

# Guidelines for Shared Interest Groups (SIGs)

Shared Interest Groups (SIGs) are a benefit offered to all OLLI-USF members. They foster fellowship by encouraging OLLI-USF members to engage with others who share a common interest. **SIGs do not take the place of OLLI courses. They complement and enhance classes and other programs offered by OLLI-USF; they are not to compete with or duplicate them.**

Shared Interest Groups are member-driven, not staff-driven. That is, they are established, managed, and run by OLLI members who share an interest. OLLI-USF provides opportunities for SIGs to organize, advertise and promote their activities. A SIG's vitality, therefore, depends mainly upon the active participation and commitment of its own members.

These guidelines outline how SIGs are established and how they operate within OLLI-USF, and includes tips for maintaining a thriving SIG.

## Establishing a New SIG

1. Begin by reading these guidelines completely so that you understand the purpose, structure and operation of a SIG and the entire process for establishing one.
2. Complete a SIG proposal form.
3. Submit your proposal to OLLI-USF. Return your completed proposal form to the OLLI offices on campus in the NEC building, attn.: Cath Mason, or email your proposal to [cmason6@usf.edu](mailto:cmason6@usf.edu).
4. The Operations Manager will review your proposal in consultation with the SIG Liaison. Proposals for new SIGs may be approved, rejected, or returned to the applicant for additional information or with suggestions for revision. The SIG Liaison will work with you should additional information be needed.
5. When a proposal is accepted it is first granted provisional approval pending the successful outcome of the new SIG's organizational meeting.
6. Schedule an organizational meeting of at least 12 founding members. A member of the OLLI staff must attend. (See the section below on scheduling rooms.) If you don't know 12 committed members, don't give up. See the section below on recruiting and publicity, and discuss your concerns with the SIG Liaison.
7. Hold your organizational meeting with at least 12 founding members and accomplish the following:
  - Agree upon a SIG Coordinat



## SIG Liaison

Shared Interest Groups are supported by OLLI's SIG Liaison, an appointed member of OLLI-USF's leadership team and Board of Advisors. The Liaison's job is to help develop, promote and assist where needed with the operation of SIGs. They are SIGs' champion at OLLI: don't hesitate to reach out to them when in need of guidance, advice, or resources. Our SIG Liaison is currently Kathy Palmer, herself an active member of several SIGs, assisted by Nancy Baily.

## Recruiting and Publicity

Each SIG is responsible for recruiting participants, notifying their members in advance of meetings, generating their own publicity and communication materials, and for helping to keep information published about their SIG up to date. While SIG Coordinators may be responsible for this, some SIGs designate other members to be responsible for publicity, communication, and recruiting. A variety of methods are available for publicizing SIG activities and recruiting new members. Please note the contact person for each method below:

- **Revisions to the OLLI Course Catalog SIG pages are due October 1 / February 1 / July 1.** These should go to Cath Mason, OLLI Operations Manager, at [cmason6@usf.edu](mailto:cmason6@usf.edu); 813-974-8422.
- **Open Houses**—SIGs are encouraged to send representatives to provide information at SIG tables set up at Open Houses.
- **Classroom Announcements**—to visit a class that is closely related to your SIG topic and make a brief announcement, contact the course instructor to request permission and make arrangements. Review our current catalog for instructor names; staff can provide contact information.
- If you are trying to get a new SIG up and running and a **general announcement** would be useful, provide a brief written announcement to Joseph McAuliffe, (813) 974-5166, [jmcauliffe@usf.edu](mailto:jmcauliffe@usf.edu). **Please provide several weeks lead notice of announcements** you wish to have included in the weekly eblast.
- **OLLI Master Calendar**—regularly-scheduled meetings should appear on OLLI's public calendar. OLLI staff will post regularly-scheduled meetings, once notified of them. Go to <http://bit.ly/OLLICalendar> to view the OLLI Master Calendar.

## Notification of Changes or Problems

- Immediately notify staff of the following changes: your SIG's Coordinator, other designated information contact persons, these person's current phone numbers or email addresses, or your group's regular meeting schedule.
- One-time changes in your SIG's meeting time need not be reported. However, please do notify OLLI so staff can answer inquiries when people are looking for your group.
- Please notify the SIG Liaison of any SIG formation problems or desire to dissolve your SIG so that OLLI-USF's SIG listings remain current.

## Contacts

SIG Liaison: Nancy Baily, [nwilliamson100@yahoo.com](mailto:nwilliamson100@yahoo.com) OLLI Operations: Cath Mason, [cmason6@usf.edu](mailto:cmason6@usf.edu), 813-974-8422

OLLI Registration: Charise Dixie, [olli-inquiries@usf.edu](mailto:olli-inquiries@usf.edu) or 813-974-5848