

2018-19 Campus Theme

From Ignorance to Wisdom

The doorstep to the temple of wisdom is a knowledge of our own ignorance.

Benjamin Franklin

For its eleventh year, the SOU Center for the Humanities has chosen **From Ignorance to Wisdom** as the campus theme for the 2018-19 academic year. Inspiration for the theme came following informal conversations with students across campus and a request by OLLI at SOU to join us in this exploration.

At first glance the two words ‘ignorance’ and ‘wisdom’ may across as paradoxical, if not outright contradictory, as a choice for a campus theme. Yet, from the famous declaration of Socrates in the 4th century BCE that he was probably wiser than others because he knew that he didn’t know to Columbia University scientist Stuart Firestein’s claim, in the 21st century, that it is ignorance--not knowledge--that is the true engine of science, the two words have played compelling and crucial role in shaping human thought through the ages. Taking to heart the Socratic exhortation that we should constantly question everything, we hope, as a community of learners, to engage in rigorous intellectual conversations about the theme informed by the latest research, scholarship, and insights from a wide variety of perspectives, including the arts, the sciences, religion, philosophy, and many others. Some of the questions that will be taken up for examination include: What is ignorance? What exactly is meant by wisdom? Is ignorance may be the key to knowledge and wisdom?

In addition to SOU faculty, students and staff, we plan to invite scholars, artists and many others to join us in our yearlong exploration of this theme. We would appreciate your prompt approval of the theme so that we can begin working on the fall program.

May 10, 2018

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Campus Theme Program