Communications Committee Administrative Policies and Guidelines
Effective April 18, 2013

1. Mission

The Communications Committee was established as a standing committee by the OLLI Board of Directors to provide timely, useful and cost-effective non-emergency communications with the membership and publications production support to the staff and Board.

2. Responsibilities

- Oversee OLLI Catalog, *OLLI E-News*, the OLLI website and other publications to assure their consistency, accuracy, attractive appearance and conformity with professional journalistic standards.
- Initiate and encourage submission of articles and notices for *OLLI E-News* related to OLLI and its affiliated organizations deemed of interest to the membership.
- Provide an electronic forum in *OLLI E-News* for members to communicate their comments, suggestions and concerns about the Institute to their fellow members as well as to the leadership.
- Develop procedures and guidelines to ensure that all publications contain only materials appropriate for dissemination to the membership, and, if the material is intended for release on the website, that the content is appropriate for an external audience and does not include privacy information unless authorized by the individual.
- Provide technical and editorial support upon request to officers, staff and committee chairs in the preparation of the quarterly catalog of OLLI courses, *OLLI Ink*, *Poets of OLLI*, *Teachers' Manual*, and *Member Handbook* as well as brochures, invitations, flyers and other materials for special purposes, including any publications intended for dissemination beyond the membership.

3. Organization

The chair recruits an average of 25 to 30 volunteers to serve as editors, proofreaders, writers, graphic artists, layout designers, photographers and Website/HTML experts. The committee conducts most of its business via email or in small teams, meeting with all members approximately three times a year. The chairperson is appointed by the president.

4. General Guidelines for All OLLI Publications

a. Copyright Notices, Disclaimers, Restrictions

(1) In the catalog, website, *E-News*, *Member Handbook*, and *Teachers' Manual*, place the following copyright notice (updating the year reference annually): Copyright © 2012 Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University. Materials in this publication subject to OLLI-Mason copyright may be reproduced for noncommercial educational purposes if credit is given to OLLI-Mason.

(2) In *OLLI Ink* and *Poets of OLLI,* place the following copyright notice (updating the year reference annually): Copyright © 2012 Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at George Mason University. All rights revert to authors and artists.

(3) No copyright notice is required for the Membership Directory since it is not releasable to the general public.

b. Use of Logos
All major OLLI publications should include both the OLLI and the George Mason University logos.

c. Proofreading Guidelines

To achieve consistency in usage, the Communications Committee has decided to follow the University's preferences and use the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th Edition, for editorial guidance, along with the *Merriam-Webster* dictionary, available online at www.m-w.com, supplemented by the following recommended rules:

- acronyms, including a.m. and p.m. should be avoided if possible, except for OLLI
- Board of Directors: use the full name when first mentioning the OLLI Board, use "Board" for subsequent mentions, and use "board" when the reference is to a generic board, not OLLI's
- carpool: one word
- dates and places: comma is used after the year in a complete date and after a state when it follows a city, e.g. "he was married on March 4, 1972, in Nashville, Tennessee, to his college sweetheart"
- email: one word, lowercase (except at beginning of sentence), without a hyphen
- ID card: abbreviation may be used, especially to mean a Mason ID card
- Internet: capital I
- Mason or George Mason: preferred over "GMU"
- name tag: two words
- numbers: Write out one to ten; use figures for 11 and above
- OLLI URL: olli.gmu.edu, lowercase, black (not blue), no underline, no italics for use in printed publications. Editors may use bold or a font change at their discretion; on the website, OLLI's Web address will be blue with an underline to indicate that when clicked it is a true link. Note: The OLLI website URL should be included on every OLLI publication
- online: one word
- quotations: periods and commas are always put inside quotation marks and semicolons and colons always outside
- seasons: used without caps
- spacing: one space after a period or colon
- term: use "term," not "semester," to designate the four annual OLLI class terms
- titles: capitalize both the officer title before the person's name and the committee's full name; no caps for subsequent uses of the term (e.g. president, committee). The titles of BA, MA and PhD are used without periods. Lowercase bachelor of arts and master of music. Do not capitalize the specialty field unless it is a proper noun, such as English
- Web: capital W
- website: one word
- webmaster: one word, rules for titles apply to capitalization
- web page: two words

5. Catalog

a. Objectives

(1) Provide a current schedule and description for each term of the courses, special and social events, and ongoing activities available to current and prospective OLLI members in sufficient detail to allow them to make choices among available offerings.

