

Section F – CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

The responsibilities and duties of the Curriculum Committee are stated in the ElderStudy Constitution and Bylaws.

The programs that ElderStudy offers are the reason for the organization's existence, making the curriculum ElderStudy's most important feature.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

The Curriculum Committee's goal is to provide diverse, interesting, and stimulating academic and cultural classes to the ElderStudy membership using the resources available.

Areas of instruction shall include, but not be limited to, Art, Literature, Drama, Music, History, Western and other Cultures, Current Affairs, Government, Finance, Science, Health and Nature.

The committee will always try to accommodate suggestions from any ElderStudy member about speakers and/or topics.

The academic year is divided into fall and spring semesters (with no ElderStudy programs offered during the summer).

The curriculum comprises about forty, two-hour, stand-alone programs each semester. This does not include special interest groups such as Book Group or Genealogy Group. In addition, organizational meetings and group luncheons must be scheduled.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Curriculum Committee is informal. Any ElderStudy member may attend any committee meeting and participate fully, including voting. The committee chair maintains an email list of interested ElderStudy members, and this may be considered the *ad hoc* Curriculum Committee membership roster.

It is highly advantageous to have members who have fruitful contacts with potential speakers. For example, retired UMW faculty and staff members are important committee members.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Curriculum Committee meets several times during a semester. The primary task is to develop the curriculum for the next semester. Other tasks are to assess the current semester's schedule and to consider old and/or new matters that may affect the committee's operations, such as changes in UMW procedures to schedule rooms.

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Meetings operate in a process of informal consensus. Suggestions for speakers or topics may be proposed by anyone, based on his/her own research or on ideas from other ElderStudy members.

Discussion by committee members may result in recommending changes to the proposal, but such discussion must always be positive and constructive. For example, if a Civil War history topic is suggested, but a Civil War history session is already scheduled, the new suggestion may be deferred to the next semester.

The committee chair is responsible for scheduling the dates and number of meetings so that the committee's business can be accomplished predominantly with face-to-face consensus. There will always be unresolved issues after the last meeting in a semester, so some business must be accomplished via email. The chair must strive to keep committee members informed and part of the discussion.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE WORKING DOCUMENTS

The committee uses a Microsoft Office Excel workbook to record each semester's curriculum. The goal is to have everything about the semester's schedule recorded in this file.

The committee chair determines which committee member(s) will be responsible for maintaining the workbooks, provides a method for shared access to the workbooks, and provides instructions for using the workbooks. In particular, it is advantageous to have a single point of contact who manages the scheduling of session dates and times (the "Session Scheduling").

A semester's workbook is constantly modified during the scheduling process, and further modifications are made as the semester actually occurs. The workbook is saved after the end of the semester, as a record of the semester's activity.

There is one entry in the workbook for each curriculum session, for each organizational meeting, and for other events which affect scheduling (i.e., dates of holidays and relevant UMW events).

Items in each entry include:

- Date and time of the session (or meeting, or event)
- Location of the session
- Title and description
- Name, phone number(s), email address, and mailing address of the presenter
- Name and phone number of the sponsor
- Amount of honorarium or donation, if applicable
- Description of any audiovisual equipment needs, and other notes
- Count of attendance.

The workbooks are the source for other documents, including the printed schedule mailed to all ElderStudy members before the start of each semester, the schedule kept on the ElderStudy website, and preliminary schedules used at Curriculum Committee meetings.

SESSION SPONSORS

Each session must have a **sponsor** as well as a presenter. The sponsor is an ElderStudy member who volunteers to coordinate the session. Usually, but not always, the sponsor is the member who proposed the session. The duties of a sponsor include:

- Negotiating a date and time for the presentation with the presenter and the Curriculum Committee's Session Scheduler
- Obtaining a satisfactory session title and description from the presenter
- For tours: determining any attendance limits or other details; designating (or being) the point of contact for reservations if necessary; providing complete and understandable directions to the site
- Obtaining the presenter's phone number(s), email address and mailing address
- Managing the exchange of information with the presenter
- Reminding the presenter a week or two before the date of his/her session
- Greeting the presenter, aiding in setting up any required audiovisual or other equipment, and noting the ten-minute mid-program break
- Handling room overflows when necessary
- Opening the session with announcements and information on upcoming sessions, then introducing the presenter, using biographical data provided by the presenter
- Welcome new members
- Counting attendance at the session and reporting this to the Curriculum Committee
- Thanking the presenter and providing a certificate of appreciation, if available.

SESSION SCHEDULING

ElderStudy sessions are scheduled on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Organizational meetings may sometimes be scheduled on Mondays and Fridays, at the choosing of the committee chairs or the Board of Directors. Sessions normally extend from 10am to noon or from 1pm to 3pm. Other daytime hours may be used if necessary (for example, a bird walk starting at 8am). Sessions should not be scheduled on Monday, Friday, or at night because of members' scheduling conflicts or members' desire not to drive at night. Exceptions may be made only with committee consensus and, perhaps, advice from the Board of Directors.

Care must be taken not to schedule sessions on holidays or other special days which might cause problems with member participation.

The fall semester sessions usually begin in September. Sessions in late August may be held if that is the only time that the presenter is available. Similarly, spring semester sessions usually end in May, but sessions in early June may be scheduled if necessary.

Most sessions will be held on the Stafford Campus of the University of Mary Washington. Other locations may be used when relevant to the presentation. Tours to sites of historic or other interest may be scheduled. When an off-campus location is used, only one session should be scheduled for that

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day. The sponsor is responsible for providing complete and understandable directions to get to the site of the session.

