

OLLI Facilitator Focus Group Report – Sept. 26, 2019

18 facilitators participated in the Facilitator Focus Group. The first 7 questions were identical to the Membership and Leadership Focus Group questions, while the last 4 questions were facilitator-specific. After input for all the facilitator questions was obtained, 14 of the 18 facilitators voted for 3 strategic plan priorities from the ideas presented. They could vote for the same category multiple times if they wished with their total number of 41 votes (1 of the available votes was not cast). The facilitators were also asked to evaluate the process. All of the input obtained from the facilitators is documented below.

FACILITATOR PRIORITIES

1. Better communication (10/41 votes = 24%)
2. Classroom technology (6/41 votes = 15%)
3. Outreach (5/41 votes = 12%)
4. 3-way tie for 4th place (4/41 votes = 10% each)
 - a) Educational environment
 - b) Increased mentoring/co-facilitating opportunities
 - c) Attract new members
5. 2-way tie for 5th place (3/41 votes = 7% each)
 - a) Encourage new facilitators
 - b) Classroom attendance
6. Class evaluations (2/41 votes = 5%)

FACILITATOR COMMENTS

Below is the actual input obtained from Facilitator Focus Group questions. Note that only questions 1-4 were categorized and prioritized (but the 3rd level items are listed in random order).

1a. What drew you to OLLI?

Education

- Adult education
- College environment
- Like to contribute
- Desire to share knowledge & skills
- Teach what I need to learn

Social

- Meeting new people
- Friends told me

Activities

- Hiking groups

Flexibility

1b. What prompted you to facilitate for OLLI?

Power of sharing

- Share the power of music
- Stepped in to correct misinformation
- New idea that was needed
- Once a teacher, always a teacher

Encouragement

- Someone asked me to
- Encouraged by another member
- Taking a class, stepped up when co-facilitator dropped out
- Can't get involved without contributing
- Bet with wife

2. **What keeps you here? (3-way tie)**

Positive social environment

- Interesting environment
- Friendly relaxed environment
- Feel appreciated
- Staff is helpful & welcoming
- The people

Innovation

- Keep thinking of new classes
- Flexibility to teach what interests you

Motivation

- Commitment
- “dirt” keep moving

3a. **What would enhance or increase the value of your OLLI experience?**

Incentives & reward system

- Pay for speakers
- Increase in pay
- Member reward/certificate for participation

3b. **What changes would you make?**

Classes

- Greater learning group variety/options
- More advanced classes with prerequisites
- More skill-based classes
- Do more with younger students (YC, high school, home school)
- Bring in outside speakers

Classroom technology

- More support for classroom technology
- Provide tech assistant in first class
- More training on when to call the help desk
- Consistent classroom technology
- Address technology issues that can't be immediately solved
- Access to *all* my resources available instantly for students & members

Communication

- Better communication between staff & facilitator when someone drops out
- Better communication from members about dropping classes
- Share facilitator handbook
- More accuracy between catalog description and actual course
- Student handbook (expectations as a member)

Change fee structure (may impact attendance if charge for workshops)

Move Pie Day to March 14th

4. **What is a higher priority for you – educational or social activities?**

- Educational – 15 votes
- Social – 3 votes

The input from the following questions was not prioritized and is listed in random order.

5a. **What benefits would occur if OLLI membership grows?**

- More people served
- New creative energy
- More income
- More flexibility – night & weekend classes
- Better picnics

5b. What could be some drawbacks?

- Impact on Yavapai College
- Over-subscribed classes & social activities
- Too much load for the office staff
- Parking issues
- Facilitator availability

6a. How do we attract more members?

- No age requirement for OLLI participation (communication)
- Testimonials in the catalog (publicity)
- Reward for recruitment (communication)
- Relationship with "NewCat" twice a year instead of once
- Use Prescott Valley facilities
- Newspaper articles & other marketing
- Take OLLI on the road
- Trifolds in businesses/restaurants & business cards (communication)
- Speaker bureau
- Open house at Chino Valley facilities
- More interesting classes

6b. How can we be more inclusive?

