



Instructor Handbook

2026-2027

Important Dates

Winter 2027

Course proposals due – October 16, 2026
Classes begin - January 25, 2027
Classes end – April 9, 2027

Spring 2027

Course proposals due – January 22, 2027
Classes begin - April 12, 2027
Classes end – June 25, 2027

Summer 2027

Course proposals due – April 9, 2027
Classes begin – July 12, 2027
Classes end – August 27, 2027

Fall 2027

Course proposals due – June 11, 2027
Classes begin – September 13, 2027
Classes end – December 3, 2027

Important Contact Info

Mary Brock - Director

Amanda Turner – Operations Manager

OLLI Office – 864-633-5242

OLLI Email – olli@clemson.edu

OLLI Website – www.olliatclemson.org

Teaching Locations

Charles K. Cheezem Education Center
Keowee Key Activity Center

Welcome to OLLI at Clemson University! We are very fortunate to have so many talented and accomplished instructors share their expertise and passion with our members. Your willingness to contribute is truly appreciated.

This handbook will help acquaint you with basic OLLI procedures and policies; additionally, helpful tips and insights for teaching OLLI at Clemson members. Everyone at OLLI wants you to feel successful and energized with your teaching experience.

WHAT WE DO

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Clemson University is a membership community of over 1,000 individuals in the Upstate who come from all backgrounds and educational levels. Together we enjoy the camaraderie of our peers as we participate in a myriad of activities designed just for us.

OLLI at Clemson embraces an unusually comprehensive array of courses, excursions and special interest groups. Each year, nearly 300 unique programs provide opportunities to gain knowledge and expertise in a wide variety of academic and recreational pursuits and to share our experiences and perspectives with others.

Our activities are innovative and limited only by members' imaginations!

WHO IS OLLI FOR?

OLLI membership is open to anyone who wishes to experience the wide range of courses and activities we offer. Most members are over 50, but we encourage attendance by any adult who wishes to be part of our community of learners. We benefit from a diversity of life experiences and points of view and value the opportunity to learn from one another both inside and outside our classes.

OLLI members are delightful because they are mature and attend courses because they *want* to. They are curious and motivated to learn; they are engaged in the conversation; they are willing to push the limits of their personal experience in learning something new.

ADULT LEARNERS JOIN IN THE DISCUSSION

Adult learners are unique in their approach to learning. They are patient and engaged while listening, but also desire discussion based on their rich history of experience and wisdom. We highly recommend that you provide ample time for interactive discussion throughout the course.

In general, adult learners approach learning differently than younger learners in that they are more self-guided in their learning, and they bring more to a learning situation because of their wider experience – and often take more away from the experience.

HARD OF HEARING MEMBERS

Some OLLI members have a degree of hearing loss, so please project your voice. Also, since it is sometimes difficult for the rest of the class to hear class member questions, please repeat questions. Ask your class members to let you know if they cannot hear you and let us know if a microphone is needed.

CLASSROOM ASSISTANCE WITH AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT

Audio visual equipment is available in all classrooms at the Cheezem Education Center with the exception of the Upstairs Art Room. Available equipment includes a Windows based laptop, screen and/or monitor on which to display, clicker, and sound equipment. Schedule an appointment with OLLI staff if you would like to become familiar with the equipment before your course begins. If you are interested in teaching from our Seneca location, just indicate your a/v needs on your proposal.

USING AUDIO VISUAL MATERIALS

Use audio visual materials to provide a framework for understanding. Remember that your slides should provide only an outline, not the whole message. If using PowerPoint keep slides simple and uncrowded. Stick to simple light and dark colors; use dark text on a light background or vice-versa. Avoid text-heavy slides. Display slides with a large enough font (no smaller than 24 pt.) to enable people at the back of the room to read easily. Use bullet points versus complete sentences.

Avoid reading your audio-visual materials. Remember some class members are visual learners and others are auditory learners. Be mindful of this and prepare course materials and presentations with this in mind.

Be sensitive to declining vision by providing class members with drawings, graphs, maps or other data that may be difficult to study on the screen.

Provide bibliographies or resource lists.

COPY REQUESTS

For copies of lesson plans, handouts, etc., you may either email your request with the appropriate document(s) attached to olli@clemsun.edu or make plans to stop by the OLLI office. **Please allow at least two days for completion of requests.** You will be given an email list prior to your course starting date. We strongly suggest that you email large documents to your class members under blind copy. If you need assistance sending emails to class members, contact the OLLI office at 864-633-5242.

WI-FI

Wi-Fi is available at the Charles K. Cheezem Education Center. All OLLI laptops are connected to Wi-Fi. Please contact the OLLI office for the password for use with your own device.

COURSE ROSTER

Approximately seven to ten days prior to your course start date, you will receive a course roster from the OLLI staff. Class member emails and other contact information are included on the rosters that you are provided. This information is only intended for distribution of materials pertaining to the course you are currently teaching. **We encourage you to reach out to your class members via email and introduce yourself.** When emailing your class members please place all email addresses in the BCC (blind carbon copy) line so as not to distribute names and email addresses widely. We strongly suggest you provide your email address to your class members in the event they have questions or need information.

EVALUATIONS

Evaluations are conducted through an online program called Qualtrics. Summary reports are emailed to instructors within three weeks of the end of the course. This feedback will help you learn which parts of your course were successful and which need improvement. The goal is an enthusiastic approach, a depth of knowledge, and a clear and organized communication style. Please encourage your class members to complete the survey during the last session of your course.

SUGGESTIONS FOR RUNNING YOUR CLASS SMOOTHLY

Plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the course start time. Classrooms are available 15 minutes prior to the class start time unless special arrangements have been made.