Courses which comprise more than one session are not common, but are not ruled out.

The dates and times of organizational meetings and luncheons are determined by the relevant committee chair and/or the Board of Directors. The Curriculum Committee will ensure that these dates and times are obtained and scheduled before any other sessions, to ensure that there are no conflicts. Meetings have priority. The Curriculum Committee will reserve the necessary rooms for meetings held on the Stafford campus.

ROOM SCHEDULING

The Curriculum Committee will have a member (the “Room Scheduler”) whose task is to reserve the necessary rooms for sessions held on the UMW campus. It is the responsibility of the session sponsor to make sure that an off-campus location is available.

The committee chair will encourage the Room Scheduler to maintain an up-to-date set of written procedures to follow in scheduling rooms, in case he/she is unavailable to perform the task.

OPENING CLASSES TO NON-MEMBERS

Session sponsors and/or the chair of the Curriculum Committee may propose that a session be open to non-members. Occasionally, guests may attend a regular session provided that space is adequate and that the sponsor and speaker are informed. Guests should be introduced to the attendees.

COMMUNICATING THE CURRICULUM TO THE ELDERSTUDY MEMBERSHIP

The Curriculum Committee will provide the ElderStudy newsletter editor with a copy of the fall semester schedule in time to be included in the August newsletter, and a copy of the spring semester schedule in time to be included in the December newsletter.

Before the beginning of each semester, the Curriculum Committee will provide a description of the semester’s schedule for the ElderStudy website.

COMMUNICATING SCHEDULE CHANGES

Cancelling a program for any reason is primarily the responsibility of the sponsor, who must inform our webmaster, the telephone committee person, the committee email representative, the committee scheduler, the committee room scheduler, and the Curriculum Committee Chair, so the announcement can be made in a timely manner. This does not preclude the president or the Curriculum Committee Chair, or his/her designee from urging a cancellation if he/she feels it is in the best interest of the membership. (NOTE: if the Committee email representative sends out an email notifying the membership of a cancellation, the sponsor can assume that the other individuals identified above have been notified and no further action on his/her part is required.)

The Curriculum Committee maintains a recorded telephone message (540-654-1769, option 2) to inform members about session cancellations, room changes, etc. The committee chair designates one or more committee members to keep the message up-to-date and provides instructions for this.

Changes to a semester's schedule after it has been distributed in the ElderStudy newsletter must be effectively communicated to the membership.

Changes can include:

- Cancelled sessions
- Added sessions
- Rescheduled sessions
- Relocated sessions
- Miscellaneous changes.

The Curriculum Committee will notify the membership of changes as soon as practicable, using the following methods, when possible:

- A notice on the recorded phone message; the phone number is (540) 654-1769, Option 2
- Emails to all members who use email
- A notice on the ElderStudy website
- An update to the schedule posted in the main ElderStudy classroom

For cancelled sessions, the Curriculum Committee will attempt to schedule the session in a future semester.

HONORARIA AND DONATIONS

ElderStudy may pay speakers to give presentations. ElderStudy may, in some cases, make a donation in lieu of an honorarium. Current honoraria monetary limits are:

- \$100 for each local speaker who is not a member of ElderStudy (two speakers for the same lecture split \$150)
- \$150 for each out-of-town speaker (the additional amount covers the additional travel time/mileage)
- \$75 for Gallery Tours.
- At the discretion of the committee, a meal may be added for out-of-town speakers
- ElderStudy members and non-ElderStudy members may be reimbursed up to \$75 for their program presentations to cover the actual cost of handouts and visual aids
- No honorarium is given to ElderStudy members or persons whose paid job is primarily public outreach (see below)
- \$225 maximum for each program
- In rare and exceptional cases, a higher fee may be offered to a special speaker at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

The Curriculum Committee will keep track of those speakers whose jobs are public outreach (National Park Service, Alzheimer's Association, etc.) and at the end of the current academic year, if

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funds are available, donate the amount of the normal honoraria directly to those organizations that the speakers represented.

The Curriculum Committee records whether or not each scheduled session was actually held. This information, along with the honoraria/donation amount for each session, will be provided to the Treasurer by the committee chair or designated representative within five to seven days after the end of each month (honoraria will normally be distributed by the Treasurer on a monthly basis); receipt of this information by the Treasurer will be taken as authorization to make the applicable payments. Within ten days of receipt of this authorization, the Treasurer will send the identified honoraria together with a thank-you letter to the speaker. The content of the letter is determined by the Treasurer and the Curriculum Committee.

If a speaker requests that an honorarium check be provided on the day of the presentation, the Curriculum Committee chair or designated representative must contact the Treasurer at least four days in advance of the presentation to authorize such action.

CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION

The Curriculum Committee may provide Certificates of Appreciation to presenters. The design of such certificates shall be approved by consensus of the committee.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES OF THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE CHAIR

The Curriculum Committee chair will attend, when practicable, all meetings of the Board of Directors and all General Membership Meetings. When unable to attend, the chair shall attempt to find a committee member to attend in his/her place. At these meetings, the chair will provide a report of the Curriculum Committee's activities.

The Curriculum Committee chair is an *ex-officio* member of the Administration Committee (with all rights and privileges of membership, including the right to vote). The chair is encouraged, but is not required, to attend Administration Committee meetings. Attendance at Membership Committee meetings is also encouraged but not required.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Mary Washington and Mary Washington ElderStudy requires semi-annual curriculum reports. At the end of each semester, the Curriculum Committee chair or designee shall prepare a report, and submit it to the ElderStudy president. The report shall contain a list of the sessions presented and a count of the number of attendees.