



Learning for Better Living

Old Orchard Beach/Saco Adult & Community Education

TEACHING HANDBOOK

SECTION I:
TEACHING AT OOB/SACO ADULT EDUCATION

SECTION II:
UNDERSTANDING ADULT LEARNING & PREPARING TO TEACH

UPDATED 7/16

40 E. Emerson Cummings Blvd./Old Orchard Beach, ME 04064

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I

CONTACTS.....	2
MISSION / VALUES / VISION.....	3
DIRECTIONS.....	3
WELCOME.....	4
OUR TEACHING CODE OF ETHICS.....	4
“RED TAPE” – PAPERWORK AND PROCESS.....	5
GENERAL POLICIES.....	7

SECTION II

WHO TAKES ADULT EDUCATION COURSES AND WHY.....	8
A PROFILE OF ADULT STUDENTS.....	9
WHAT ADULT LEARNERS EXPECT FROM YOU.....	10
FIFTEEN SURE-FIRE TIPS TO CONDUCT A SUCCESSFUL CLASS.....	11
WHAT MOTIVATES ADULTS TO LEARN?.....	12
ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE MOTIVATIONAL PLAN.....	13
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS TO SUSTAIN ADULT MOTIVATION.....	13
SEVEN TIPS TO BETTER TEACHING.....	14

SECTION I

CONTACTS

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MISSION STATEMENT

MISSION

Old Orchard Beach/Saco Adult & Community Education offers learning opportunities to enrich the quality of life for citizens in our community by providing programs to assist adults in pursuing a variety of personal enrichment, educational, and vocational goals.

VALUES

Responsive

We will maintain a dynamic organizational environment in which we continuously identify the needs of our community, staff, and constituents, critically evaluating our ability to effectively respond in a timely fashion to those needs.

Act with Integrity

As an organization we will make and implement decisions that demonstrate respect, fairness, and honesty.

Innovative

We will serve our community by implementing initiatives that reflect best practices and improve the program.

Collaborative

To attain our organizational goals, we will foster diverse ideas, skills, solutions, and resources both within our organization and our community.

VISION

The wider community values Old Orchard Beach/Saco Adult & Community Education as an essential component in fostering a better quality of life for individuals in our community. Since learning is a life long process, community members recognize adult education programming as an integral partner in providing a continuum of educational experiences for a diverse community. Adult education is integrated into plans for community improvement and development, and is seen as an asset to our community.



It's with great appreciation that we welcome you to our program. We hope Section I will assist in orienting you to working with us. Please refer to it for questions you may have or for contact information, we are here to assist you.

Section II is designed to support your teaching efforts. Whether you are a seasoned teacher or new to this experience, we want you to have a very successful class and hope these tips are helpful.

Sincerely,
Your Adult Ed Staff

OUR TEACHING CODE OF ETHICS

The best self-promotion is an outstanding class. It is our expectation that the quality of your teaching will speak for itself and that if students wish to further engage you, your products, or your services, they will do so upon course completion.

Promotion of products (including tapes, publications, etc.) or services in class is not permitted. Feedback, written or verbal, that suggests you are actively promoting your business, services, or products while teaching may result in termination of your contract.

The following guidelines have been established so that you may better understand our policies on self-promotion.

Please Do:

- Distribute promotional products in class if their cost has been included in the course fee.
- Arrange to have your promotional products sold in the office if they are not included in the course fee.
- Provide generic guidance and share your expertise while engaged in the process of teaching.

Please Do Not:

- Sell, or promote the sale of books, tapes, etc., directly to students in class.
- Promote your services while engaged in teaching.
- Offer advice* directed to individual students while engaged in teaching.
- Distribute your business cards during class time.

* "Advice" here is referring to counseling someone individually, versus providing generic advice or information (i.e., financial planning instructor cannot tell a student where to invest his or her money).

If you would like clarification about any of these points, feel free to call our Director, David Durkee, at (207) 934-7922 or email us at adultedinfo@rsu23.org.

From Course Proposal to Hiring - The adult education staff receives hundreds of proposals a year from qualified professionals who hope to teach a course or workshop. For many hopeful teachers, their proposed course is an extension of a full-time job; for others, a hobby or interest they have mastered on their own and wish to share. Many proposals are rejected, but not because they are "bad ideas." The proposals we do accept compliment current course offerings or break new ground for our primary audience either in subject matter or format and speaks to the research we have done on what our community wants.

If your proposal appears to be a good fit, an in-person or phone interview will be scheduled. The interview is an opportunity to discuss questions regarding your content, teaching formats, target audience, benefits and expected outcomes. If no outstanding issues remain, agreed upon dates may be selected at that time.

