



FRESNO STATE OLLI

INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES

Thank you for teaching for the Fresno State OLLI. This guide should answer many of the questions you have, but if we missed something, feel free to call or email. We want you, and those attending your course, to have a wonderful time together!

What is OLLI?

OLLI is the Fresno State Osher Lifelong Learning Institute endowed by the Bernard Osher Foundation, and one of more than 120 OLLI programs on college campuses across the nation. We provide a dynamic variety of learning opportunities for those age 50 and better to support lifelong learning. Most of our members are retired, and they become OLLI members to learn for the love of learning with no homework, tests or complications.

Our members

You will find our members to be inquisitive, engaged and intelligent. Instructors commonly describe their OLLI participants as the best learners they have encountered.

Preparation

Although there is no single format for courses, instruction using a lecture/demonstration format and an opportunity to ask questions is most popular with members.

Whether you are teaching for the first time, or you've taught elsewhere, it's very important that you organize your talk well in advance of your class meetings. Create an outline and make notes for yourself for how you want the class to flow. Include key points so that you remember what you want to say – sometimes standing in front of people causes our brains to forget things.

The more familiar you are with your material, the more comfortable you will be. Review the course description you submitted that is in our catalog as a reminder of what was to be accomplished through the class.

Technology

Our classrooms are equipped with laptops and projectors. Your presentations can be displayed in the classroom, whether you are using a multimedia presentation like PowerPoint, or are showing photos, videos or audio clips. We encourage you to please make arrangements with the OLLI office at least a week before your class begins to view your classroom and test the equipment.

If you are using a PowerPoint, slides or any multimedia, we request to receive those the day before your class so we can test them and make sure they work well.

Sound and hearing

We have microphones available in most of our classrooms and you are welcome to use them. Some of our members may have hearing challenges, so if you speak softly, please use the microphone. Instructors are best heard if they enunciate as clearly as possible, try to avoid speaking super quickly and check to make sure everyone in the room can hear them.

Handouts

You may wish to share information through handouts in your class. The OLLI office will make handouts for you to distribute in your class. Please provide your handout via email to the OLLI office at least five days before your class so they will be ready for you. Giving assignments should be carefully considered and treated as suggestions only. For example, in writing or memoir classes, participants will expect to write on their own. Reading suggestions are often appropriate. There are no tests or grades.

Your First Class!

You're prepared and excited to meet a group of people with an interest in your topic.

Introduce yourself at the beginning of your first class meeting and tell them about your interest/experience in the course topic and what they will learn. You may wish to have members introduce themselves and tell you what they hope to get out of the class, but here's a caution: It could take an hour or more to do that depending on enrollment. It's not required but some instructors like to do it.

Be mindful of the time. Most classes run for 90 minutes; some for 120 minutes. You must end on time because there could be another class scheduled for your room. If you finish too quickly, say in 45 minutes, then we ask that you review and revise your course outline so that your class runs fairly close to the time promised. Those attending expect the class to last the length of time noted in the catalog.

Our members ask lots of questions and it's up to you whether you want to take questions as you go, or at the end. Tell the class which you would prefer so they will know.

Set the tone for your class. If you will discuss material that some may find offensive or will not agree with, tell the class that you expect the discussion will be respectful and calm.

If you have friends taking your course, please remember to address everyone in the class, not just those you know.

Your OLLI Experience

If you wish to email your participants with follow-up materials or other items after your class, please provide your materials to the OLLI office and we will share them with participants.

Instructors are prohibited from collecting member personal information for their own use and we will not share member personal information with instructors or any others. O

Sticky issues

Our members are generally lovely people and our instructors have a great time. If you encounter something or someone in your class that causes concern or distress for you or other members, please contact the OLLI office to report it.

Some members may try to dominate the question period by telling long personal stories or asking one question after the other, blocking other members from participating. We suggest these methods for handling this situation:

- Tell the person that you need to hear questions from other members and you will get back to them if there is time. ("If you've already spoken, please give someone else a turn.")
- Offer to meet the member after the class is concluded to answer the question.
- If members get off topic in their comments, redirect. ("I'm not sure I understand how that relates to this topic. Can you clarify?")
- Talk to the member after class or ask the OLLI office to do so (Thank them for contributing to discussion so regularly, while firmly asking them to make room for others to contribute.)

Final notes

We want your experience to be wonderful so please let us know how to help. On the last day of your class, members will receive an evaluation to complete and we will share the results with you.

Thank you for teaching for the Fresno State OLLI!

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