(2) Provide adequate information to facilitate registration and enrollment.

(3) Provide a vehicle for recruitment of instructors and of members by describing the organization and its program.

b. Production procedures

(1) The catalog includes general information about OLLI, course descriptions, special events, ongoing activities, a schedule (calendar of courses), registration and membership information, registration forms, class locations and directions and any other required notices.

(2) Production of the catalog requires close coordination with OLLI staff on content and schedule. As the primary contact person for instructors and coordinators, the program associate formats and forwards to the Communications Committee catalog editor draft entries for each course, special event and ongoing activity.

(3) The editor takes these individual pieces of copy, edits them for length, consistency and style and forwards them by batch to proofreaders.

(4) The proofreaders email their corrections to the editor who either accepts or rejects the proofreaders' corrections.

(5) The batches are then sent via email to the program associate.

(6) The program associate then sends out the corrected listings to the instructors/coordinators in PDF format for their approval. If there is a disagreement about the corrections, we generally allow the instructor's opinion to prevail.

(7) After the instructors'/coordinators' approval or corrections are noted in the draft, the editor then sends the complete draft catalog with course and special events numbering added, via email to the program associate for formatting.

(8) The program associate then produces a draft list of courses and sends it for review to the Program Committee chair and the executive director.

(9) Sufficient copies of the mockup of the formatted draft catalog are printed in PDF format for the proofreading team and the editor to review.

(10) The editor and proofreaders correct the proof.

(11) The editor then takes one corrected copy of the mockup to the program associate. They work together to make the necessary corrections.

When all necessary changes have been made, the program associate forwards the catalog to the printer.

c. Guidelines for length of catalog listings.

(1) Communications Committee guidelines concerning the length of course descriptions, including special events and ongoing activities, suggest that individual entries be no longer than 200 words.

(2) For multiple-speaker courses we have these general guidelines: In the case of a course that has a coordinator and multiple speakers, additional space may be allotted to include a brief introductory paragraph and the list of speakers, dates and topics. Information about each speaker should include current position and title, and, if needed, a sentence enlarging upon the speaker's topic. If the instructor, coordinator or moderator believes additional information is important to either the description or bio, the additions will be subject to revision/deletion as space requirements dictate. In this case, both description and bio material should be put in journalistic style with the most essential information first.

(3) The following word count guidelines apply to multiple-speaker courses:

- 2-instructor course: 250
- 4-Week course: 300
- 8-Week course: 400

(4) These guidelines are intended for the course instructors, coordinators, and our editors. They are not hard and fast and there will be room for exceptions. If the editor limits the available space in the catalog for an entry and additional information is required by the instructor or coordinator, it can be posted on the website in full with an explanatory note in the catalog entry.

6. *E-News*

a. Objectives

        (1) To keep OLLI members informed about what is happening or has happened recently at their Institute.

        (2) To provide news about upcoming events or activities at Mason or other organizations with which OLLI is affiliated that may be of interest to the membership.

        (3) To serve as a public forum for communication between the membership and the leadership.

b. Guidelines

        (1) General. *E-News*, OLLI's official newsletter, is released by the office to all members with recorded email addresses and posted in the Tallwood social room every Friday except when the office is closed. An online version is posted on the OLLI website. During class terms, a printed version is distributed in classrooms and the social room at all three campuses. Courtesy copies are emailed to a small number of non-OLLI members who have requested it. All email distributions include opt-out instructions so that recipients can easily unsubscribe.

        (2) Editor's responsibility. The responsible and accountable OLLI official for the newsletter is the editor, a volunteer member who is assisted by other members who write articles, take photographs and proofread materials. The editor establishes submission deadlines—currently Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. (Monday at 7:00 p.m. for letters to the editor) for that Friday's issue. The Communications Committee chair provides general oversight and proofreads each issue prior to release.

        (3) Primary means of communication. Since *E-News* is OLLI's primary communications vehicle, all news items appropriate for the general membership will normally be included in the newsletter. Exceptions would include items that the president wishes to release as a president's message and any late-breaking, urgent items that cannot wait until the next scheduled issue and cannot be accommodated by the editor before press time for that issue.

