Communications Committee Administrative Policies and Guidelines
Effective 21 March 2008

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

a. Oversee OLLI catalog, *OLLI E-News*, the OLLI Web site and other publications to ensure their consistency, accuracy, attractive appearance and conformity with professional journalistic standards.

b. Initiate and encourage submission to *OLLI E-News* of articles and notices related to OLLI and its affiliated organizations deemed of interest to the membership.

c. 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.

d. Develop policies, 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 Web site, that the content is appropriate for an external audience and does not include privacy information.

e. Provide technical and editorial support upon [on] request to officers, staff and committee chairs in the preparation of the quarterly catalog of OLLI courses, *Fairfax Ink*, *Poets of Tallwood*, the Membership Directory, and *Member Handbook* as well as brochures, invitations, flyers and other materials for special purposes, including any publications intended for dissemination beyond the membership.

f. Budget for all OLLI publications in coordination with appropriate committee chairs responsible for the content.

3. Organization

The chair recruits an average of 15 to 20 volunteers to serve as editors, proofreaders, writers, graphic artists and Web site/HTML experts. It conducts most of its business via email or in small teams, meeting in plenum session approximately three times a year. The chairperson is appointed by the president.

4. General Guidelines for All OLLI Publications

a. Copyright Notices, Disclaimers, Restrictions
Place the following copyright notice (updating the year reference annually) in the OLLI catalog: Copyright@2008 Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Materials in the publication may be reproduced for noncommercial educational purposes as long as credit is given to OLLI.

b. Use of Logos
All major OLLI publications should include both the OLLI and the George Mason University logos. As used on front covers of publications that rotate colors to distinguish one edition from another, such as the catalog, *Member Handbook* and Membership Directory, logos will be in black on a colored

background. Both the Osher and Mason logo files are distributed by their owners in EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) format, which allows the image to be scaled to fit any desired size. The Elderhostel Institute Network logo may be used on the back cover or in appropriate locations in publications where space allows, such as in the catalog, the *Member Handbook* and in programs for teacher appreciation or celebratory events.

c. Proofreading Guidelines for Regularly Used Words and Phrases
To further the goal of consistency in usage, the Communications Committee has decided to follow the University's preferences and use the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th Edition, as our bible, along with the *Merriam-Webster* dictionary, available online at www.m-w.com, supplemented by the following entries. Individual editors, however, retain flexibility in the application of these guidelines to their specific publication.

> Acronyms: avoid if possible except for OLLI
> Board of Directors: use the full name when first mentioning the OLLI Board in an article,
>> use "Board" for subsequent mentions, and use "board" when the reference is to a
>> generic board,
>> not OLLI's
> carpool: one word
> email: one word, lower case (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: preferred abbreviation instead of GMU
> name tag: two words
> OLLI URL: lower case, 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 Web site, OLLI's Web
>> address will be blue with an underline to indicate that when clicked it is a true link.
>> (Note: The OLLI Web site URL should be included on every OLLI publication.)
> online: one word
> seasons: used without caps
> 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)
> Web: capital W
> Web site: two words with a capital W
> webmaster: one word, rules for titles apply to capitalization
> Web page: two words with a capital W

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 OLLI members and potential members in sufficient detail to allow members 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, describing the OLLI program and an overview of the function of the organization.

b. Guidelines

(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. The program assistant forwards to the Communications Committee catalog editor draft entries for each course, special event and ongoing activity after putting them in the same technical format. The editor takes these individual pieces of copy, edits them for consistency and style and forwards them by batch to a proofreader.

(3) When returned and corrected, the program assistant sends each course description to the prospective instructor/coordinator for review. As replies are returned, the editor produces a draft list of courses and sends it for review to the Program Committee chair, the Program Review Committee chair and the Executive Director. The complete draft catalog is then sent to the program assistant for formatting. A mockup of the formatted draft catalog is sent to two Communications Committee proofreaders and the editor for review. Corrections are made and reviewed by the editor; the cover is added; the formatter converts the finished copy from Word to Adobe PDF and sends it to the print shop and to the webmaster for posting online. At this time, the Communications Committee chair and the newsletter editor are alerted that the catalog production is complete.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

(6) The following word count guidelines apply to multiple-speaker courses:
Two-instructor course: 250
4-Week course: 300
8-Week course: 400

(7) These are intended as guidelines for the course instructors, coordinators, and our editors. They are not hard and fast and there will still be room for exceptions.

6. *E-News*

a. Objectives

(1) To keep members fully informed on a timely basis about the Institute and items relating to its courses and events.

(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 as well as occasional news about local events not widely publicized that may also be of interest to the membership.

(3) To serve as a public forum for communications 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 Web site. During class terms, a printed version is distributed in classrooms and the social room. Courtesy copies are emailed to a small

number of non-OLLI members who have requested to receive 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 pm (Monday at 7:00 pm for letters to the editor) for that Friday's issue. The Communications Committee chair provides general oversight over *E-News*.

   (3) Primary means of communication. Since *E-News* is the Institute'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 and the leadership but submissions are encouraged from the membership 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. Web site

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

b. Guidelines
   (1) General. The Web site, the Institute'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 Web site 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 Web site 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 Web site is the webmaster, a volunteer member who is assisted by one or more qualified members of the Web site team who may prepare and post content and can serve as backup webmaster. The webmaster makes every effort to keep the Web site as current as possible. The Communications Committee chair provides general oversight over the OLLI Web site.

   (3) Format. The Web site 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 Web site 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 that the catalog is sent to the printer.

8. Other Publications

a. General. The content of occasional publications and communications will usually originate with 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. Specific examples of continuing publications for which the Communications Committee provides budgetary support are:

b. *Fairfax Ink* is an occasional publication, commonly produced annually. The editor is normally the coordinator of the Fiction Writers' Club, which serves as the editorial board. They solicit short stories, poems and other writings from OLLI members. The Communications Committee provides the budget and whatever formatting, proofreading and other technical support is requested.

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

d. Membership Directory is prepared, proofed, and published semi-annually by the administrative staff using funds allocated to the Communications Committee.

e. *Poets of Tallwood* is an occasional publication, commonly produced every two years. The editor is normally the coordinator of the Poetry Workshop; the group serves as the editorial board.