- Classroom accessibility & parking issues
- Communicate scholarship availability
- Transportation
- Communicate no age requirement
- Send newsletter (announcements) to Moose, Elks, Computer Society, etc.)
- HOA newsletters
- Social media & Nextdoor

7. As a member, how would you describe OLLI in 5 years?

- Over-crowded
- 50% tele-classes
- "Video tape" classes & make available
- More diversity in membership
- No longer printing catalog (less required lead-time for classes)
- New generation of classes (Lawrence Welk -> Bruce Springsteen -> ?)
- Public transportation
- Satellite locations
- Paid facilitators

8. What needs do you have as facilitators?

- Every facilitator has a complete OLLI manual (student & facilitator guide, classroom tech info, YC map, etc.)
- OLLI repository
- Write protected thumb drive for every facilitator
- Up-to-date rosters
- Information on key topics of interest from members
- More specific feedback on evaluations
- Resource on facilitator & member backgrounds/expertise (searchable database)

9. What would make your facilitating job “easier”?

- Ask members what they would like to see & communicate to facilitators
- Change class evaluations
- More opportunities for brief presentations from members to encourage facilitation
- More robust mentor program (communication)
- Better communication process for presenters
- Established requirements for class proposals
- More use of co-facilitators
- More robust mentor program (communication)
- Email list of student email addresses (easy email blast w/o involving staff)

10. Are you satisfied with your classroom attendance?

- No-show policy – rules around dropping
 - Not missing first class if sequential class (Russian)
- No-shows are a problem when there is a waiting list & impacts field trip fees
- Very satisfied (class “groupies”)
- The majority are satisfied
- Policy (guidelines) for class sizes
- Overbook to account for no-shows

11. Are the class evaluations helpful?

- Pulling teeth to get evaluations
- Process for encouraging evaluations (Rothgery Formula follow-up emails)
- Number of helpful evaluations has grown
- Lack of feedback with few returned
- Not getting enough specific feedback
- Repeat students are tired of filling out forms
- More constructive feedback with 2 questions
- Online allows those that drop classes to submit evaluations

COMMENTS FROM FACILITATORS THAT COULD NOT ATTEND

- OLLI used to ask your inputs for subjects for classes. I do not remember any feedback on inputs. I recommend starting such a process again, with a suggested 2-3 suggested subjects only. Then provide perhaps 5-8 by popularity, to all OLLI members and hopefully stimulate volunteers to facilitate.
- I like the way OLLI is and I don't see any need for changes or improvements.

FACILITATOR FEEDBACK

15 evaluations forms were submitted with the following comments:

1. Is there anything that we failed to address?

- No (10 responses)
- Failed to introduce everyone
- How do we attract new facilitators?
- How do we eliminate the tech problems?
- Overfilled class – people should not be turned away

- Discussion regarding interaction with national OLLI program and with Yavapai College
- The social committee needs OLLI aprons

2. Are there any issues that need to be clarified?

- Will we know what changed because of today's meeting?
- Would like to know more about the responsibilities of the various committee
- Attendance

3. Did you feel that your voice mattered?

- Yes (12 responses)
- Yes – all given equal opportunity to speak
- Yes- all voices seemed to matter
- Sure, but we will see if anything changes

4. How can we improve the process?

- Schedule a follow up focus group on how to implement suggestions. Just raising issues is not as helpful as how we address them. Perhaps have fewer questions and combine the most important issues and specific ways to address them. The longer the gap between identifying issues and how we address them these issues sometimes become less relevant because just raising issues does not solve them.
- I thought the process you used was very effective. As I looked around the room, I didn't see a single person that did not contribute with a remark or idea. Chris is a great moderator!
- This was very well facilitated. Participants were very respectful.
- Today's meeting was valuable, thank you.
- Provide feedback on the issues as they develop.
- It seems like we did not need to use all that paper.
- It was perfect.
- Maybe to have similar meetings twice a year.
- One of the best brainstorming sessions I've attended – good control, good focus – no suggestions.
- Do it annually & distribute results to ALL participants.
- Sessions such as this will improve the process.
- Fewer questions or more time.
- Maybe we need to know the results of any committees that address these problems and what solution they come up with. Perhaps 2 times a year summary.

Facilitators in Attendance

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|------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| • Phil Groves | • Bill Maxwell | • Angie Mazella |
| • Bonnie Manko | • Marianna Friemark | • John Mazella |
| • Dave Hoffman | • Eleanor Wing | • Mark Dillon |
| • Nailya Almagambetova | • Bob Ellis | • Ed Wisneski |
| • Nancy Dubow | • Mark Troester | • Jack Taber |
| • Vince Claude | • John Carter | • Christy Powers |