



## *The Thomas More Institute in the Time of COVID-19*

The screen capture above finds us, like almost every event in 2020, on Zoom. Our Volunteer Appreciation event took place back in May, but our events and meetings look much the same now. We would of course much prefer to see you in person; however, we are making the most of life in the time of COVID-19.

In March, we cancelled the final two weeks of the Winter Term and the entirety of the Spring Term. Staff and volunteers quickly turned to Zoom to maintain events and meetings and to plan the 2020/21 academic year under new circumstances.

Several summer initiatives served as pilot projects and practice for moving the TMI community online. Our 2020/21 academic year is underway, with the Autumn and Winter Terms taking place entirely on Zoom and the Spring Term awaiting decision.

In addition to keeping us connected, our online presence has expanded our community. Friends and strangers from elsewhere in Canada, the USA, and overseas have participated in our events and courses, broadening the possibilities for the future of TMI.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Christian Dior 1947 to 1957**  
**Before and After his “New Look”**: new three-week course starting 13 November, 2020, including a virtual visit to the McCord Museum

**The American Elections:**  
**What Next? A Conversation**  
**with Jason Opal**: webinar on 20 November, 2020, featuring Professor Jason Opal, interviewed by Carol Fiedler and Brian McDonough



## THE YEAR AHEAD

Just prior to the Autumn Term beginning, all leaders and participants had the opportunity to attend several Zoom orientation sessions to introduce them to the primary platform that we are using to facilitate our courses. Digital literacy is a skill that we do not want anyone to learn alone, so we have, in TMI fashion, learned together. We are still available to answer questions and troubleshoot individual problems by email or by phone.

Across the 12 courses of the Autumn Term, a few dozen new students have joined us, including some who would not otherwise be able to participate due to geographical distance. The Seniors Outreach Program has successfully resumed, keeping increasingly isolated seniors connected. Also, a record-breaking 30 community members joined us for our AGM in early October thanks to Zoom.

To keep us connected while we remain online for the Winter Term, you can find testimonials from our community, videos promoting our online courses, and registration information for the rest of our 2020/21 academic year on our social media accounts and our website ([thomasmore.qc.ca](http://thomasmore.qc.ca)).

## COMMUNITY NEWS

Zoe Shaw joined the TMI staff in March as the new Administrative Services Coordinator; Shernaz Choksi joined the Board of Directors in October. Moreover, a warm welcome to all of our new volunteers and participants!

## OUR SUMMER INITIATIVES

**TMI Connects** relieved some of the isolation of early lockdown with 10 weekly conversation sessions on a variety of general topics.

The **Book Circle** met every three weeks to analyse a different novelist's works each session.

The course **Shakespeare in the Spring** took place as a pilot project to envision a TMI course on Zoom.

Some members of the **Seniors Outreach Program** met in small groups online to explore the possibilities for 2020/21.

Our 45th Anniversary Celebration and the Spring Series were cancelled, but we still hosted a webinar interview with Maitre **Julius Grey** on 12 June.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

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