

OLLI Program Definitions and Filter Questions for Study Group Committee

What is the purpose of OLLI programming?

OLLI's volunteer-led learning community, featuring a dynamic curriculum of non-credit classes, study groups, and educational travel, will allow members to enjoy a satisfying and fulfilling life as they reach and enjoy retirement, share Bradley's dedication to lifelong learning, and enrich the intellectual life of Bradley University's campus.

Study Group Definition:

- Study Groups: member-led investigations into academic topics, facilitated by volunteers with a passion for topics in the following categories: Art, Music, & Entertainment; Cinema; Gardening, Agriculture, & Environment; Health and Wellness; History, Political Science, & Current Events; Literature; Philosophy & Religion; STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics), and Topical & Community Awareness. OLLI Study Groups are held at Bradley University and throughout the community at satellite locations every month of the year, and are categorized into three levels of participation: discussion-based groups (participants asked to read material and participate in whole group discussions), participation-based groups (participants may be asked to read material, participate in small group breakouts/discussions, do research and/or make brief oral reports), and practice-based groups (participants may be asked to learn a skill set and engage in practice between sessions). The goal number of study groups held each season is: 10-11 for Winter and Summer, and 18-20 for Spring and Fall. A volunteer committee selects the offerings each season.

FILTER QUESTIONS TO ASSIST IN SELECTING OLLI PROGRAM OFFERINGS

The specific offerings from each of the three types of OLLI programs (Classes, Study Groups, Learning Trips) are determined by committees of OLLI volunteers working with the Continuing Education staff members who support OLLI. To help volunteers and staff to be aligned, these filter questions provide guidance for selecting appropriate offerings (not rigid checklists, but rather helpful guidance). Consider all the filter questions in total.

All three categories of Filter Questions are to be applied to all decisions – the Universal, the Staff, and the Committee Filter questions.

UNIVERSAL FILTER QUESTIONS FOR STUDY GROUPS:

What do we want our members to experience?

- High quality, educational programming with a broad spectrum of topics
- A diverse, academic-oriented experience available through Bradley University
- A sense of belonging to a continuous learning community
- Volunteer-driven curriculum and peer-led instruction

How does the program provide social engagement for our members?

- Held in an open, friendly environment with food and fellowship
- Opportunity to learn on Bradley's campus and/or provide positive interactions with BU students

How do we engage our membership?

- Provide programming to enable adults ages 50+ to develop intellectually
- Provide outstanding, personalized customer service and opportunities for fellowship
- Provide an outlet to let members feel relevant and part of a continuous learning community

STAFF FILTER QUESTIONS FOR STUDY GROUPS:

- Do membership fees cover the direct cost of the program and provide revenue?
- If held offsite, does the host/facilitator have knowledge to run the AV?
- Can volunteer hosts be on hand to provide assistance to facilitators and members?

COMMITTEE FILTER QUESTIONS FOR STUDY GROUP SELECTION AND PRIORITIZATION:

- Can a facilitator provide guidance for intelligent discussion for 4-6 weeks on this topic?
- Can this topic be investigated from an academic standpoint?
- If the topic is offered elsewhere (e.g. community colleges, park districts, etc.), will this offer a superior experience for OLLI participants?
- Do any BU faculty have interest in facilitating or using group as a cohort?
- Can a committee volunteer find a qualified volunteer facilitator in the community?
- If the facilitator has led a group before, were his/her evaluations positive?