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As I write this, the OU campus is buzzing with the return of thousands of students from all over the world. Norman really is a different town with and without students. Many OLLI at OU students are returning as well because today kicks off the very first course for the fall 2014 semester.

Every year, during the afternoon of freshmen move-in, President Boren holds convocation at the Lloyd Noble Center and welcomes all new and returning students and faculty. This year, he pointed out five ways to succeed at OU. I felt it was worth me reprinting (read: stealing) these tips from him and relating them to OLLI students.

1. “Don’t specialize too early.”
   Take classes from great teachers because those teachers change lives. OLLI at OU definitely has great teachers. Some of our finest are Kathryn Jenson White, David Anderson, Walker Robins and David Ray. All are teaching for OLLI this fall.

2. “Don’t be afraid to grow.”
   The only way to grow is to open yourself up to new experiences and meet new people. Step outside your comfort zone and take a course on French Cinema or Western Music Styles.

3. “Internationalize your experience.”
   While President Boren continues to encourage students to study abroad (and rightfully so; it’s an amazing experience), OLLI students can do that (in a way) without ever leaving Norman. Sign up for a course on the History of Zionism and Israel or the History of Jerusalem. You can
also transport yourself through time in Post-Revolutionary America or the time of Lewis and Clark.

4. “Don’t be passive.”
Education isn’t about soaking up knowledge—it’s about having discussions and being active in classes. In my opinion, this is the absolute best part of the OLLI program. Our students love to discuss and share their experiences. It is the best way to learn and engage yourself.

5. “Get back to those dreams you brought with you.”
Each student who comes to OU has a dream. That includes OLLI students. Follow it.

Treat these OLLI at OU courses just as you would if you were an undergraduate taking a college course for the first time. Enroll in your favorite subject or pick a brand new topic, and then engage yourself in one of the University of Oklahoma's hidden gems!

Chris Elliott
Director
Course Spotlight:

POETRY CLUB with DAVID ANDERSON

By: Patrick Piscitelli, Program Coordinator

We are in full swing with the fall semester at OLLI at OU, and we could not be happier about it! We have another wonderful semester, full of exciting and engaging classes offered by the University of Oklahoma’s top faculty. Each semester, we strive to provide original and appealing courses to our OLLI members, and this semester, we are offering a totally new course, or should we say – club: OLLI’s first Poetry Club, led by David Anderson.

David has taught many classes for OLLI, including Works of William Shakespeare, Tragedy: From Classical Athens to Renaissance London and co-led last year’s OU Book Club. He is a treasured member of the OLLI community, and our students cannot get enough of him, which is why so many members are eager for his poetry club.

I had the opportunity to ask David some questions, regarding his upcoming class and preferences on poetry.

Patrick: What interested/motivated you to offer a Poetry Club for OLLI at OU?

David: I’ve taught a lot of “book” classes for OLLI, and also co-taught a book club last year. These are fantastic because they let us step back and discuss a novel, play or epic poem as a whole, zooming in on whatever passages interest us at the moment. But focusing closely on a small work is also an important and highly satisfying way of approaching literature. The poetry club will allow us to look closely at a small number of lyrics, ballads or dramatic monologues and get a very sharp sense about what (we think) the poet is doing.

Patrick: Have you previously led a poetry club within OU? If so, where?

David: I teach a lot of poetry and really enjoy close reading. I think the students enjoy it, too. My own scholarly work is what’s called “historicist,” meaning I interpret literary texts in terms of their historical context. But I think close reading is an invaluable skill that any critic or reader should cultivate. It’s like the carpenter’s hammer—the most basic, and therefore important, tool in the tool kit.

Patrick: What aspects of this class are you most excited for?
David: I’ve come to have a great respect for the analytical (and argumentative) skills of OLLI students. I have no doubt that when they’re let loose on a poem, they’ll see a lot of things that I don’t. I’m going to learn a lot. But I promise that if I ever borrow one of their arguments in a scholarly article, I’ll give them a footnote.

Patrick: What is your favorite genre of poetry?

David: Too close to call. I suppose it would be lyric poetry (perhaps that of the Metaphysical poets), but that’s a huge category. My period is the Renaissance, but I also love the 19th and early 20th centuries. Nothing contemporary, if I’m being honest.

