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Welcome to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Western Michigan University!

The vision of OLLI at WMU is to be the leading provider of distinctive lifelong learning opportunities in Southwest Michigan. Our goal is to inspire mature adults who have a passion for learning. With 800+ current members (pre-Covid,) dedicated volunteers, office staff and the backing of Western Michigan University, we are engaged in significant outreach activities in our community. Southwest Michigan is an area with rich history, exciting growth and exceptional people, and OLLI at WMU is committed to offering a program with the same outstanding qualities.

We are pleased that you have joined. Our program began in the Spring of 2011 as the Lifelong Learning Academy, offering 46 courses, trips and events. In 2014 we were invited to become an Osher Institute, and in 2015 the Osher Foundation awarded us a $1 million endowment. In 2015 our offerings grew to 127 courses, trips and events. The Bernard Osher Foundation currently supports 124 Osher Institutes across the U.S., and we are number 118 (more information on the foundation on the next page).

For a volunteer-driven organization such as ours to run smoothly and flourish, it takes the contributions of many people. Further, our volunteers have different experiences, skills and knowledge, this variety also helps make our organization successful. It is important that our staff, volunteers and participants work together to build an environment that welcomes everyone and respects a diverse range of perspectives, backgrounds and opinions. Thank you for making the choice to become an OLLI at WMU member. OLLI at WMU is a great place to engage with others in learning, volunteering, traveling and making new friends.

Again, welcome to OLLI at WMU. The contents of this handbook will provide you with the information you need to navigate your way through the many opportunities available to you. You are always welcome to call our office at (269) 387-4157 if you need assistance or further explanation. We hope you enjoy your experience with OLLI at WMU!

The Executive Committee
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Western Michigan University
About the Bernard Osher Foundation

The Bernard Osher Foundation, headquartered in San Francisco, was founded in 1977 by Bernard Osher, a respected businessman and community leader. The Foundation seeks to improve quality of life through support for higher education and the arts.

The Foundation provides post-secondary scholarship funding to colleges and universities across the nation, with special attention to re-entry students. It also supports a national lifelong learning network for seasoned adults. The Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes are found on the campuses of 124 colleges and universities from Maine to Hawaii and Alaska. Each provides a distinctive array of non-credit courses and activities specifically developed for adults aged 50 or older who are interested in learning for the joy of learning. The Foundation also provides support to the National Resource Center for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes at Northwestern University.

In addition, the Foundation benefits programs in integrative medicine in the United States and Sweden, including centers at the University of California, San Francisco; Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston; the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm; Northwestern University; and Vanderbilt University. Finally, an array of performing arts organizations, museums, and educational programs in Northern California and in Mr. Osher’s native state of Maine receive Foundation grants.

The Foundation has a nine-member board of directors, chaired by the Honorable Barbro Osher, Honorary Consul General of Sweden in California.

More information is available at osherfoundation.org.
What Does OLLI at WMU Offer?

OLLI at WMU is a membership-based, volunteer driven organization that offers courses, trips, events, tours and Special Interest Groups. Each offering is designed with an educational component, to enrich or entertain the participant. Offerings are described below.

Membership:

Although our program is designed for people aged 50 years and older, membership is open to anyone with a passion for learning. The annual membership fee helps defray costs not covered by course fees. Membership is $35 per year and is renewed on an annual basis, July 1 to June 30 each year.

Courses:

The courses for OLLI at WMU are taught by volunteers whose course proposals were reviewed and approved by our Curriculum Committee. There are no tests, no grading and no academic credit. The course subject matter, length and capacity are determined by the instructor. Courses generally run 1 to 6 weeks for two-hour per meeting. Pricing for most courses is $10 per two-hour session for members. Additional fees may be added for copying, materials, admission or other costs. Registrations for courses are non-transferable and each person must be registered individually.

Trips:

Travel opportunities range from day trips to overnight trips. Trips are carefully planned to give you the best educational experience possible. Pricing varies, depending on the trip length, distance and activities. An itinerary will be provided in advance. OLLI at WMU contracts with AAA to handle trip registration. AAA can be reached at (800) 887-4971. Registrations for trips are non-transferable and each person must be registered individually.