What Happens After the Interview? - The time-line for curriculum development and brochure production is such that the acceptance of your course proposal may occur as much as 3-6 months before your course is actually offered. During this "waiting period," you will receive:

- A contract that restates the payment terms and course schedule-please sign and return as soon as you can
- A course description - how your class will be marketed in our course catalog
- A form to request your room set-up, AV equipment, photocopying and other materials you may need us to provide
- Appropriate employment forms required in order to pay you if you are a first time teacher

The contract and any requested employment papers should be signed and returned along with the room/equipment/materials request form by the due date.

While we make every effort to satisfy your preferred classroom seating arrangement, please note that we are housed in a high school. Not all rooms are perfectly suited to adult educational purposes. We ask that you be as flexible as possible as we try and satisfy both your needs and those of your students using the rooms we have available.

Copying materials for your class is handled one of two ways - You may send the originals in with your contract or deliver to the Adult Education office at least one week before your class date for copying. Or, you may choose to copy your own course materials; please note that we do not reimburse instructors for copying without advance approval. In either case, indicate your copying instructions on the materials request form provided.

The Enrollment Confirmation Call - Our open enrollment policy means that registrations are accepted until a class is filled or the course starts, whichever occurs first. Two to five business days before your class is due to begin, you will receive an email or a call from our staff confirming the course's status. At that time, your room, set-up, materials and equipment needs will also be reconfirmed. We will also remind you about hand-outs, the evaluation process, and answer any questions that have arisen.

If your class has marginal enrollment, we may wait until two days before the start date to contact you. This allows the maximum time to receive more registrations. When possible, we will call you as soon as there is adequate enrollment to run your class.

Just Before You Teach - Review your outline and read your course description again so you know exactly what students will expect. Pick up your course folder at the Old Orchard Beach Adult Education office which contains an attendance list with contact information (along with evals/room report). We require regular attendance, and we ask that before each class you make sure that those in the class appear on the attendance list. Any discrepancies should be sorted out before class starts. Students who are not on your attendance list must go to the office to register or show proof of registration. Teachers cannot accept payment or register a student, this must be done through the office.

All teachers arrange to pick up their course folder the day of their class. Enclosed will be teacher and student eval forms, a room report form and attendance sheet. Other arrangements may be made such as emailing your forms if your class is off-site.

Course Evaluations - At the end of your last class, distribute Course Evaluations to be completed by your students. A student can collect and place them in your folder to be returned to the Adult Ed office.

This process is an important part of how we assess your effectiveness as a teacher and your ability to deliver what the course description promises. The evaluation addresses your presentation, preparedness, command of material, and overall impressions of the educational experience and of our program.

For off-site classes, your course folder with evaluation forms should be picked up here at the OOB/Saco Adult Education office or emailing arrangements can be made if its your preference.

Copies of course evaluations are sent to you after being reviewed. We take student feedback seriously and follow up with you as needed on any comments that require clarification, action, or might impact your effectiveness in subsequent classes.

Instructor Evaluation and Room Report - We want to get immediate feedback from you regarding your teaching experience including the 'fit' of your room. Please submit these along with your folder at the end of your last class.

Code Red - You will be asked to come to our office 15 minutes early (if your class is at OOB High School) to receive this short training which will then be read by you to your students at the beginning of your first class.

Off-Site Courses - When classes meet off-site, our staff is not there to oversee the program. In that sense, you bear the responsibility of representing OOB/Saco Adult Education. If you teach off-site, whether in your own office, studio, or other facility, you and OOB/Saco Adult Education are interchangeable to the student. Therefore, your task is greater in terms of meeting our students' expectations.

Staying in Touch - Planning exciting, diverse classes that are effectively publicized and meet in suitable facilities requires the joint effort of many individuals. In the evenings you will see our administrative staff who determine your room assignment and see to its proper set-up. Any problem you encounter should be reported immediately to the office staff. We are ready to assist you with room, AV needs, or other issues and to correct them as soon as possible.

In the End, Remember the "F" Word (FUN) - When you set aside the procedures, policies, and practices, the experience of teaching in a non-credit program is (must be) essentially fun! It emanates from you as the teacher of the classroom, thereby setting a tone of enjoyment, relaxation, and openness of exchange, none of which can be achieved unless you are having fun. The impact of such a quality combined with your expertise and students' motivation can open the door to a truly uplifting and enriching learning experience.

Fun is cultivated and nurtured as part of a culture that values individuality, freedom of expression, mutual respect, and open lines of communication between you, your students, you and our staff.