Patrick: What are your top 3 favorite poems and why?

David: The list could change tomorrow, but for now I’ll suggest [Philip] Larkin’s “First Sight,” [Robert] Browning’s monologue “A Death in the Desert,” and John Donne’s “Valediction: Forbidding Mourning.”

Patrick: Will participants write poetry as well as read it?

David: No. Some of my undergrads have experienced the panicked look that hits my face when they ask me to read their original work. It’s not what I’m good at. Happily, there are creative writing teachers to whom they can go with that sort of project. This club will be about appreciating the great masters.

I became even more intrigued after speaking with David and hearing about the many dynamic aspects that will be incorporated in this club. This will be an incredible opportunity to learn more about poetry and experience the benefits of “close reading.”

OLLI’s Poetry Club will meet once a month starting in October 2014 and ending in May 2015. Each meeting will take place from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. The club will be set in a larger classroom, so if you have yet to enroll, there is still time and availability.
Member Spotlight:

PACER FASELER

By: Amy Dickey, Program Coordinator

There Goes Pacer

In Fall 2009, just as OU freshmen were stepping onto campus for the first time, Pacer Faseler stepped into an OLLI class for the first time.

“Retiring was a frightening event for me,” he said. “I have known a number of people who retired a lot younger than I did, seeming to lose interest in life. They age rapidly and die early. I am convinced that OLLI plays a very important role in my life.”

Before his journey with OLLI, Pacer grew up as a Texan on a farm along with his 11 siblings. Being raised in the country near San Antonio for most of his life, the best opportunity to play with friends was to go to school early ahead of the school bus. It was on just such a trek to meet up with his friends that the story of his unique nickname unfolded more than 70 years ago.

“One morning I was a little late,” Pacer recalls, “and the bus passed me. As it passed, one of the older kids stuck his head out the window and yelled ‘There goes the Pacer!’ The name stuck like glue.”

After many years on the farm in San Antonio, Pacer entered the Air Force during the Korean War, while attending Southwest Texas State at the same time. Joining the Air Force opened several doors for Pacer.

“I had the opportunity to fly a number of WWII aircrafts before entering the jet age and missile age,” he said.

His active role in the Air Force resulted in being assigned to Tinker Air Force Base as a Recruiting Squadron Commander.

Pacer retired from the Air Force and was quickly faced with the possibility of having four daughters in college at the same time. He knew he would need a second career, so he went back to school in pursuit of his MBA, attending the University of Oklahoma along with two of his daughters. He also had several economics classes with one of them.

Pacer left OU after one semester when he received an employment offer he could not refuse. For many years, he continued to support his family, becoming President of the Texas Irrigation Council and the Lower Rio Grande River Authority, as well as being a point man for water quality issues in the Lower Rio Grade Valley.

Pacer and his wife, Carolyn, returned to Norman to retire. The pair enjoys attending plays at the theatre, watching music programs
offered through OU, cruising on different cruise lines, cheering on the Sooners at basketball and football games and, of course, attending OLLI courses.

Involvement In OLLI

Just as an OU student would sit at the front of the class in his or her favorite course taught by a top-notch professor, Pacer can be spotted at the front of just about every OLLI course.

Since joining the OLLI program in 2009, Pacer said he takes an average of about nine classes each semester, plus many summer courses and most of the “Mornings with the Professor” sessions. Many aspects attracted him to the program, from the opportunity to learn a little about a lot of subjects to the chance to meet and become friends with a lot of interesting people.

Pacer’s passion for traveling to Athens, Istanbul, Barcelona and Copenhagen has aligned with many of the courses OLLI has offered.

"I am convinced that OLLI plays a very important role in my life."
-Pacer Faseler

“Other favorites that teach us more about the places we have traveled. A special treat was a course on St. Petersburg. My wife and I were able to take the class a month before we traveled there.”

According to Pacer, his journey with OLLI has been life altering in the most positive way possible.

“I want to be in a lot more (classes),” he said. “I believe these classes, some travel, reading and exercise does not prevent aging, but it sure does slow it down.”