Events:

OLLI at WMU holds social events throughout the year. A Fall Kickoff, the Annual Membership Meeting and January Thaw are the mainstay annual events, with special events being offered throughout the year. Events are meant to energize members about OLLI opportunities and activities, along with inspiring non-members to join. Events generally have a program, refreshments and time to mingle with other OLLI enthusiasts.

Special Interest Groups:

SIGs are usually extensions of OLLI courses or programs that have sparked interest in further pursuit as a group. SIGs may also form to pursue an area of interest, independent of previous OLLI courses. The purpose can be to practice what you have learned, such as a language or skill, or to further discuss a topic. SIGs are meant to be informal and can meet as often and as long as the group decides. SIGs are free of charge, but are only open to OLLI members. Registration is required.

Member Tours:

OLLI at WMU may hold a members-only tour during the fall and winter/spring. Check the registration on the website for more information on the current tour. These tours may be on or off campus and are free. We have toured the new WMU Medical Center, KVCC Culinary Arts and Innovation Center, Dalton Center and more.
Accountability

The vision of OLLI at WMU is to be the leading provider of distinctive lifelong learning opportunities in Southwest Michigan.

Courses:

The Curriculum Committee for OLLI at WMU solicits courses and volunteer instructors. In most cases, courses are proposed by instructors. Once course proposals are submitted, the Curriculum Committee reviews and makes recommendations for future action. The proposals are then approved by the OLLI at WMU, director on behalf of the WMUx, associate provost. Visit wmix.edu/olli/become-instructor to fill out a Course Proposal Form.

Trips:

The Travel Committee for OLLI at WMU plans trips for each semester. The members of the committee personally visit and map out each trip. Itineraries, meals and activity levels are planned to provide an excellent travel experience. Proposed trips are then sent to AAA, Western Michigan University’s travel provider, to be priced. Once a price is determined, the OLLI at WMU director gives final approval.

Events:

The Events Committee plans the events that will take place during each semester. The location, program, activities and refreshments are offered in order to create an appealing event for participants.

Feedback:

- **Evaluations:** The Assessment and Evaluation Committee sends a survey to participants after each course, trip and most events. The purpose of the survey is to collect feedback on individual aspects of each offering. This anonymous feedback is given to committees in order to improve quality for participants.
- **Facebook:** OLLI at WMU is on Facebook, where you can private message or comment on our page to request more information.

Member Expectations:

OLLI at WMU strives to provide an environment conducive to learning and entertainment for all participants.

- **Cell phones:** Please put cell phones on silent mode. If you need to take a call, please exit the activity quietly.
- **Eating:** Eating during courses is discouraged, but if you need to eat please do so quietly.
- **Opposing viewpoints:** A wide range of backgrounds and opinions are shared, and we ask that you are respectful of all those that attend opportunities with OLLI at WMU. Please be courteous.
- **Disabilities:** If you have a visual or auditory disability please make the OLLI at WMU office aware. We will do our best to accommodate your needs.
- **Accessible parking on campus:** If you hold a valid disability parking permit and an accessible parking space is not available, you may park in any available or metered parking space (except reserved parking).
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY CIVILITY STATEMENT

Western Michigan University is committed to creating and sustaining an environment that honors the inherent dignity and worth of all members of the WMU community. Respectful behavior expressed verbally, textually, visually, and physically should be the norm in all university communications and venues including classrooms, meetings, offices, workplaces, forums, events, social media and residential communities. As an institution of higher education, we welcome a diverse range of perspectives and opinions and uphold the importance of civil debate. We fully support the free exchange of ideas and beliefs, as well as the expression of provocative or unpopular ideas. It is through this process that we generate knowledge and deepen our understanding of humanity. Freedom of thought and expression may create conflict, strong emotions, and divergent ideological positions. While these effects are expected and welcomed, all members of the community have a responsibility to behave in a manner that does not harm others nor creates a hostile environment. Behavior that attacks, humiliates, belittles, or conveys hatred towards others diminishes our thriving and safe university environment. Each member of our academic community is encouraged to be thoughtful and sensitive in their choice of words and behaviors. We should be aware of how our behavior affects others. Furthermore, we carry a responsibility to challenge those who communicate intolerance, hatred and bigotry. Words and actions matter. Everyone is asked to do their part in creating a healthy and positive university community and a culture that truly values each member’s uniqueness experiences, and perspectives.

