To the OLLI membership,

In the short time since our spring 2020 semester was suspended, it’s amazing how much has changed, and what we’ve accomplished. Everywhere, OLLI members are learning how to use new technology, trying out new ideas, and being creative in the pursuit of learning, sharing, and staying connected to each other. Thank you for your continued patience and understanding as we navigate through these uncertain times.

Please see below for important information about cancellations, reimbursements, and planning.

**Spring 2020 continuing courses**

As you may know, the OLLI Garden course (HC-404) is expected to go ahead, although it has been suspended for several weeks. Registration for this course is now free. Some spring 2020 instructors are reaching out to students to explore the completion of classes online.

**Summer 2020 Event Cancellations**

*Five Points Art Show* – the art show was scheduled for the first two weeks of June, and has been cancelled in the spirit of “an abundance of caution”.

*Fall 2020 Open House* – we’re hoping it won’t be necessary to cancel the Open House, which is tentatively scheduled for August 7th. No firm plans have yet been made, but we need to be prepared for the possibility that an open house simply might not be possible this year.

**Course Credits (reimbursements)**

- If your course was completely cancelled before it had the chance to meet, you are eligible to receive a credit in the full amount of the course fee.
- If your class started, but was cancelled before it could finish, you are eligible to receive a credit covering the cancelled portion.

For example, if you were enrolled in a 5-week course, but it only met three times before being cancelled, you are eligible to receive a credit for the two cancelled class meetings (approximately $11 for a standard 5-week course). This credit will not expire and may be used towards any future membership fee or course fee.

**How to claim your course credits**

If you’d like us to add your course fee to your OLLI account, you must email osher@uconn.edu stating your name, and the name of each course for which you enrolled this semester. You will receive a credit in your OLLI account within ten days of your request.

**You can also donate your course fee to OLLI!**

As you can imagine, the impact of the coronavirus is having a significant impact on our budget. We are deeply grateful to anyone who is able to donate their course fee to OLLI. To do this, please email osher@uconn.edu and tell us your name and the spring 2020 courses for which you registered. We thank you in advance for your generosity!

**New Members**

If you are a new member (you registered for an annual membership for the first time in January 2020), you are also eligible to receive a credit for the cost of the membership fee. To claim or donate this, please follow the same rules as above.

*If you have any questions about course reimbursements,*

*please email us at osher@uconn.edu*

**Financial Implications to OLLI at UConn**

There will be a significant financial impact to OLLI (about 20% of our total annual budget) for the foreseeable future. We are looking at ways to cut back without impacting our core mission of learning and social activities.

**Online Learning**
Since the core mission of OLLI is lifelong learning and social connection, we’ve been particularly hard-hit, especially because we’re also a “high-risk” population.

By now you’ve probably heard about Zoom, which is a videoconferencing online application that’s being used by all kinds of organizations to work, teach, and stay in contact. Not only is Zoom extremely simple to use, it also allows you to see other people as you talk, which decreases the sense of isolation.

Many other OLLIs already use Zoom as part of their distance-learning curriculum, or are learning how to use it for online classes and meetings. Next week we’ll be sending out a survey in our weekly e-blast to get a sense of how many instructors and students would be interested in online courses for the summer session. OLLI staff will share the responses with you as we work towards offering online learning.

OLLI staff will soon be offering Zoom training, testing, and a “sandbox” for you to learn more. In the meantime, take a look at these videos to learn the basics:

- Live Training Webinars
- Zoom Video Tutorials
- Watch Recorded Training Sessions
- Zoom Support During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Being Careful: FBI Warns of Teleconferencing and Online Classroom Hijacking During COVID-19 Pandemic

Other Things We Can Do

You’re probably already doing these things, so if you have other ideas, please share them among us all. Any way in which we can stay connected and give our days some structure and purpose has to be a good thing!

- Call another OLLI member and ask how they’re doing.
- Write something for the newsletter or the weekly e-blast! Share how you’re feeling, what you’re doing, or what you miss.
- Share something on our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/olliatuconnwaterbury/
We all know that none of these measures can make up for an OLLI you can go to every week, where you see friends, and are surrounded by other learners. But they will ensure an OLLI that keeps going, and perhaps becomes even stronger because of the challenges we now face as a community and as individuals. These are exceptional times, but we are most definitely exceptional people.

With all best wishes,

OLLI Executive Committee and OLLI Staff