“It is not possible to name a favorite course because there have been many,” he said. “I enjoy courses that inspire extra reading."
OLLI at OU prides itself for offering a variety of courses led by OU’s finest faculty. However, occasionally, we will have the privilege to offer a class that is led not by a university professor, but a modest master of a certain subject—and when classical music is the subject, we have Clive Mander.

I had the honor of meeting Clive in late January 2014, when he contacted the OLLI program and inquired about the process of becoming an instructor. He taught his first OLLI course this summer, “The Music of Gustav Mahler and Richard Strauss,” a fun and informative course that allowed his students to experience and appreciate the beauty of classical music and all the work associated with it.

I asked Clive some questions about his interest in OLLI and classical music, so we could get our members better acquainted with one of the newest additions to the OLLI program.

**Patrick:** How did you hear about OLLI at OU?

**Clive:** Working at OU, I have friends and colleagues who have attended courses and

“I felt it a privilege to be able to share my enthusiasm for classical music to such an appreciative audience.”

–Clive Mander
have spoken very highly of the standard of the presentations. I came across the web page and was very impressed by the variety and depth of the subjects covered.

Patrick: What interested/motivated you to lead an OLLI course?

Clive: Good friends of mine who knew of my love for classical music encouraged me to become an instructor, and OLLI at OU seemed a perfect fit. I took some persuading, but I realized there was a wonderful opportunity to share my knowledge, built up over many years, and convey the enthusiasm I feel for the subject.

Patrick: How was the experience of teaching your first course with OLLI at OU this past summer?

Clive: I very much enjoyed my first instructor experience. As with any assignment, preparation was essential, and I learned a lot myself in presenting the classes. The feedback I received was very encouraging, and I felt it a privilege to be able to share my enthusiasm for classical music—in this case, the music of Mahler and Strauss—to such an appreciative audience.

Patrick: Your administrative department here at OU is Internal Audit. How is it you’re so well versed in classical music?

Clive: My interest in classical music started in my teenage years. Even though classical music was then, as now, a somewhat minority taste (the ‘60s was an exciting time for popular music!), I found a real affinity for the more serious side and found a whole world to explore.

I used to make trips to the local lending library to borrow recordings and get to know the works of many different composers. We had a large local concert hall in south London, where I lived, and for a modest outlay, my friends and I could get a seat to hear some of the top UK orchestras and conductors.

My accountancy career, which has included corporate tax consultancy as well as auditing, developed after my college years.

Patrick: After teaching a course, and with another coming up in fall, what do you like most about OLLI at OU?

Clive: I love the opportunity to share my enthusiasm for classical music, as well as the challenge of preparing a meaningful course for such a discerning and appreciative audience.

Clive will be leading another classical music course this fall, titled “Classical Music in the Twentieth Century” and will meet on Fridays, starting August 29 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. His classes are rich with music history, as well as filled with many of the best symphonies ever played. Different symphonies and their distinguishing qualities will be sampled and discussed each session.
Helping Others Get Involved with OLLI at OU

By: Chris Elliott, Director

By the time Erna MacDonnell enrolled in her first OLLI course, she had led a full life by any measure.

Born in Iceland in 1943, she graduated from college in Scandinavia and worked as a model before moving to California in 1964, where she worked as a senior buyer for several technology firms. In California, she piloted her own boat around the San Francisco Bay area, flew vintage airplanes and once tried to buy a lighthouse. She was fluent in five languages (English, Icelandic, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian).

In 1981 she moved to Oklahoma, married Ken MacDonnell and began the 30 happiest years of her life. She soon went to work for Shaklee and later worked at the OU Couch Cafeteria, before retiring in 2004. Her family and friends remember her elegant sense of style, her effortless poise, her sly and often quirky wit and her remarkable gourmet culinary skills. Anyone meeting MacDonnell for the first time was struck by her musical laughter and the charming Icelandic accent that she never lost.

So, what kind of OLLI courses would such a talented and accomplished woman with such broad life experiences find interesting? MacDonnell’s sense of adventure, and her wish to expand her intellectual horizons, knew no bounds. Her first OLLI course was on British mystery novels. Although she was already an avid reader, she wanted to deepen her knowledge of the genre. Her last OLLI course, taken after she had been diagnosed with ovarian cancer that would take her life in a few short years, was calligraphy. This was a new area of interest, and the beautiful, handmade cards she sent to people during the final phase of her life will be cherished by those lucky enough to have received one.