Note: We have included WMU’s Civility Statement. From time to time, we offer courses that are intellectually stimulating, while at the same time may bring about discourse which proves challenging. We believe this is important, but we want to ensure we are respectful when differences of opinions arise, and as such we want to follow the University’s stance for civility in the classroom.
Registration Information for Members and Non-Members

Membership:

Individual memberships are $35 per year and are non-transferable. Memberships can be purchased online or through the OLLI at WMU office.

How to register for courses:

- Register online [wmich.edu/олli/courses](http://wmich.edu/olli/courses).
- Call the OLLI office at (269) 387-4157.
- Email OLLI at [wmu-олli@wmich.edu](mailto:wmu-olli@wmich.edu) for a return phone call.

How to register for trips:

- Register for trips by calling AAA at (800) 887-4971. Online registration is not available for trips.

Early Bird Registration for Courses:

Early bird registration is for members only. Non-member registration begins two weeks after member registration. Please note that some courses fill quickly, even during the first hours of registration.

*You may renew your membership or become a new member AND register during early bird registration.*

Confirmations and Parking Permits:

If you register by mail or over the phone, you will receive a confirmation and a receipt of payment within two weeks. If you have an email address on file, you will receive confirmations electronically. Online users will get a confirmation immediately via email. Parking permits are received separately from confirmations and are emailed, let us know if you cannot print your parking permit or will need one mailed at least a week before your course start date.

For courses held on WMU’s campus, OLLI pays for your parking. Other course locations do not require permits. Please let the office know if you have a WMU permit or a disability parking placard/license plate, as you will not need a parking permit. Parking permits are emailed one to two weeks before the first session of your course. If you do not use email a parking permit will be sent via regular mail.

Cancellations:

If you registered for a course and it is canceled, you may receive a refund or apply your course fee to another course if space is available. Occasionally, an instructor needs to miss a session and will reschedule. Registrants will be notified of changes.

*If WMU is closed due to weather, OLLI courses at all locations are canceled and will be rescheduled.*

Course Withdrawals:

You may drop/withdraw from a course by contacting the OLLI office. Non-attendance or notifying the instructor is not an official cancellation. Refund guidelines are below.

Refunds:

You will be eligible for a refund if you withdraw from a course at least two weeks before the first session. If you drop a course less than two weeks before the first session, fees will not be refunded.
Membership Benefits

In addition to the satisfaction you get from supporting OLLI at WMU, membership benefits that have not been listed previously include:

Reduced course and travel fees:

Current course fees are based on $10 per two-hour session for members and $20 for non-members. Each catalog lists day trips and extended trips, non-members pay more. Members save significantly!

The monthly newsletter, All Life is Learning:

The e-newsletter contains information about upcoming events, trips and OLLI at WMU members as well as any changes to the schedule.

OLLI Membership Card with discounts at:

- WMU Bookstore Shops (10% except for electronics and sale items): (269) 387-2939.
- Miller Auditorium (15% for most tickets): (269) 387-2300 – you must purchase tickets in person at the box office and show your OLLI membership card.
- Gilmore Theatre Complex (25% for most tickets): (269) 387-6222.
- West Hills Athletic Center: (Waived enrollment fee; members pay annual fees): (269) 387-0410.
- The Spirit Shoppe (10% off in-store purchase) 4510 KL Ave.: (269) 345-7814.

Invitations to member-only events:

These may include new member coffee events, campus tours, special lectures or meetings.

The WMU Concierge Card:

This card provides discounts of 10-15% at many local restaurants and businesses. You can sign up by calling (269) 387-8746 or online by visiting mywmu.com and clicking on Concierge.

