

## **Analysis of OLLI Membership Survey 2016**

The fall survey of OLLI members was written by a committee of OLLI members, including board members, with an eye toward having results in time for the annual Town Hall Meeting in early November. The survey was first offered to the approximately 1,200 members by email notification (with link) on October 26, and within days saw over 300 responses. Reminder messages were sent by e-blast and in OLLI E-News, and read by liaisons as an announcement in the OLLI Communicator, plus a prominent link was available on the OLLI website home page. The survey ultimately saw 448 responses by its closure on December 17, a period of 55 days. This represents a 37.3% response rate—very impressive—which suggests that our members are eager to make their opinions known.

This analysis is intended to complement the SurveyMonkey results report, which includes more detail and also bar charts. Most statistics in this analysis have been rounded, usually to the nearest whole number.

### **Q1. I have been an OLLI member for:**

<b>Less than 5 years</b>	<b>42.5%</b>
<b>5-15 years</b>	<b>48.0%</b>
<b>15-25 years</b>	<b>9.5%</b>

OLLI was much smaller 15 years ago and has grown rapidly in the last several years, so it's not surprising that the vast majority of respondents have belonged for 15 or fewer years.

*Note: Due to an error in survey construction, those who have been members for 15 years were forced to decide which of two answers to select, since the 15-year option was in both the 5-15 and 15-25 options.*

### **Q2. My home campus is:**

<b>Fairfax/Tallwood</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>Loudoun</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Reston</b>	<b>13%</b>

Our rule of thumb for Fairfax/Loudoun/Reston home campus population is roughly 80/10/10, and this question reflects the majority who identify with Tallwood. This will be apparent in responses to later questions and particularly write-in comments.

### **Q3. I am willing to take classes at: (check all that apply)**

<b>The Tallwood campus</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Church of the Good Shepherd</b>	<b>80%</b>
<b>Lord of Life Fairfax</b>	<b>77%</b>
<b>Lord of Life Clifton</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Reston campuses</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Loudoun campus</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Other off site venues as needed</b>	<b>41%</b>

Since 76% of responding members identify with the Fairfax/Tallwood campus (see Q2), the first three responses above are not surprising, and suggested that a few members from Reston and Loudoun are also flexible about location. The low score for Lord of Life Clifton substantiates the low registration and attendance rates for classes at that location, and should be an indication that Clifton is the least popular of the Fairfax/Tallwood off-site options (not a surprise to staff and program planners). Reston’s 54% is quite a jump from the 13% of respondents identifying with the Reston campuses, which may indicate that Reston draws substantially from other locations.

*A major caveat: People will say one thing in a survey, and do another in reality. Since this question states “I am willing to take,” it may represent good intentions—but that doesn’t guarantee follow-through.*

**Q4. How important are these things to you as an OLLI member? (Weighted averages are indicated and, like golf scores, lower is better.)**

<b>Acquiring new skills/knowledge</b>	<b>1.32</b>
<b>Meeting new people/socialize</b>	<b>2.04</b>
<b>Intellectual stimulation</b>	<b>1.16</b>
<b>Using my expertise via volunteering</b>	<b>2.91</b>
<b>Taking advantage of OLLI’s affiliation with George Mason University</b>	<b>2.62</b>

Putting these in prioritized order, we get:

Intellectual stimulation	1.16
Acquiring new skills/knowledge	1.32
Meeting new people/socialize	2.04
Taking advantage of OLLI’s affiliation with George Mason University	2.62
Using my expertise via volunteering	2.91

Not surprisingly, learning and knowledge are top priorities, in keeping with OLLI’s primary goals, and socialization is not far behind. The affiliation with Mason isn’t a huge driver, and volunteering at OLLI is not a major factor in membership, presumably since volunteering options are abundant elsewhere without paid membership.

**Q5. Which of the following is more important to you?**

<b>Classes held at one centralized location.</b>	<b>45.5%</b>
<b>Large capacity rooms at a variety of locations.</b>	<b>55.5%</b>

Because this question offered only two options, 24 respondents skipped it. This either/or dilemma didn’t give people the option to say, for example, that they would be fine with both options, or didn’t care. Given the construction of the question and the closeness of the results, it’s probably safe to call this one a draw.

**Q6. Do you think that OLLI should pursue growth by: (check all that apply)**

<b>Continue its outreach program in Reston.</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>Continue its outreach program in Loudoun.</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>Continue its outreach program in Tallwood.</b>	<b>54%</b>
<b>None of the above.</b>	<b>19%</b>

Again, the construction of this question didn't allow people to select "Discontinue outreach" at various or all locations; perhaps "None of the above" (80 responses) was expected to fill this role and might be construed as representing the 80 responders opposed to growth/outreach efforts. Because there was no choice for them, 23 respondents skipped this question. Given that the first three responses had fairly equal distribution and similar response rates, we can conclude that 345\* of the 448 respondents to the survey had, overall, equal interest in growth at our three campuses.

\*448 total responders, less 23 non-responders, less 80 "None of the above" responders = 345.

**Q7. What is your preference regarding increases in dues?**

<b>Incremental dues increases.</b>	<b>73%</b>
<b>Less frequent but larger dues increases.</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>No dues increases and a reduction in services.</b>	<b>22%</b>

With an overwhelming majority preferring in incremental dues increases (and apparently not balking at the need for future increases), it appears that this fall's announcement of a \$50 dues increase (from \$375 to \$425, or 13.3%) was poorly received, which is hardly a surprise by now. Responses to this question strongly indicate that OLLI's board should set up an annual increase plan, rather than a leap in dues less often.

