

JUNE 2024

# SELIM CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING LEARNING POST

SELIM CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

## MAKE YOUR BRAIN HAPPY

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This month we're wrapping up the celebration of our 50th Anniversary with a look back at our favorite moments in our first 50 years of service to lifelong learners.

### What's your favorite memory?

Do you have a favorite memory from the Center's first 50 years of lifelong learning programming? Drop us an email to share your memory:

[selimcenter@stthomas.edu](mailto:selimcenter@stthomas.edu)



Selim Center for  
Lifelong Learning

# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

## The Selim Center for Lifelong Learning

### **Our Founding Director, Dr. Mohamed Selim**

Before “diversity” was a part of college vocabularies, Dr. Mohamed Selim joined the faculty at the then College of St. Thomas in 1959 for a one-year appointment. As Mo said: “As a Muslim from Egypt, I was not sure how I would fit at a Catholic college, and I think the monsignor had the same question. (The word diversity was not yet in our daily vocabulary).” In 2004, he retired from the University after 45 years of teaching and leadership, with the longest tenure of any lay faculty member to that time. He was named professor emeritus and received the University’s Distinguished Service Award before retiring in August 2004.



### **Our Instructors**

The Selim Center for Lifelong Learning has been graced by the service of hundreds of skilled instructors over its first 50 years, dedicated to providing high quality lifelong learning experiences for the Center’s students. In addition to the lay practitioners used in the earliest years, the instructors included University of St. Thomas employees and also instructors from the extended Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area colleges and universities. Over the years, that scope expanded to include instructors from other colleges and universities in Minnesota, and with the advent of Zoom technology, instructors from schools in other states.



### **Our Students**

Research tells us that lifelong learning is one of the essentials for healthy aging. From its first 50 years, the Center has served 103,601 students. The Center’s learners come to campus from throughout the state of Minnesota and also western Wisconsin. With the advent of Zoom simulcast learning, the Center’s scope expanded to include students participating from 17 states and 3 foreign countries beginning in 2020. The ability to participate via Zoom simulcast has especially allowed alumni from across the country to reconnect with the University of St. Thomas through the Center’s programming.



**Thank you for your support  
during our 1st 50 years!**

# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

## The Selim Center for Lifelong Learning

### Study-Travel

The addition of local/regional study-travel (day trips) in 2014 proved extremely popular. The Center filled a coach-style bus with 50 students, 2 staff and an instructor, and travelled to a variety of destinations for educational talks, local food and great conversations along the way. Instructors enjoyed the change-of-pace learning settings greatly!

This area has continued to evolve, including international study-travel and also United States-based study-travel.



### Year-Round Programming

Around the same time as the Center introduced study-travel, it began offering programming year-round. Summer programming is offered as an in-person opportunity, only, as did the winter programming. After an exceptionally tough winter in 2020, winter term programming evolved to online-learning only in 2021, to assure students could safely learn and also from anywhere in the world, allowing the Center to connect with students who had typically been “snow birds” during the winter months.



### Thank You, Susan!

As the Center concludes celebrating its 50th anniversary, I want to highlight and express gratitude for the many contributions of Susan Anderson-Benson, the Center’s Assistant Director of Operations. Susan has known and worked with all four the Center’s directors, Mo Selim, Sr. Marie Herbert, Dr. Jan Viktora, and me, Bob Shoemake, the current director. Her organizational skills are legendary, as is her ability to anticipate both needs & potential problems. Her willingness to share her many gifts has helped the Center to flourish. Her work has been invaluable. On behalf of Mo, Marie, Jan and me, & all of our students who have been helped by her, THANK YOU, SUSAN.



**Thank you for your support  
during our 1st 50 years!**

# A LOOK AHEAD TO FALL TERM

Launches on July 19, 2024

Here's a Preview of What's Coming this Fall:

## **Study Travel to the North Shore of Lake Superior**

Are you interested in spending September 11—14 exploring the North Shore with Dr. Bernard Brady? Space is limited. If you would like to be part of this group, please contact Bob Shoemake at [rcshoemake@stthomas.edu](mailto:rcshoemake@stthomas.edu) or 612-730-6401.

## **Selim Center Election-Related Lecture Series and Single Session Events**

In preparation for this fall's elections, the Selim Center is hosting a number of lecture series and single session events.

