

INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING IN RETIREMENT SPRING 2026



Course Listing & Schedule

January 26 -
March 20, 2026

Semester Preview

January 21, 2026

Register Today!
Call 1-800-825-5862, Ext. 4862
or (256) 765-4862
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University of North Alabama
Center for Learning &
Professional Development
UNA Box 5036
Florence, AL 35632-0001
(256) 765-4862
800-825-5862, Ext. 4862



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The Institute for Learning in Retirement

Spring 2026 Schedule

January 26 – March 20, 2026 • Florence First United Methodist Church

MONDAYS

- 9:00 - 10:00 am **LR Voices** • Led by Susan Farris
- 10:30 - 11:40 am **Byways of Language & Literature** • Led by Dennis Balch
- Space & Time Over Time & Space** • Led by Tom Osborne
- 11:50 am - 1:00 pm **The Great Books** • Led by Nancy Belue

WEDNESDAYS

- 9:00 - 10:00 am **"If A Tree Falls..."** • Led by Susan Farris
- Enjoying The Arts** • Led by Elizabeth Renault
- 10:30 - 11:40 am **Impacting Northwest Alabama & Beyond** • Led by Susan Farris
- The Great Courses: How Railroads Transformed The World** • Led by Karen Kielbasinski
- 11:50 am - 1:00 pm **Readers' Choice** • Led by Dennis Balch

FRIDAYS

- 9:00 - 10:00 am **All Over the Map** • Led by Susan Daniel
- Hodgepodge** • Led by Will Grimmitt
- Civil War Battles & Events In North Alabama** • Led by Charles Wickwire & Kurt Vettters
- 10:30 - 11:40 am **ILR Music Series** • Led by Jacquie Osborne
- The View From My Window** • Led by Anita Cobb
- 11:50 am - 1:00 pm **Interfaith Book Club** • Led by Jacquie Osborne

Around Town Field Trips (Dates & Times TBA) • Led by April Sturtevant & Kaye Perkins

OFFICERS

President: Susan Farris

Vice-President: Charles Wickwire

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Course Leader Facilitators: Marian Morris,
Linda Austin, David Curott

Travel: April Sturtevant, Kaye Perkins

Sunshine: Elizabeth Stoy

Technology: Richard Hudiburg, Rob Martin,
Steve Merry, Ken Wolf, Dennis Balch

Time: Marian Morris, Ed Byler

COUNCIL

Three Year Term: Dennis Balch, Ed Byler,
Lucy Crosby, Shelaine Williams

Two Year Term: Donna Albright, Susan Daniel,
Karen Kielbasinski,
Kaye Perkins

One Year Term: Howard Zeff, Will Grimmitt,
Steve Merry, Phyllis Romine



LIKE US @UNAsILR

2025-2026
LEADERSHIP

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ILR Voices

Over eight weeks, eight ILR members will present a variety of interests and talents.

Byways of Language and Literature

Topics that inform, entertain, and delight! Rick Bragg does Jerry Lee; a local Pulitzer novelist; 1920s Klan in the US heartland; a look at textiles and civilization.

Space and Time Over Time and Space

Standard Time was created for the Railroads; Empires built vast networks of roads; Land is the engine of history; debt is historically related to landed property.

The Great Books

THE BEST SHORT STORIES (2024): The O Henry Prize Winners, Amor Towles, editor. Opinions, discussion, shared inquiry on questions prepared by leaders.

"If A Tree Falls...."

Explore the natural, cultural, and historical significance of trees.

Enjoying the Arts

The classes will survey: Roosevelt's WPA art program; Thomas Danbo's gigantic troll sculptures; the development of Pointillism which uses color to trick the eyes; and Georges Rodrigues' Cajun paintings and "Blue Dog" series.

Impacting Northwest Alabama and Beyond

Representatives from four area industries/businesses that impact the local, state, and/or global economies will be featured in this series (Agricultural Center, IFDC, Martin Supplies, and Shoals Tourism).

The Great Courses: How Railroads Transformed the World

A study of the history of railroads and their effect on cultures, politics, economics, even psychology, with introductory highlights, and concluding comments.