OOB/Saco Adult Education is committed to such values as they support our broader mission to provide learning opportunities that address the needs of the individual and the community. We invite you to join our effort to make lifelong learning an integral part of the lives of adults as they pursue their dreams, ponder the impossible, and yes, have fun!

OLD ORCHARD BEACH/SACO ADULT EDUCATION GENERAL POLICIES

Payment - Our Payroll Department issues checks twice per month. Your payment is submitted on the first payroll date after your last class. No invoices are needed.

Storms & School Closings - If regular day school classes are canceled, then ALL Adult Education classes are also canceled. Please check your local radio and television stations for RSU23 news or call our storm line at (207) 934-7922, ext. *827.

We may not be in the office to respond to phone or email, so please listen to radio and TV listings for RSU23 cancellations. Once we are back in the office we will call to reschedule or update our records if the teacher has already called students to reschedule.

Schedule Changes - Changes in day, time, date, or course length, are prohibited once the brochure has been printed since the course description is OOB/Saco Adult Education's contract with students.

Enrollment - Once your class has reached a minimum level of enrollment, you will be notified. In case of marginal enrollment, we wait as late as two days prior to the start date to inform you about your classes' status. In case of low enrollment, OOB/Saco Adult Education may decide to cancel the class and will notify you as soon as the decision is made.

Emergencies - If an illness or an emergency prevents you from teaching a class, please notify us immediately. It is your responsibility to either find a substitute or call before noon with a make up date so that we may contact your students. In case of a substitute, please provide us with the teacher's name, phone number, address, social security number and qualifications before noon of the day of class.

Class Start and Stop Time - Please be in the building at least 15 minutes prior to the start of your class. Be prepared to start teaching at the scheduled time. In some cases, that may mean you will need to be here even earlier to get your room and materials ready. Let us know if we can help.

Accidents - Report any accidents involving teachers or students immediately to the Adult Education office or Director. There is a first aid kit available in the Adult Ed office. If emergency care is needed, please accompany the student to the office. You will need to fill out an accident report within 24 hours of injury. Call 9-1-1 immediately if needed.

While classes are in session, the facilities are monitored by our staff. Once inside the classroom, however, the teacher is responsible for the management of the classroom environment.

- Use the attendance list to determine who should be in your class. If a student's name does not appear on your attendance sheet, they need to produce a registration or go to (or call) the office to register.
- No drug or alcohol use is permitted nor should students be under the influence of either. Please report your suspicions immediately to the office. We will ask the student to leave the premises. If a student is unruly, ask another student to go to the office. We will handle the problem, but at no time should you leave the classroom.
- If you observe anyone in the building behaving in an unusual or unexpected manner please report it to the office immediately.
- You must be the last person to leave your classroom. If necessary, ask students to leave the classroom and continue conversations in the hall.

Fire - You are responsible for evacuating everyone in your class. When you arrive at the building for the first time, please take a moment to locate fire alarms and exits.

SECTION II

WHO TAKES ADULT EDUCATION COURSES AND WHY?

According to The College Board, nearly 30 million American adults are involved in continuing education of some sort. We hear a great deal about “non-traditional” students who return to college after a number of years, and about adults enrolled in courses for professional reasons.

But unlike courses taken for credit, or as part of a degree, or certificate program, those who enroll in non-credit classes do so because they are self-motivated. They wish to:

- learn or practice a skill
- gather information
- pursue a curiosity
- indulge in a lifelong love
- simply enjoy the company of those with similar interests

More often than not, adults in non-credit programs have immediate needs they wish fulfilled or results they expect to achieve.

In the early 1980's, researcher Carol Aslanian conducted a groundbreaking study entitled, “23 Million Americans in Transition.” In it she concluded that adults are most likely to engage in lifelong learning when their lives are in some state of change. The most common life crossroads she cited include:

- losing a job
- getting a new job
- moving
- getting married
- getting divorced
- having children

At these critical turning points, adults are inclined to see education as a vehicle that helps them navigate through important, sometimes stressful, times of life change.

Continuing education really came of age in the 1970's when baby boomers (those born between 1945 and 1965), entered early adulthood. This generation, the best educated in our nation's history, has always valued learning and continued to view non-credit education as a natural means to fulfill life goals. And, while many of us may pursue one hobby or interest for years (or until mastery is achieved), most adults enroll in non-credit courses to gain an introductory-level of familiarity with a subject. While they may take multiple courses over time, adult learners move from one topic to another: yoga one semester, cooking the next.

Until the early 1980's, there were limited providers of adult education. Now, in addition to post-secondary institutions, continuing education is available in retail stores, hospitals, dance and health clubs, museums, TV, DVD, and through the internet. Of course, online options have made adult education “non-location, non-time” specific.