Publications:

OLLI at WMU produces numerous publications for our members. All print publications can be made available if you would like to distribute them to friends, family, organizational groups or outside events. Contact the office at (269) 387-4200 to ask about picking up materials. Listed below are our publications (*indicates can be found online):

- Three e-course catalogs – fall, winter/spring and summer
- “All Life is Learning” monthly E-newsletter
- OLLI at WMU facebook page* (facebook.com/WMULifelongLearning)

Limited quantities of catalogs and promotional materials are available.
Course Locations

Courses are held at sites on campus and in the community. OLLI at WMU appreciates and thanks its partners who provide space for classes and meetings at no charge.

**College of Health and Human Services**
Western Michigan University - East Campus
Cass St. (South of Oliver from Oakland Dr.)
Kalamazoo MI, 49008
Directions: [wmich.edu/hhs/directions](http://wmich.edu/hhs/directions)

**Portage Senior Center**
320 Library Lane
Portage MI, 49002
Directions: [portagemi.gov/departments/seniorcitizenservices.aspx](http://portagemi.gov/departments/seniorcitizenservices.aspx)

**First United Methodist Church**
212 S. Park (Parking is behind the church off Academy St.)
Kalamazoo MI, 49007
Directions: [umc-kzo.org/map](http://umc-kzo.org/map)

**Schoolcraft Community Library**
330 N. Centre St.
Schoolcraft MI, 49087
Directions: [schoolcraftlibrary.org/about](http://schoolcraftlibrary.org/about)

**Friendship Village of Kalamazoo**
1400 N. Drake Road (between W. Main and Ravine Rd.)
Kalamazoo MI, 49006
Directions: [friendshipvillagemi.com/contact-us](http://friendshipvillagemi.com/contact-us)

**The Fountains at Bronson Place**
1700 Bronson Way
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Directions: [bronsonplace.watermarkcommunities.com](http://bronsonplace.watermarkcommunities.com)

**Heritage Community/Wyndham**
2300 Portage St. (west on Phillips for entrance and parking)
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
Directions: [heritagecommunity.com](http://heritagecommunity.com)

**Walden Woods Clubhouse**
Arboretum Pkwy (off Drake between W. Michigan and W. Main)
3501 Dunn’s Ridge
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
Directions: [avbhomes.com/communities](http://avbhomes.com/communities). Scroll down to Walden Woods, then choose “View Community Location.”

WMU Campus Map: [wmich.edu/maps/wmupmap.pdf](http://wmich.edu/maps/wmupmap.pdf)

Please check our most recent catalog for a list of locations, as some may have changed or been added.
Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are vital to the success of OLLI at WMU. We welcome fresh perspectives on the various committees that work behind the scenes to keep OLLI running smoothly. There are many volunteer opportunities available; some are listed below:

Volunteer Committees:

The Executive Committee is composed of the chairs of the following committees:

- **Assessment and Evaluation** – Oversees course and trip evaluation content and process, which may expand into an overall assessment of the Institute.
- **Curriculum** – Strives to provide diverse courses of varied lengths. Work involves recruiting instructors, reviewing course proposals, using course/trip evaluations as references for future course/trip planning and assigning liaisons.
- **Development** – Encourages a culture of philanthropy through fund raising activities.
- **Events** – Plans and implements events geared to attract members, guests and instructors such as the fall Curriculum Showcase, Annual Membership Meeting and the January Thaw.
- **Marketing** – Plans, implements and evaluates marketing, promotional and public relations activities. Includes oversight/editing/distribution of the course/trip catalog and website with WMU staff.
- **Membership** – Engages in outreach to retain current members and generate new members. Works closely with Marketing and Events Committees in community outreach efforts.
- **Travel** – Plans diverse day and overnight trips. Assists with trip logistics, sometimes in collaboration with other organizations; may serve as a trip escort.
- **Volunteer Services** – Meets with potential volunteers to determine which roles will best match their interests.

Ad Hoc Assignments:

- Serve as a liaison in courses.
- Teach a course – *you do not have to be a current or past faculty member from WMU or an OLLI member* – we welcome past and present instructors from public schools and colleges as well as members of the general community – Got an idea for a topic? Contact us!
- Assist in writing/editing publications such as the course catalog and monthly e-newsletter.
- Distribute OLLI catalogs or other publications.

