco Cenci. Treasurer to the Vatican, Cenci owned a vast fortune in art, palazzos, vineyards, and other landed estates. While the Vatican archives preserved Beatrice's last words, the tragedy of Beatrice Cenci was basically lost to history. Today, however, the drama of the young woman's life echoes through the arts, and the Cenci Palazzo in Rome has become a museum. Some of our greatest authors did know the story. Hawthorne based a short story on the tragedy, and Shelley wrote a play titled "Beatrice Cenci," which later became an opera. In various works, Shakespeare, Melville, Dickens, Edith Wharton, and filmmaker David Lynch drew on the tragedy, either directly or indirectly. Dr. Robbins will share her research on the Cenci family, its association with the Vatican, and how details of the tragedy have fluctuated over time. The story of brave, near fearless Beatrice Cenci deserves to be remembered.

Fueling Your Future: Why Protein Matters More Every Decade | \$5*Michael Hartman*

September 10, 2026 | Thursday | 9:30-11am

Maintaining muscle and staying active often feels more challenging after middle age. This is largely due to a natural process called sarcopenia, where sedentary adults can lose 4 to 6 pounds of vital muscle mass every decade. This loss represents a significant threat to your independence, balance, and long-term vitality. In this seminar, you will learn why your body requires more protein now than it did in your 30s to trigger essential muscle repair and growth. We will explore research showing that nearly 50% of adults over 50 miss their daily protein targets, making it increasingly difficult to remain resilient. You will discover how to calculate your specific needs to maximize benefits while avoiding overconsumption and why spreading your intake throughout the day is far more effective than consuming one large protein-heavy meal. By making small, intentional lifestyle and dietary choices, you can ensure you meet your goals and build a stronger future.

History of the Royal Navy and England's Greatest Sea Captains: Francis Drake, James Cook, and Horatio Nelson | \$5*Ken Johnson*

September 15, 2026 | Tuesday | 9:30-11am

Although there were earlier minor attempts at organizing a fleet of English ships to defend the island nation, Henry VIII greatly increased both the size and number of ships (from 5 to 80) in England's standing navy. With the defeat of Spain's Great Armada in 1588, England became one of the dominant sea powers in Europe, and by the mid-1700s, England had the most powerful navy; it remained so until the United States Navy became supreme in World War II. This long period of naval supremacy during the "Age of Exploration" enabled England to establish and maintain a worldwide network of colonies, making it a true superpower. Great sea captains aided in England's domination of the seas. Francis Drake (1540–1596), the first Englishman to circumnavigate the globe, was an adept privateer who raided Spanish ships and ports in the New World and a leader in routing the Spanish Armada (1588). James Cook (1728–1799) was a famed explorer, navigator, and cartographer in the Royal Navy. During three voyages to the Pacific Ocean, he mapped and explored Australia, New Zealand, the Hawaiian Islands, and many of the smaller islands. Horatio Nelson (1758–1805) rose to national attention in several early sea battles but became internationally famous with his victories over the French in the Battle of the Nile (1798) and over the French and Spanish in the Battle of Trafalgar (1805).

Orange is NOT the New Black: Life in a Women's Prison | \$5*Susan Sharp*

September 22, 2026 | Tuesday | 9:30-11am

In 2013, Netflix debuted one of its most popular series ever, *Orange is the New Black*. Based on Piper Kerman's book, it depicts life in a woman's prison. This lecture explores what day-to-day life is really like for women prisoners. There will be a guest speaker.

How Women Created Mankind | \$5*Ralph Doty*

September 29, 2026 | Tuesday | 9:30-11am

History books have traditionally been written by, for, and about men: they tend to focus on masculine words, thoughts, and deeds. But if we look back farther -- to the time before written history -- and trace the way our species has evolved, as witnessed by our fossil bones and our present-day bodies (and minds), we find quite a different picture. This talk will focus on the ways in which changes in women's bodies -- and behaviors -- have influenced the evolution of our species.

