

**Thomas Kelly**

**OLLI Course Content**

**Spring 2024**

**The 1930's; The Great Depression and a New Deal for the American people.**

**Week 1:** The election of 1932 and the first 100 days of the Franklin Roosevelt administration. Even before his inauguration, President Roosevelt assembled his “Brain Trust” to design and implement new government programs. The administration hit the ground running and within 100 days had passed 15 pieces of major legislation.

**Week 2:** The Depression hurt farmers and agriculture especially hard. We will discuss the problems of farmers during the Depression and the government’s attempts to aid people and the agricultural industry.

**Week 3:** The crisis of unemployment affected all industries, age groups and genders. This week we will discuss the government’s attempts to assist workers while also redefining the relationships between laborers/businesses/government.

**Week 4:** Unlike most administrations that face criticism from only one end of the political spectrum, the Roosevelt administration came under fire from both the “Left” and the “Right.” This week we will discuss the critics of the New Deal and the solutions that they offered in its place.

**Week5:** The centerpiece of the “Second New Deal” was the Social Security Act. This Act has been widely hailed as the most successful government program ever. Yet critics of Roosevelt and the New Deal have been working to undermine Social Security and the broader ideas of New Deal politics almost since its inception. We will close out the course with a class discussion of the successes and failures of the New Deal ideology.