        (4) Forum for communications. Members who wish to communicate publicly so other members see their comments are encouraged to write opinions, questions and suggestions related to OLLI as a "Letter to the Editor" or, for etiquette matters, as a "Letter to Ms. Ollie Ettakit." Letters are subject to editing for length, accuracy, civility and clarity. Upon request, any letter may be published anonymously if contact information is provided so the member's identity can be verified. All members, directors and staff have a right to submit a letter, and all such letters will be published as long as they are not slanderous, obscene or otherwise offensive. Whenever an official response is clearly appropriate, the editor will obtain and publish the OLLI response in the same issue so members will have more complete information and a balanced picture of the matter.

        (5) Content. Articles consistent with the objectives of *E-News* will normally be published, subject to editing for length, accuracy and clarity, and for balance and fairness in coverage. The majority of content comes from member-volunteer staff writers, the executive director, committee chairs and club coordinators, but submissions are encouraged from the membership, officers and staff. Unsolicited articles deemed to be expressing a personal opinion rather than straight reporting will be published as a letter to the editor. Promotional articles for external fund-raising organizations except those associated with organizations with which OLLI is affiliated will be excluded.

7. Website

a. Objective: To serve as a convenient, easily accessible repository of current and historical information about OLLI.

b. Guidelines

        (1) General. The website, OLLI's repository of information about OLLI and its public face to the world, is maintained for the benefit of the membership and the general public, including potential members. The

leadership and the membership can use the website as a reference source to quickly find information about key people in the organization, governing documents such as the bylaws and Board Handbook, and a myriad of other documents. The website is hosted by Mason Web servers and also by the OLLI Web server located at Tallwood.

      (2) Webmaster's responsibility. The responsible and accountable OLLI official for the website is the webmaster, a volunteer member who is assisted by one or more qualified members of the website team who may prepare and post content and can serve as backup webmaster. The webmaster makes every effort to keep the website as current as possible. The Communications Committee chair solicits updated content from other committee chairs and provides general oversight.

      (3) Format. The website maintains a consistent look and feel by using the same template for each page. Navigational aids, including a site-search tool, are provided so that material can be found easily and quickly. Whenever possible, materials will use the standard page template and will be formatted as an HTML page. When necessary and appropriate, certain documents will be displayed in their native form, normally in Adobe portable document format.

      (4) Content. The website will contain all significant information about OLLI with the exception of private, confidential items such as members' telephone numbers, email addresses and postal addresses found in the *Membership Directory*. Of particular benefit to members is the catalog for each upcoming term. The webmaster will post the catalog data as soon as practical after receiving it from the office, which should be at the same time the catalog is sent to the printer.

      (5) Facebook. The webmaster also monitors the OLLI at Mason Facebook Group.

8. Other Publications

a. The content of occasional publications and communications will usually originate with staff or a specific committee with responsibility for the area. The appearance of such publications and communications would benefit from the extensive publications experience (writing, editing, proofreading, layout, production) available among the members of the Communications Committee. Committees originating such publications and communications should collaborate with the Communications Committee for the review and production stages of such pieces. Flyers and emails are often distributed directly by committees or staff.

b. *OLLI Ink* is an annual publication, commonly paid for using Friends of OLLI funds. The editor is normally a member of the committee and solicits short stories, poems, other writings, and related original artwork from OLLI members. The Communications Committee provides proofreading and, when possible, formatting and other technical support.

c. *Member Handbook* is a joint project of the Member Services and Communications Committees, revised as needed.

d. Membership Directory is updated continuously online within the Member Portal of the website. It is printed in limited quantities as an historical record semiannually for use by staff, directors and committee chairs, and for retention by the OLLI Historian.

e. *Poets of OLLI* is an occasional publication, commonly paid for using Friends of OLLI funds. The editor is normally a moderator of the Poetry Workshop, which serves as the editorial board. The Communications Committee provides formatting, proofreading and other technical support as requested.

f. *Eye on Reston* and *OLLI-Loudoun Notes* are occasional email newsletters specifically pertaining to items of particular interest to members at those two campuses. They are also posted to the website. The editors are members of the Communications Committee.

g. *Teacher's Manual*. First published in 2009 and updated as needed, it is intended to encourage and assist OLLI members who have subject expertise, but limited teaching experience, to offer to develop and teach courses.