### **Lecture Series:**

- Tuesday mornings, September 24-October 8: Historian Dr. David Williard, "The Body Politic: Transformative Moments in the History of American Law."
- Tuesday mornings, October 15-29: Political Scientist Dr. Tim Lynch, "Election 2024: What Will, Might, and Probably Won't Matter for U.S. Election Outcomes"
- Tuesday afternoons, September 24-October 29: Political Scientist and Historian Dr. Oleksandr Komarenko, "Russia versus Ukraine: Past and Present."

### **Single Session Events:**

- Friday, October 11th: Dr. Kate Beane (Flandreau Santee Sioux Dakota), "How We Name People and Places, Whose Names We Use, and Why It Matters"
- Friday, November 1st: Tom Horner, "America on Election Eve: What the campaigns say about today; what the outcome promises for tomorrow."
- Thursday, November 7th (7:00-8:30 p.m.): Dr. David Schultz, "The Election No One wanted But We Got Anyhow: Making Sense of the 2024 Elections."

*Watch for the July 19th newsletter when the complete fall line-up will be announced and open for registration.*

**Complete details & registration information will be found**

**starting July 19th at**

**[www.stthomas.edu/selim-center/programs](http://www.stthomas.edu/selim-center/programs)**

# STUDY-TRAVEL TO ITALY

Coming in January 2025

Begin the new year in the Mediterranean, joining fellow learners from the Selim Center in study travel to Italy. Program One explores the many layers of Sicily's history and culture. Program Two explores Rome and its environs. You can participate in either or both programs.

Sicily: Exploring the Layers of History: January 7–15, 2025

Rome from Antiquity to the Early Modern Era: Legacies and Transformations, January 15–23, 2025

These unique study-travel programs will explore ancient architecture and history from antiquity and early Christianity to the Early Modern era. Dr. Vanča Schrunck, St. Thomas archeologist and historian of the ancient world, will interpret and help us appreciate the history and rich cultures we encounter. The first program (or first half) starts on the island of Sicily, whose location at the center of the Mediterranean made it a crossroads of history and civilizations. Dr. Schrunck will introduce us to the many layers of this beautiful island, from Palermo to the ancient Greek temples of Selinunte; the historical cities of Agrigento and Syracuse; ending in the stunning city of Taormina, with its views of the sea and Mount Etna. This first program (or first half) will conclude in Rome.

After a rest day, the second program (or second half) begins as we explore the transformation of intellectual and physical culture in Rome from antiquity to Michelangelo. Focusing on ancient Roman and early Christian history, we will visit major and lesser-known sites to analyze how ancient landmarks were memorialized or transformed through time. We will explore the Forum, the Colosseum, and enjoy a lunch at the top of Il Vittoriano where we will take in the panorama of Rome through a historical lens. We will then delve into early Christian history and archaeology in this Jubilee Year through visits to important sites of sacred continuity such as catacombs and early churches. These visits will tie together rich layers of Rome's history. In the three levels of San Clemente Basilica, we will experience the evolution of Christianity from the 1st century through the Middle Ages. We will visit Rome's first cathedral, St. John Lateran, and Santa Maria Maggiore, a beautifully preserved church from the 5th century. A day in Tivoli, with its setting of Emperor Hadrian's villa and magnificent gardens of Villa D'Este, will be an ideal place to contextualize our study of ancient legacies in an Early Modern landscape. Our course will culminate with a customized guided visit of the Vatican Museums and the Sistine Chapel.

**More details, including itinerary & pricing will be found at**

**[www.stthomas.edu/selim-center/programs](http://www.stthomas.edu/selim-center/programs)**

**Registration opens on July 1, 2024**



## CENTER HISTORY

This month we are sharing recent history.

Some members of our spring term class, “An Introduction to Hinduism,” enjoyed bonus time together with a tour of the Hindu Temple in Maple Grove. The students appreciated being able to continue their learning beyond the class itself, which they described as “very informative”, and “wonderful modeling of embracing all religious traditions through curiosity and open dialogue”, taught by “a very learned man” and “an esteemed professor.”

#makeyourbrainhappy



The July newsletter will be published on July 19.

The focus of the July newsletter will be the launch of the Fall term schedule, with an overview of all the classes taking place this fall.

## Contact Us

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