**Q8. The cost of dues influences my membership at OLLI. If dues continue to increase:**

<b>I will continue as an OLLI member.</b>	<b>77.9%</b>
<b>I will have to apply to OLLI for financial aid.</b>	<b>2.6%</b>
<b>I will be unable to continue to belong to OLLI.</b>	<b>19.5%</b>

Again, 23 respondents skipped this question because it didn't offer them the answer that fit them. There was no option for those who wanted to say "The cost will no longer be worth it to me." As written, the survey's second and third choices imply lack of financial ability to remain in OLLI, as opposed to the more likely scenario: not enough classes of value for \$425 (a particular problem in Loudoun and Reston). Nevertheless, the fact that only 78% said they will continue (therefore 22% may not) is a red flag, although they may have been using the survey to express discontent to the board.

*NOTE: Again, people will say one thing in a survey, but do another. By the end of 2017, we should be able to verify roughly how many members were lost because to the dues increase.*

**Q9. OLLI was set up as a Volunteer run organization. Which statement best applies to you?**

<b>I volunteer regularly as an OLLI member.</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>I volunteer occasionally as an OLLI member.</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>I did not realize that OLLI was a Volunteer organization.</b>	<b>21%</b>

As constructed, this question offered no response option to those who are aware OLLI is a volunteer organization, yet cannot or do not volunteer. As a result, a whopping 102 respondents (23%) skipped this question. Since there is no definition of “regularly” vs. “occasionally” provided, the first and second responses are nebulous. (Is once a month “regularly” or “occasionally?”) The 21% who chose the third option could indicate that there are many members who don’t realize OLLI is a volunteer organization—or it could simply be the repository for those who don’t/can’t volunteer and didn’t find an appropriate response to choose. Overall, because of the construction of this question, and the fact that survey responders skew toward volunteerism, these responses don’t provide solid helpful information.

**Q10. Please note how important the following are to you as an OLLI member. (Weighted averages are indicated and, like golf scores, lower is better.)**

<b>Add to and enhance programming in current venues.</b>	<b>1.44</b>
<b>Increase video conferencing between venues.</b>	<b>2.96</b>
<b>Improve accessibility at Tallwood for those with disabilities.</b>	<b>2.55</b>
<b>Review and update the committee structure.</b>	<b>2.96</b>
<b>Actively seek diversity in our population.</b>	<b>2.45</b>
<b>Update our audio-visual equipment where needed.</b>	<b>2.05</b>
<b>Pursue large corporate donors to fund facility needs.</b>	<b>2.18</b>

Putting these in prioritized order, we get:

Add to and enhance programming in current venues.	1.44
Update our audio-visual equipment where needed.	2.05
Pursue large corporate donors to fund facility needs.	2.18
Actively seek diversity in our population.	2.45
Improve accessibility at Tallwood for those with disabilities.	2.55
Increase video conferencing between venues.	2.96 (tie)
Review and update the committee structure.	2.96 (tie)

Continued improvement of programming is the top choice, while the tied last-place options indicate a lack of interest in more video conferencing (as evidenced by poor attendance at VC events in Loudoun) and a lack of insight or interest into why committee structure should be an issue.

**Q11. Please use the box below to make any further comments for consideration.**

A significant 186 of the 448 respondents (42%) chose to take the time to write their thoughts. Reading the SurveyMonkey write-in responses in detail is highly recommended to get the complete picture.

The following is an attempt to loosely quantify the comments from survey respondents. The comment issues are presented in descending order of frequency. Because many write-ins addressed more than one issue, the total of these responses exceeds 186 and there are redundancies in the categories below when a response fits more than one category.

**ISSUE: Dues increase – approximately 58 comments**

As expected, this was by far the most common subject of write-in comments, and most were negatively concerned about the recent increase from \$375 to \$425, a 13% increase. Comments concerned the budget, the impact of growth on expenses, and the cost/benefit of OLLI at the new price point. Several expressed interest in tiered or part-of-the-year enrollment options. Only two voiced support for the price increase.

**ISSUE: Locations – approximately 42 comments**

Many members were concerned about dues increases because of growth and the increased use of off-site facilities, while others commented on traffic and wished for a single new OLLI facility.

**ISSUE: Program quality/offerings – approximately 34 comments**

These comments varied from concern about instructor competence to wishes for programs in certain areas. These comments will be forwarded to the Chairs of Program Planning.

**ISSUE: Survey construction – approximately 24 comments**

Some 24 respondents expressed frustration about questions that were phrased in such a way that they could not answer them appropriately. Apparently those 24 respondents largely chose to skip questions 5, 6, and 9, and took the time to offer their critiques and/or their answers as Q11 comments.

**ISSUE: Growth – approximately 22 comments**

Most expressed concern about continued growth as it impacts venues, expenses, and parking, although a few were positive about the long-term plans for continued expansion.

**ISSUE: FOLLI donation concerns – 7 comments**

Seven people expressed concern that FOLLI donates to Mason when OLLI's own needs are not being met. The OMS and EIP gifts were specifically criticized.

**ISSUE: ADA compliance – 5 comments**

Four individuals expressed concern about OLLI's physical accessibility, handicapped parking availability, and audio issues. One aptly pointed out that subtitles should be mandatory for movies shown at our facilities.

**ISSUE: Miscellaneous comments regarding unique concerns**

Numerous one-of-a-kind comments, like interest in a rain barrel for gardening by DKC, will be forwarded to appropriate groups and/or staff.

*Note: No option was given for the survey respondents to provide their name or contact information, so several who expressed an interest in (for example) volunteering cannot be contacted for follow-up.*