Measure That Cat: An Overview of Quantum Mechanics | \$5*Bruno Uchoa*

October 6, 2026 | Tuesday | 9:30-11am

In this lecture, I will discuss the fascinating properties of quantum mechanics and the historical disputes between the Copenhagen interpretation, led by Niels Bohr, Heisenberg, and others, and competing theories. At the heart of quantum mechanics is the principle of quantum entanglement, the notion that two experiments can influence each other even when separated by an infinite distance. I will discuss the experiments that, not long ago, confirmed the existence of quantum entanglement in nature and address its far-reaching implications.

We Got Our Kicks on Route 66 | \$5*Andy Rieger*

November 10, 2026 | Tuesday | 9:30-11am

Route 66, dubbed America's Mother Road by John Steinbeck, turns 100 years old in 2026. The road stretches nearly 2,400 miles from Chicago to Los Angeles and was built about the time that average Americans became enamored with automobiles. Oklahoma has over 400 miles of the original route, the most of any of the eight states traversed by the highway. The road connected cities with small towns, it gave birth to roadside motels, all-night diners, drive-ins, quirky gas stations, and cultural attractions. It even inspired a song and a television show. Interstate highways, built mostly in the 1960s and 1970s, reduced travel on Route 66 and decimated the small towns that depended on motorists for their livelihoods. Fascination with the highway will peak this year with centennial celebrations planned throughout the country. Visitors, including many from other countries, are expected to cruise the highway seeking to see what's left of the nostalgia in the small towns that are called Route 66, their Main Street. Three Oklahomans — two retired professors and a journalist — began celebrating early by cycling all remaining navigable miles on the Mother Road. Dr. Dave Sabatini, Engineering, and Dr. Robert Dauffenbach, Business and Economics, teamed with journalist and educator Andy Rieger in cycling Route 66 one state at a time. They will share their travelogue, photos, and impressions of a bygone era in American travel.

The Joy of Theatre Production: A Morning with Max Weitzenhoffer | \$5*Max Weitzenhoffer*

November 17, 2026 | Tuesday | 9:30-11am

Broadway—and theatre as a whole—stands among life's most electrifying experiences. When everything comes together just right, a performance doesn't just entertain—it stirs something deeper, lifting audiences to their feet and etching itself into history. Few have shaped that magic more profoundly than Max Weitzenhoffer. A towering force behind both New York's Broadway and London's West End, Max has left an indelible mark on the world of theatre. From producing acclaimed hits like *Dracula* and *The Will Rogers Follies* to working across every facet of production, his influence reaches far beyond the stage. A Tony Award-winning producer, collaborator, and University of Oklahoma alum, Max brings a wealth of experience and unforgettable stories. In this special session, OLLI members will step behind the curtain to discover what it truly takes to create a hit show, hear captivating behind-the-scenes moments, and explore the rich past—and exciting future—of theatre.

OKLAHOMA CITY

For OLLI members living in the Oklahoma City area, we offer courses at PHF Conference Center on OU's Health Sciences campus:

**655 Research Parkway
Oklahoma City, OK 73104**

Rooms are equipped with audio/visual systems for class presentations and coffee and water are provided for each class.

Parking information for PHF Conference Center can be found in the course information email sent to OLLI members prior to the start of each class.

SENIOR SEMINARS are four- to six-week courses that combine the structure of traditional classes with lively, discussion-based exploration. Whether you're diving into history, literature, or science, each seminar offers an enriching and inspiring experience.