Take advantage of early arrivals. Get acquainted.

Introduce yourself. Allow a few minutes at the beginning of your first session to allow class members to introduce themselves. Please ask for a show of hands for new OLLI members and welcome them. Ask the class members about their expectations.

Ask class members to silence their cell phones and/or devices at the start of the class.

Have clear objectives for each class session and share those objectives with the class members. Feel free to set ground rules. You might find it helpful to announce that participants should raise their hands when they have a question, and that each member limits him/herself to one question unless time permits. This is at your discretion, but there have been occasions where

one or two class members dominated discussion and therefore the rest of the class was not able to ask questions or contribute their thoughts.

Retain control of the topic/discussion. Intervene early if a class member attempts to monopolize discussion.

Provide a short break midway through the session if it is longer than 1.5-hours.

Allow time for questions and answers but retain control of the flow and timing of your class. It may be best to defer questions until the end of the class rather than be interrupted throughout.

Manage your time well. Don't try to cover too much in a short time. Conversely, pace yourself to get through the material and topics described in your course objectives.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Although OLLI members are mature adults, there are times when good classroom management techniques can minimize disruptions to a good learning environment. Most disruptions will be fairly mild and can be minimized by using the following techniques:

- **Class member is monopolizing the conversation.** First validate the class member's enthusiasm; then shift the interaction to other class members or topics.
 - "It's great that you are so interested in this issue but I really want to hear from the other class members."
 - "That's an interesting point of view. Sally, how do you feel about that issue?"
 - "I would love to keep this discussion going but we really need to move on."
- **Class members are engaging in side-bar conversations.** If the private discussion is distracting to you and others, you must re-engage those class members and have them rejoin the class presentation or discussion. Sometimes making eye contact with the talkers and physically moving closer to them will work. Call on one of them or invite the talkers to share their comments with the class.
 - "Do you have an idea that the rest of us could learn from?"
 - "It looks like you have some questions; perhaps you'd like to share those with the group."
- **A class member is overly negative and forcefully challenges your presentation and other class members' points of view.** Listen to and acknowledge the issues being raised; then move on.
 - "I understand what you are saying but we really need to shift focus to the next topic."
 - "Obviously, you see things very differently than I do. Let's discuss this disagreement further after class."
 - "You may be right. We need to move on now but why don't you send me whatever material you may have to support that position and I'll forward it to the entire class."

- **Too many questions are bogging down your presentation.** It's usually best to address questions when they occur but sometimes it is not appropriate to get off track.
 - "I am so sorry but I'm going to have to move on to the next topic. Please save your questions for the Q&A I have planned at the end."
 - "We really don't have time to go into that now but please send me an email with your question and I'll get back to you very soon."

In rare instances, the above tactics may not work. If the situation is serious, you should enlist the immediate help of the OLLI staff.

CLASSROOM EMERGENCIES

In the event of an emergency, have someone call 9-1-1 immediately. If you are teaching at the Charles K. Cheezem Education Center, please send a class member downstairs to alert office staff. If you are teaching at one of our off-site locations or hosting an excursion/outdoor adventure, always call 9-1-1 first! Then call the OLLI staff at 864-633-5242 and inform them of the situation as soon as possible.

CANCELLATION OF COURSES

In case of instructor illness or an emergency requiring the cancellation of a course session(s) please contact the OLLI office at 864-633-5242 as soon as possible. The OLLI staff will notify your class members through phone calls and/or direct email. If you must cancel a session, you may want to schedule a makeup session. Usually we do this in the week following the last session. Please contact OLLI staff so the space can be reserved and class members can be notified.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

OLLI follows the Clemson University inclement weather policy. When Clemson University is closed due to inclement weather, all OLLI activities are cancelled or postponed to a later date.

FUTURE PROGRAMMING

Just as we ask our members for their ideas about future course and excursion programming, we request your ideas as well. You are our most important resource. If you have recommendations for future courses or excursions, please let us know.

ASK A COLLEAGUE. TELL A FRIEND

If you know someone who might be interested in teaching an OLLI course or leading an OLLI excursion, ask them to contact us, or give us their contact information. And please tell a friend about OLLI. Increased awareness of OLLI in the community is the key for our sustained growth.

CODE OF CONDUCT

OLLI at Clemson University is a community of intellectually active mature adults. Membership entails mutual respect among members and instructors as they pursue knowledge and explore individual interests. Failure to treat ideas, viewpoints, the classroom environment and interests of other members of the community with respect and civility compromises the intellectual climate at OLLI and cannot be tolerated. The OLLI administration and volunteer leadership are responsible for ensuring that the Code of Conduct is being followed in all OLLI sponsored programs.

This OLLI at Clemson University Code of Conduct is congruent with that for students at Clemson University in promoting behavior that enables enlightened discourse among individuals.

It is inappropriate to use the OLLI classroom setting for promotion of a personally marketed product or services available from a for-profit company for whom the instructor is employed. It is, however, permitted for an instructor to make known such an affiliation either in the biography listed in the OLLI catalog or when introducing yourself to your class members. It is also permitted to include a company logo on any printed materials you provide class members. Marketing one's business or using member emails outside of the classroom parameters during an OLLI setting is not permitted.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

OLLI staff are always available to answer questions and provide assistance. Other OLLI instructors are usually willing to offer guidance. Take every available opportunity to meet, get to know and have discussions with your fellow instructors, many of whom are career teachers and experienced OLLI instructors.

KEY CONTACTS

- Mary Brock: Director, overseeing all OLLI operations

- Amanda Turner: Operations Manager, responsible for:
 - class scheduling
 - equipment supply and operation
 - office supportamandat@clemson.edu 864-633-5242

As of June 22, 2026