MacDonnell embraced OLLI courses because they could increase the breadth and depth of

“Launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in each moment”
-Henry David Thoreau
her knowledge. No matter what somebody’s life experiences or education might be, OLLI courses allow anyone to deepen their knowledge of a familiar subject or explore an unfamiliar one.

The transcendental writer Henry David Thoreau once urged his readers to, “launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in each moment,” and he said of himself that he, “wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner and… learn what it had to teach, and not, when [he] came to die, discover that [he] had not lived.”

This was MacDonnell’s unspoken credo, and she would be pleased to know that others might use the recently established Erna Jona MacDonnell Scholarship Fund to enroll in OLLI courses that allow them to live deeper lives or launch themselves on new waves.

The Erna Jona MacDonnell Scholarship Fund has been established to provide OLLI at OU Memberships to age 50+ learners, so that they may enroll in OLLI at OU courses. The scholarship is need-based, and awards are decided by committee. Those interested in applying for the scholarship should contact the OLLI at OU office by calling (405) 325-3488 or email celliott@ou.edu.
BRIDGING THE CULTURAL GAP:
The OLLI/CESL Collaboration

By: Patrick Piscitelli, Program Coordinator

OLLI at OU strives to serve its members and local community at every opportunity possible and is dedicated to searching for other ways to help those within the University of Oklahoma community.

This fall semester, OLLI has found a way to do both, by giving OLLI members the unique opportunity to make a difference in the lives of students who participate in OU’s Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) by becoming mentors to students from other cultures.

CESL Director Donna Alexander provided us with information about this volunteer program, its purpose and the simple, yet helpful actions required.

**OLLI at OU:** What are CESL’s goals for this collaboration? What do you hope to have your students achieve?

**CESL:** CESL students will have the opportunity to have increased exposure to Norman community members, enabling them to develop a relaxed relationship with someone who can answer their cultural questions. The students will fill out surveys, may have interview questions on different topics and will meet periodically with the assistant director to monitor the progress of the program.

**OLLI at OU:** Could you provide some specific information and/or include possible activities that you would like the OLLI members to know before they agree to participate?

**CESL:** The more open they are willing to be to their students—answering questions about families, holidays or other customs our students may find strange or inexplicable—the better. They should have a natural curiosity about other cultures and be interested in sharing their time with a student.

This program is not about “entertaining” the student, it’s about letting the student participate in some of the natural life events the volunteers already have in their lives. Possible activities could be as mundane as grocery shopping and preparing a meal, taking a pet to the vet, allowing the student to accompany you to your child’s swimming lesson, etc.

**OLLI at OU:** Is there anyone else from your office that you would like us to involve in the program?
CESL: Cory Northern, the new assistant director, will be the CESL representative for this venture. I will also be involved this first time out, but he will be watching closely and participate in all the events with me.

The CESL students speak English well, allowing conversations to flow naturally during the time spent with their OLLI mentor. These students come from all over the world, including Asia, Africa, South America and the Middle East. This program will help them practice and refine their English in an informal setting, while comprehending the North American culture, and more specifically, the Oklahoma culture.

If you are able to volunteer and spend time with a CESL student throughout the fall semester, please contact our office, and we will send you more information. We appreciate any and all of your time, support and help.

“This is an incredible opportunity to help out the OU students and OU community, while getting to learn more about cultures around the world.”
The OLLI at OU program made its first location expansion to OU’s Health Sciences Center last spring, and this fall marks just the third semester ever for OLLI to hold classes in our recently added OKC location. All of our classes take place in a state-of-the-art facility named the Samis Education Center.

Some of the popular courses that have been offered include Kathryn Jenson White’s “Introduction to Documentary Film” and Walker Robins’ “How the Holy Land Became Holy.” This semester, one course that the OLLI staff is particularly excited for is a new type of class — “Nutrition and Wellness as We Age,” led by the OU Health Sciences Center’s Brian dela Cruz.