SENIOR SEMINARS – OKC

Nutrition & Wellness as We Age – Part 1 | \$60

Brian Dela Cruz

July 16-August 6, 2026 | Thursdays | 1:30-3:30pm

The aging process causes changes to our bodies in numerous ways. Although we cannot stop our bodies from aging, we can provide them with the nutrients they need to maintain health. Learn about the benefits of eating healthily as we age, which include resistance to diseases and illnesses, higher energy levels, increased mental activity, and better overall health. **This course is part of a two-series course where part one focuses on nutrition for a healthy individual as we age.*

Get Your Kicks on Route 66: Oklahoma and the Mother Road at 100 | \$60

Mike Adams

August 7-September 4, 2026 | Fridays | 9:30-11:30am

Experience the legend, culture, and spirit of one of America's most enduring icons — U.S. Route 66 — on its centennial journey (1926–2026). This five-session course explores how Route 66 was born, how it transformed communities and commerce, and why Oklahoma became the heartland of the Mother Road. From pioneering engineering and early auto travel to quirky roadside art, economic boom and bust, cultural heritage, and preservation efforts today, we'll travel the full arc of this legendary corridor. Through expert insights, historic photos, maps, and first-hand stories, this course brings Route 66 to life for curious, informed lifelong learners.

Billionaires Own the Media, But They Don't Own Us | \$5*Cal Hobson*

August 27-September 24, 2026 | Thursdays | 12:30-3pm

Not yet. Artificial intelligence may change that, too. Federal tax policy, weighted heavily in favor of the top 10th of 1% of all taxpayers (almost entirely men), has delivered on a gold platter the annual streams of disposable tax return revenue to the Bill Gates of America. They then reinvest the bonanza in the markets, buy more land with a castle, temporarily rent the third trophy wife, or pursue a new venture that is even more intriguing and promising than the others mentioned: Artificial Intelligence (AI). It appears to be the new heavyweight factor in the world of economics, education, certainly national defense, including ever more deadly and effective drones, the environment, health initiatives, and now, long overdue, the subject of a fall 2026 OLLI course. Frankly, that's because the letters a and I, when combined and implemented, will soon be more dominant and domineering in our lives than anything or anyone I can think of, with the possible exception of grandchildren. The two best things about this seminar are, first, enrollees will hear from a raft of new guests steeped in the world of AI, which I readily admit is a complete mystery to me. Second, like OLLI's IOS course, what is learned in the confines of our forum building conference room could and should be of significant help to each of us as we conduct both the routine and complex activities life throws our way. I may even learn to turn on my own computer without Eva's help. ***Class will NOT meet on September 10**

Exploring Modern Germany | \$60*Chris Sartorius*

October 26-November 16, 2026 | Mondays | 1:30-3:30pm

This course will explore modern Germany to gain an appreciation of how it has developed into Europe's leading power. We will investigate the country's modern history (post-World War II), its government, economy, foreign policy, and current/emerging internal and external security challenges. We will also journey to several of Germany's many cities and small villages to gain insights into the country's natural beauty and the dynamism of its people. Please join us for a fun, informative look at Germany, its prospects, and how you can make the most of a future visit to this amazing country

Making Sense of the 2026 Election: Candidates, Pollsters, and Scholars | \$60*Cal Hobson*

October 29-November 19, 2026 | Thursdays | 12:30-3pm

In previous classes, forgive me for my verbosity, especially about my political advisers who hang out at Ruby's Cafe in Purcell. I'll try to be more circumspect (which is a fancy word meaning less jabber) from me and more wise wisdom uttered by our guests. As I pen this course material to you, hoping you'll participate this fall in what will be my 75th OLLI seminar, be aware that today's date is March 10th, 2026. The United States and Israel have just attacked Iran. The price of oil has shot up to \$119 dollars a barrel. President Donald Trump's polling approval is 38%. And, perhaps most importantly to some, OU's 2027 football recruiting class is ranked #1 by two sports publications. Conversely, and most sadly, Governor Kevin Stitt, in his eighth and final year in office, never quite delivered on his top ten promises for Oklahoma. Turns out they truly were just aspirational. Anything but aspirational will be the contents of this seminar. Candidates for office, pollsters, pundits, provocateurs, incumbents, former winners, and some losers will all drop by the forum building to be heard, quizzed, congratulated, and even consoled. If you enroll, you'll get all this and more, including a four-session, ten-hour tour de force of talk and thought, for just \$60 bucks.

