

SOAR Newsletter October 15

The SOAR Board of Directors met on October 14 and decided to offer another virtual semester for our members. The Spring 2021 semester will run from early February to early April (no additional fee to members). Jim Barry is already working to recruit presenters for Spring 2021 from a list of 20 potential presenters. We wish to provide Stimulating Opportunities to our members while we wait to see when we can reopen face-to-face courses. We judge the current semester to be a promising start to our venture into virtual learning, but we are eager to serve yet more of our members in Spring 2021. Well before classes start, the Technology Team plans to offer individualized instruction in using Zoom so that more of SOARers will feel comfortable with this style of instruction. It's really pretty easy, and you can use it to chat with your family!

We are grateful to the tech assistants (Mark Coleman, Karen Collins, Mark Davis, Robin Hutchinson, and Leah Zelkowitz) who have been organized and guided by Jerry Sharp and Janet van Weringh for the success of the Fall 2020 semester. Each course presents somewhat different challenges.

SOAR's Fall 2020 semester is proceeding. A total of 67 SOAR members have registered for our 10 Zoom courses, a total of 149 registrations (there may be more participants as couples and friends may be watching together). Members can also access two pre-recorded classes.

The SOAR Tech Team is posting video recordings of the Zoom sessions of the current semester to the SOARnorthcountry.com website for those who prefer to watch the presentations at their own convenience. From the Home

Page, go to Courses, click on the course that interests you and you will find a link to the presentation towards the bottom of the description. Or just click on the course title below. More than 30 people have viewed some of the recorded classes.

"The Arc Toward Justice"—Jan Wojcik

Chemistry Behind Waste, Recycling, and Sustainability—Amanda Oldacre

Classic Film Viewing and Discussion: Casablanca (1942)—

Ginny Schwartz

Insects and Airplanes—Craig Merett

Introduction to Chair Yoga—Ellen Beeler (no video recording)

Jewish Super Heroes and Racism in Comic Books—Zvi Szafran

The Mathematics of Knots—Joel Foisy

Music of the Beatles—Doug Rubio

A North Country Courtship—Tom Baker & Tabitha Brown

Thin Line Between Love & Hate: Polarization & Energy in Canada & U.S.—Stephen Bird

These two courses were prerecorded and are also accessible on the website.

Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine—Thomas Lufkin

Symptoms of Populism in Europe—Mert Kartal

Here is a comment from one happy SOARer: *Both Zoom courses I've been in so far, "Arc Toward Justice" and "Music of the Beatles," have been excellent. There have been very few technical problems. The 2 presenters are clearly enthusiastic about their subjects. While not as free wheeling as an in person class, there is still the opportunity for discussion and questions and even some socializing prior to the start of class. Playback [of recordings] works well."*

Another member is pleased with the flexibility to make-up a class: *Thank you for posting the recording of the first class of The*

Arc Toward Justice so quickly. I wasn't able to make the first class, so I enjoyed watching the recording.

And yet another enthusiastic review of both the content and the format: Doug Rubio...engaged everyone through a combination of lively lecture and discussion centered around analysis of the lyrics and music of the Beatles. As we listened to the songs, we all happily strolled down Memory Lane. It was nostalgic, to say the least. Everyone was smiling. The only tech difficulty was getting us all to mute ourselves as we sang along with our favorite Beatles tunes! I can't wait for the next class.