Readers' Choice

A shared inquiry reading group. Readings are confirmed by the group at the end of preceding semesters and may include poetry, long or short fiction, or nonfiction.

All Over the Map

Living and contributing abroad has been life changing for two of our long-time members. Edwina Clayton helped children in Albania and Phyllis Shoemaker was a nurse in Saudi Arabia.

Hodgepodge

All over the map as usual. Presentations include the poet Longfellow and a local newspaper reporter/celebrity.

Civil War Battles and Events in North Alabama

Perspectives on Civil War battles and events in our area of North Alabama.

ILR Music Series

We will be continuing to listen and learn about the history of American music.

The View from My Window

Perspectives of local and regional black history and culture: the Canaan neighborhood of West Florence; historic black churches of Northwest Alabama; black Rosenwald schools of Lauderdale County.

Interfaith Book Club

This semester we will be reading "Believe" by Ross Douthat.

MEETING LOCATION:

We're now meeting at Florence First United Methodist Church, located at 415 North Seminary Street in Florence.

Parking Info: You may park in the parking lot across Seminary Street next to the University Health Services building, or in the parking lot behind Quench.

Entrance: Enter the church through the Seminary Street entrance marked "Church Offices."

Accessible Drop-Off: For those needing a covered, handicap-accessible drop-off area, enter from Tuscaloosa Street and exit onto Hermitage Drive.

THE INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING IN RETIREMENT

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR SEMESTER PREVIEW

Wednesday, January 21, at 10:00 a.m., at Florence First United Methodist Church, 415 North Seminary Street, Florence, AL

WHAT IS THE INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING IN RETIREMENT (ILR)?

The ILR is a member led group that determines all activities from course planning to social events. Most discussion groups are led by members. The ILR is an organization of active mature men and women who seek continued intellectual and social stimulation. Regardless of your educational background or work experience, we invite you to try us out without committing to a membership! There are no tests, grades, or prerequisites!

THE INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING IN RETIREMENT IS FOR:

Anyone interested in making new friends and growing & stimulating their mind in an educational environment!

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO BEING AN ILR MEMBER?

For only \$80 a semester, joining ILR entitles you to:

- Attend any or all of the courses you would like that are listed in this brochure
- Social Events
- Trips (extra cost may be associated)
- ILR Members receive a 10% discount on UNA Continuing Education Courses.

Simply fill out the registration form located below and mail with your check. Class size is limited in some cases, so register early! If you are interested in attending a regular credit course, there is a Senior Scholar program which is administered through the UNA Office of Admissions (256-765-4608).



FAST & EASY REGISTRATION

Pre-registration is requested so we can be prepared for your attendance.



BY PHONE

Our registration office is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. We accept Discover, MasterCard and Visa. **Call (256)765-4862 or 1(800)-825-5862, ext. 4862.**



IN PERSON

During our office hours, come by our office in the UNA Office of Regional Engagement, 541 West College Street, Florence, AL. Park at the back of the building and enter through the purple awning. Please have correct change.



ONLINE

www.una.edu/professionaldevelopment
Select Personal Enrichment, and Institute for Learning In Retirement.

EMAIL

Scan and email form to Meghan Fike, mmfike@una.edu



MAIL

Complete the attached registration form and mail with your check or credit card information (don't mail cash) to Center for Learning & Professional Development, UNA Box 5036, University of North Alabama, Florence, Alabama 35632-0001.

Registration Form

If registering more than one person, please list additional names and information on an attached sheet or duplicate this form.

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

Mobile _____ Email _____

Birthday (Optional) _____ Text Opt in ☐ YES ☐ NO

Please Register me for: ☐ Spring Term 2026, \$80

Payment Method:

Check Enclosed (payable to UNA) Please include course name on lower left side of check.

☐ Purchase Order

☐ Money Order

☐ Visa

☐ MasterCard

☐ Discover

Credit Card # _____

Expiration Date _____ Verification # _____

Authorized Signature _____

Please make as many copies of this form as you need.