ONLINE (VIA ZOOM)

OLLI at OU offers online courses via Zoom to members, providing a great resource to anyone with mobility issues or who lives a great distance from the OU campus.

Please note – if you are registered in more than one OLLI Zoom course this semester, there is a separate link for each course. You will receive a separate email for each of the online courses you are registered for.

Not familiar with Zoom? Instructional materials are available upon request and OLLI staff joins each Zoom class early to assist members with getting connected.



SENIOR SEMINARS – ONLINE

Iran in the Headlines: Power, Protest, and the Islamic Republic | \$60

Gershon Lewental

October 20–December 1, 2026 | Tuesdays | 1-2:30pm

For nearly half a century, Iran has rarely been out of the headlines. From revolution and hostage crises to nuclear negotiations, regional wars, and mass protests, the Islamic Republic has repeatedly shaped—and unsettled—the politics of the Middle East and beyond. Yet constant visibility has not necessarily produced clarity. Beneath the headlines lies a complex political system, a dynamic and often divided society, and a strategic vision that continues to influence both regional and global geopolitics. This course invites participants to move beyond the daily news cycle and examine the structures, ideas, and struggles that make Iran such a persistent and consequential actor on the world stage. The course begins with the 1979 Islamic Revolution and the creation of the Islamic Republic, examining how its unique political system—combining republican institutions with clerical oversight—continues to shape domestic and foreign policy. We will trace the evolution of US–Iran relations from the hostage crisis to sanctions, diplomacy, and renewed confrontation, as well as Iran’s regional relations: its rivalries with Israel and Saudi Arabia, its influence in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, and its broader political and military strategies. Domestically, we will analyze major waves of protest, from the 2009 Green Movement to the 2022 ‘Woman, Life, Freedom’ uprising and more recent unrest around the start of 2026. What do these movements reveal about generational change, economic pressures, the limits of state authority, and the future of the Islamic Republic? The course aims to situate breaking news (and it anticipates further developments this year) within deeper historical and ideological contexts, enabling participants to understand not only what is happening in Iran, but why it matters. **Class will NOT meet on November 10*

The Science of Happiness and Inner Well-being | \$60*Pooja Shrivastava*

November 4-25, 2026 | Wednesdays | 9-10:30am

What does it truly mean to live a happy and emotionally balanced life? Drawing from psychology, neuroscience, and timeless wisdom traditions, this engaging and interactive course explores the science and practice of inner well-being. Designed especially for lifelong learners, this session offers practical, research-informed tools to cultivate calm, resilience, and gratitude in everyday life. Rather than focusing on abstract theory, the course invites participants into a reflective and experiential journey. Together, we will explore how happiness evolves across life stages and how small daily practices can significantly influence emotional health. Participants will learn how thoughts, breath, attention, and perspective shape our inner experience and overall sense of well-being. The session includes gentle guided reflections, simple breath awareness practices, and meaningful conversations that encourage connection and self-discovery. We will also explore how gratitude, presence, and purpose contribute to lasting fulfillment and emotional stability. No prior background in psychology or meditation is required. This course is designed to be accessible, uplifting, and practical, offering tools that can be applied immediately in daily life. Participants will leave with simple, evidence-informed strategies to support inner calm, deeper joy, and greater resilience in an ever-changing world. This session emphasizes shared learning, curiosity, and reflection, creating a warm and engaging environment where participants can explore happiness not as a destination, but as a way of being.

OLLI SENIOR SEMINARS FALL 2026

NORMAN | THURMAN J. WHITE FORUM BUILDING PURPOSE CODE: XCLLFALL

<input type="checkbox"/>	Blues Queens: The Women Who Built American Popular Music ...	\$60
<input type="checkbox"/>	Danger, Desire and Deceit: Never Enough Noir	\$60
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is it 2026 or 1984? Ask George Orwell.....	\$20
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