Brian is a clinical instructor and coordinator for the Department of Nutritional Sciences in the College of Allied Health. He expressed great interest in the OLLI program at OU and shared the idea of providing a nutrition course for our OLLI members. We asked Brian a couple questions, so our members could get a better idea of Brian’s Nutrition and Wellness course, and here’s what he wanted to share:

Patrick: How long have you been studying nutrition?

Brian: I started the Nutrition Program at OUHSC in 2008. I practiced as a Dietetic Intern at St. Francis Hospital in 2010. Since 2011, I have been practicing both as a Registered Dietitian and Nutritionist and teaching nutrition at OU.

Patrick: Do you feel nutrition becomes more important the older we get and why?
Brian: Nutrition definitely gets more important as we age. Unfortunately as we age, we have to work harder to stay healthy. It’s not that we can’t stay healthy; it’s just that we are more prone to chronic diseases when we get older. As we get older, we can see vitamin deficiencies, muscle loss and bone fragility.

Patrick: After reading your course description in the fall catalog, can you expand on some of the topics that you are most excited about for this course?

Brian: I think the topics that I’m most excited about are concerning osteoporosis and preventing muscle loss. Unfortunately, these are common conditions we see with the elderly population, but there are ways to maintain health and slow the process of these chronic diseases.

Patrick: Will you do demonstrations on simple, yet healthy cooking for the OLLI students? Will they get to sample some dishes?

Brian: Yes, I’m hoping we will do a short cooking demonstration during the lecture on heart disease. Salt is detrimental to a person with heart disease, and I know many of us use salt in much of the foods we consume. But there are other spices we can use to make foods tasty and healthy.

Patrick: Being that your work is focused around nutrition, do you cook for yourself often?

Brian: I definitely cook for myself when I’m at home, but I also like to treat myself by going out to eat every once in a while! We’ll talk about eating out and choosing what to eat when eating out in this course.

Patrick: What is your favorite dish to prepare and eat?

Brian: One of my favorite dishes to make is a very low sodium beef taco recipe. When we think of meat found in beef tacos, we usually think of it as tasting quite salty. The recipe I use incorporates multiple spices, which give the beef its flavor. What’s great about the recipe is there is no salt added. Use a hard taco shell or a soft taco shell, load it up with vegetables, guacamole, salsa and a little bit of shredded cheese, and you’ve got healthy tacos!

Brian’s class will implement a balance of informative lessons, engaging discussion and even some demonstrations to show how easy it can be to cook healthy, yet delicious meals. This course is scheduled to meet every Thursday, from September 11 to October 9 from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. at the Samis Education Center in Oklahoma City.

“Nutrition definitely gets more important as we age”
- Brian dela Cruz
The 2014 National Weather Festival will take place Saturday, November 1 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the National Weather Center’s facilities on the University of Oklahoma campus.

The annual National Weather Festival highlights the many weather related organizations and activities in central Oklahoma. Visitors can view the National Weather Center’s premier facilities, including the National Weather Service’s forecast operation areas.

In addition to hourly weather balloon launches with local TV meteorologists, emergency response vehicle and equipment, LEGO® models and robot demonstrations, children’s activities and a variety of weather-related information and products that will be on display, the National Weather Center plans to have local TV meteorologists, as well as first responders, storm shelter experts, the American Red Cross and several other weather-related professionals in attendance.
Fun Activities for Participants of All Ages include:

Weather Balloon Launches
Join the National Weather Center for hourly launches hosted by Oklahoma City TV meteorologists.

Ask The Experts!
There will be special booths where people can ask their questions about tornadoes, storm shelters, storm fears and Oklahoma weather patterns.

From a Professional’s Perspective: Jami Boettcher – National Weather Service and OLLI instructor

OLLI at OU: What is your favorite part of this event and why?

Jamie Boettcher: “My favorite part of this event is that our citizens have the opportunity to experience how Oklahoma’s severe weather history has produced the most effective “weather enterprise” in the world. Visitors get to see how research improves severe weather warnings, how those warnings are shared by the media and the dedication of our first responders. All of these elements of the weather enterprise share the common goal of saving lives.”