OR – if you have an idea about a volunteer role not listed, or you would like to attend a committee meeting, please contact the OLLI office either by phone at (269) 387-4157 or by email at wmu-olli@wmich.edu.
Frequently Asked Questions

Why is OLLI affiliated with WMU?

The Osher Foundation requires university acceptance and some in-kind support before the awarding of the million-dollar endowment. OLLI at WMU is administratively housed in WMUx and follows University policies and procedures. OLLI at WMU receives no state funding.

You have a $1 million endowment; why do we pay fees?

The endowment allows us to use the annual interest from the $1 million. Costs of operations, events and other expenses exceed the amount of interest yielded from the endowment.

Does OLLI pay its instructors?

OLLI instructors are all volunteers. Some have a Ph.D. and years of experience as a University faculty member, some work as a professional, some own a business, some are a former high school teacher and some are a community member who has developed a skill or knowledge in a certain area. OLLI at WMU instructors are not paid. They teach for the love of their subject matter and because they find OLLI participants so interesting and engaged. It is heartening and a compliment to OLLI at WMU that so many individuals are willing to share their expertise with us without remuneration!

How do I, or someone else I know, become an instructor?

OLLI at WMU welcomes anyone to apply to teach their passion, regardless of credentials. You, or someone you know, can propose a course by going to wmich.edu/oll/become-instructor. There you can fill out a Course Proposal Form. The proposal is reviewed by the curriculum committee for action.

You do not need to be approached by our Curriculum Committee to submit a CPF. If you are interested, you may call or simply fill out the CPF online. Please refer back to our accountability section for more details.

I am unable to attend a course or trip; can I have someone go in my place?

Course and trip registrations are non-transferable, but you may be eligible for a refund if you need to cancel. Anyone wishing to take your place would need to follow the standard registration process for a course or trip. Any persons on a waitlist are given first priority as spaces become available.

How do I donate to OLLI?

There are many ways to give. You can send a check, visit wmich.edu/oll/help-us/gift or go directly through the WMU Office of Development and Alumni Relations and designate that your gift is for OLLI. No gift is too small and no gift is too large. We thank you for your donations.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Western Michigan University is a membership- and volunteer-driven organization. Even though instructors are unpaid volunteers, the Institute incurs other costs related to course and event offerings. Additionally, there are people in the community who cannot afford the cost of our courses. Through WMU’s development office, we accept donations to either our Operating Fund or our Scholarship Fund.
Is OLLI a non-profit?

Yes, we receive our nonprofit status through the Western Michigan University Foundation. Upon donating, the development office will send you a thank you for gifts of $250 or larger, which serves as a tax receipt.

What are sponsorships?

One of the requests made by the Osher Foundation is that OLLI at WMU become more self-sufficient. Sponsorships can be for catalogs, events, trips and special projects. The purpose of sponsorships is to defray the cost of expenses to keep prices low to participants. Many thanks to all of our sponsors for supporting lifelong learning.

For more information about costs and benefits of sponsorship, please check the OLLI at WMU website, wmich.edu/olli or call the OLLI office at (269) 387-4200.

How does a waitlist work?

If a course or trip has filled, you may be put on a waitlist. This feature is not available online for trips and can only be done by calling AAA. Participants are put on the waitlist in the order received. When a participant cancels their registration, the office or AAA calls the first person on the waitlist. If the spot is declined, the next person on the waitlist is called, and so on until the spot is filled.

I am not receiving emails from OLLI, what should I do?

If you are not receiving emails from OLLI, try checking your junk or spam folder. In most cases, this will solve the issue. If you still cannot find the email try adding our email address to your address book, as this will tell your email provider it is a safe sender. Our email addresses:

General: wmu-olli@wmich.edu
Evaluations: wmu-olli-eval@wmich.edu

Why should I read the OLLI at WMU Newsletter All Life is Learning and can I contribute?

The newsletter is published monthly and contains a list of upcoming events within OLLI at WMU, along with articles written by OLLI at WMU members. This information is meant to be helpful and is our way of keeping you informed.

We welcome all members to contribute articles and photographs. If you are interested in contributing, contact the OLLI office.