

OLLI Facilitators: Ideas for things that have worked well

Have time for class participation/discussion

Ask questions that promote discussion, not “yes” or “no” answers

Ask leading questions before showing a video

Use YouTube videos (May want to transfer them to a jump drive so they don't “disappear”)

Use a co-facilitator

If you're unsure about facilitating, start with a class that's shorter than the 6 weeks

Use slides (e.g., PowerPoint)/photographs. Don't put too much text on slides with print too small to read from the back of the room

Use personal stories (yours and others) that are connected to the topic

Supplement DVD lectures with related information/discussions

Have class volunteers make mini-presentations

Have handouts with supplemental information

Follow up on questions you can't answer during class

Spend time before class and during break circulating and greeting/visiting with class members

Move around the room or position yourself somewhere other than the podium

Ask class members about classes they'd like you to offer

Have someone else review your class description to be sure it says what your class is really about

Give an overview of the class on the first day so class members know what to expect

Be ready to change directions if class members have better suggestions

Have fun! Don't take yourself too seriously

Plan ahead to deal with class members that monopolize discussion. Set clear guidelines at the beginning and enforce them

Cut short political opinions that don't add to the discussion

Review special terminology and concepts

Some issues we keep trying to solve:

I.T./Computer problems – Feel free to call the office and/or ask if class members can assist

High attrition rate – Sometimes unavoidable. Make sure your class offers something they can't get on their own (e.g., adding extras if you're using a DVD). If your course relies on information from previous classes, make that clear in your descriptions.

Political arguments – Emphasize the need to respect all opinions