History

OLLI first offered classes in October 1996 as the Senior University at California State University Long Beach (CSULB). Then, as now, the goal was to provide an environment for older adults to fulfill the desire to never stop learning. Fifty students enrolled that first session. Within one year, there were 450 members.

In 2006, in recognition of generous support provided by the Bernard Osher Foundation, Senior University became the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) in the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) at CSULB. Because of demonstrated success, the Osher Foundation provided what is now a $2 million endowment to ensure permanent support for our program.

We offer four multi-week class sessions each year. Approximately 75% of our courses meet on the University campus. For the 2018/2019 academic year, we had over 120 volunteer instructors, offering an average of 85 classes per session. We ended the academic year with almost 2000 members, an all-time high.

Our Mission

OLLI at CSULB provides educational opportunities, encourages an active lifestyle, and promotes social opportunities for older adults. We celebrate the positive aspects of aging through a community that fosters personal growth, promotes individual empowerment, and nurtures human potential through lifelong learning.
Background

In 2014, OLLI at CSULB adopted a strategic plan that focused on achieving certain objectives. The objectives and subsequent results:

**Improve Member Communications**- The quarterly “SUN” newsletter continues as our primary method of communicating with members. This is augmented by digital communications (e.g. mass email communication supported by our new online registration system, the OLLI web site, Facebook, etc.) and prominent on-site hallway and electronic bulletin boards. We offer many events each year, including social gatherings, orientation meetings, membership meetings, and group travel to local places of intellectual interest.

**Increase Classroom Space and Convenience**- Additional venues were added since 2014. We have offered Saturday and evening classes, expanded our offerings at the Alpert Jewish Community Center, and begun holding classes at American Gold Star Manor in collaboration with a CHHS initiative. While we have adjusted the quarterly sessions to coincide with 2-month periods in order to limit parking costs, cost-effective, available parking remains a significant problem. We installed new comfortable seating in the OLLI lobby area, added a covered outdoor seating area, and upgraded the chairs in the main campus classroom.

**Modernize our Technology**- We implemented on-line registration and have achieved a 70% participation rate with the new data management system. We have continued to keep the Computer Lab technology current and have upgraded the laptop and audio/visual system in the main classroom. While we have digitally archived some past issues of the “SUN,” we have not been able to create a robust archival system for all “SUNs” or other important documentation.

**Increase University Collaboration**- We have established continuous working relationships with other departments of the CHHS and the Department of Design (College of the Arts) including providing our members to aid their research endeavors. Staff from the University Art Museum have taught OLLI classes. We have established a member-funded endowment for graduate student research awards in a field related to aging.

**Perform Targeted Fundraising**- We continued to obtain adequate donations to keep our financial situation satisfactory. This has also enabled us to offer OLLI scholarships to our qualifying members while having enough funds for our operations, maintenance, and expansion.
2019 – 2024 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

With the support of the Executive Director (ED) in collaboration with the College of Health & Human Services, after coordination with the Executive Committee (EC), the Governance Working Group (GWG), the Education Working Group (EWG), the Communications Working Group (CWG), and the Technology Working Group (TWG), the OLLI Governing Council (CG) approved the following strategic plan:

Implement Effective Governance and Leadership Development

- Reconstitute the Advisory Committee. (EC)
- Establish an OLLI Leadership Training Program in order that we develop a cadre of available candidates to fill required management and governing positions. This will include a succession plan for all Council positions in consultation with past OLLI leaders, employing mentoring as a way to encourage participation. (EWG,MSWG)
- Increase the volunteer cadre in proportion to membership growth, including a similar increase in instructors. (ALL)
- Conduct an annual review of this strategic plan and modify as needed. (GC, GWG)
- Continue to refine the governance structure and working group responsibilities. (EC,GWG)
- Revise bylaws as necessary to implement the strategic plan. (GC)
- Begin the next Strategic Planning Effort in 2023. (GWG)
- Establish a volunteer Archivist/Historian position. (EC)

Optimize Growth

- Emphasize diversity as we grow to include members from minority communities in Long Beach and surrounding cities. (ALL)
- Create additional venues to accommodate both growth needs and diverse members’ locations (e.g. churches, community centers, assisted living facilities). Use available tools to enhance classroom space at CSULB, as feasible. (EC)
- Offer classes tailored to various communities with assistance from CSULB students with applicable cultural and language skills. (EC)
- Provide additional parking options by pursuing off-site parking with shuttle service (if necessary). Work with the Cashiers Office/Parking management to simplify on-line purchases of parking permits. (EC, ED, Office)
- Encourage public transportation use and carpooling as alternatives to parking on campus. (EC, Office)
- Add evening classes. (EWG)
o Establish a Marketing and Public Relations Committee (MPRC) within the Communications Working Group to create and implement marketing plans for outreach to enhance diversity of membership. (EC,CWG)
o Develop a social media presence. (CWG)
o Focus on membership diversity. (CWG)
o Create a culture of communicating information through email to the membership. (CWG, Office)
o Redesign the OLLI brochure to enhance outreach. (EC, CWG)
o Develop objective metrics for determining the success of off-campus locations to include member and instructor satisfaction, growth potential, and cost/member including logistics, paid staff time, and capital expenditures. (EC,EWG)

Remain Member Driven for Curriculum and Events

o Continue to offer a variety of classes and special events. (EWG,TWG)
o Offer the Otto Ross Salon every two years. (EC)
o Evaluate and upgrade the technology lab by providing new equipment as needed. (TWG)
o Establish technology mentors for instructors. (EWG,TWG, Office)
o Increase online registration and explore further enhancements to a user-friendly environment for registration/donations. (EC, Office)
o Mine the data base for additional volunteers and instructors. (MSWG, EWG, and TWG)
o Explore distance learning in accordance with Osher Foundation regulations. (EWG,TWG)
o Expand social activities and travel opportunities for all OLLI members both on-campus and in the community-(MSWG)
o Plan for the 25th Anniversary celebration coming in 2021. (ALL)

Sustain Financial Stability

o Establish a Finance Committee or Working Group. (EC)
o Set a fundraising goal to help achieve a balanced budget. (EC)
o Develop a planned giving program. (EC)
o Review the fee structure. (EC)
o Develop position descriptions for the Treasurer and the Comptroller. (EC)
o Plan donor recognition events. (MSWG)
o Identify uses for endowment funds annually. (EC)
Increase University and Community Involvement

- Participate in the Age-Friendly University activities and increase visibility with the office of the Provost. (EC, MSWG)
- Participate in the Long Beach Age-Friendly City initiative. (EC, MSWG)
- Collaborate with local cities for classes at senior centers and libraries. (EWG)
- Establish ongoing relationships with University alumni/emeriti groups and associations for mutual benefit. (EC, ED)
- Establish a relationship with the Cole Conservatory in order to explore additional locations for music and performance classes. (EC, ED)
- Investigate and encourage volunteer opportunities within the University. (MSWG, ED)
- Offer OLLI members opportunities to be guest speakers for University classes. (EC, ED, Office)
- Establish a formal agreement or method for OLLI members to audit University classes. (ED, EC)
- Encourage CSULB students/faculty who conduct research with OLLI members to present results to OLLI members. Enhance the relationship with the Design and CHHS Departments to easily facilitate use of their rooms by offering OLLI members as potential subjects for research projects and collaboration. (EC, ED)
- Maintain a strong relationship with the LifeFit Center and PT @ the Beach. (EC, ED)
- Present an OLLI/Fitzpatrick Family Graduate Student Research Award annually. (EC)