Those who opt for classroom, or experience-based learning, will do so because they place a high value on face-to-face discourse and personal rapport.

At OOB/Saco Adult Education, we have the potential to truly create a learning community; one in which teachers and students come together to share, converse, and benefit from each other's life experience. We appreciate your participation.

Adult Learners

- Have life experiences, which may be a rich source of information to share.
- Juggle a variety of roles in their daily lives including employee, spouse, and parent. They rarely have the luxury to pursue learning to the exclusion of other life responsibilities.
- Have real problems and make real decisions. They, therefore, have a need for real, usable information.
- May be your peer in age, experience or education, but view their “teacher” as the expert. They expect you to be in charge.
- Have a sense of pride and self-direction, which they want the opportunity to express in the classroom.
- While accomplished in other areas of their lives, may frequently experience low self-esteem in the classroom.
- Have a hard time taking risks. Therefore, they feel they have a lot, personally, at stake in a learning environment.
- May doubt their ability to learn and may even expect to fail. Therefore, they need opportunities to build on their success with positive reinforcement.

Adults learn best when

- They know what is expected of them and why. Make your objectives and goals clear.
- They are allowed to adjust to the learning environment.
- An informal atmosphere is maintained.
- Their questions can be answered without embarrassment.





WHAT ADULT LEARNERS EXPECT FROM YOU

Teaching would be infinitely easier if all students conformed to our own expectations; but they do not. Any group of learners, (children, college students, and adults) have their own general characteristics that define the classroom environment. Understanding these characteristics enables you to be better prepared to teach.

In one way, adults react to the learning environment just as they did in high school or college.

After years of conditioning to understand their own responsibilities as a student, adults perceive that a classroom has a prescribed set of features, and no matter what their motivation for learning or their desired outcome, they assume those features remain the same. Adults expect (for better or worse!) that:

- A classroom is filled with desks & chairs or a large table & chairs
- The teacher stands or sits at the front of the room
- The teacher speaks or lectures from notes
- The teacher is the expert
- The student has a notebook to record the important contents of the class

While these qualities may sound trivial, to dismiss them is a sure recipe for instructional disaster! As a teacher you must understand that this is the “set” on which your play is about to unfold. This does not mean that the scenery cannot be changed, but you must recognize the starting point of the players involved. Call this “educational baggage” that adults bring with them into the classroom.

You must meet your students’ minimum expectations of the learning environment or they will all too quickly decide that you have failed to uphold what they perceive to be your end of the bargain.

If you meet your students on their terms, you are more likely to have a positive teaching experience. This does not preclude the importance of your command of your material, but, if you accept these basic guidelines, you are that much closer to being a successful teacher.

The tips on the following page are meant to assist you in creating a positive, mutually rewarding experience.

FIFTEEN SURE FIRE TIPS TO CONDUCT A SUCCESSFUL CLASS

Arrive Early - Allow time to familiarize yourself with your surroundings and test equipment.

Start on time - This conveys that you take your time commitment seriously and the importance of your material warrants all of the allotted time.

Introduce yourself - Some students may have signed up for your class as long ago as six weeks. Remind them of who you are and why/how you are qualified to teach this class.

Do not apologize - Do not draw attention to what might pass unnoticed by students (e.g., this is your first time teaching; you have never used this textbook before). Do not “pass the buck” under the guise of apologizing (e.g., “Adult Ed forgot to copy my handouts,” “This room is too small for us.”) If there are issues- bring them immediately to the office staff - we want to help solve these problems.

Allow participants to introduce themselves - Even in a single session course, people want to connect. With up to 15 students, introductions should take about 10 minutes. (Alternative method: have pairs of students introduce themselves to each other, then to the group.) This allows you to assess why students are taking the course, what they know about the subject, and/or what they hope to get out of the class.

If not, survey them - If more than 15 people in your class, use a hand survey to accomplish the above.

Watch your body language/tone of voice - The classroom is your stage – use it! Move around, change the tone/pitch of your voice and speak loud enough for those farthest away to hear you. Avoid standing in one place, monotone speech, or speaking softly. If you do not have a voice that carries well, practice speaking at a volume more appropriate for public presentation.

State your goals - Adults appreciate structure! Even a single-session class should include a course outline, which states your general topic areas and what you hope to accomplish. This conveys that you have a plan, even if it gets modified along the way.

Break sessions into smaller units; plan a variety of instructional methods - No one can do anything for longer than 20 minutes without losing their concentration. Use a variety of instructional methods (e.g., lecture, discussion, small group exercises, hands on practice) to keep your presentation engaging.

Use an outline - Do not confuse “non-credit” with “non-serious”! Have a plan and follow it. Use an outline and notes to keep your presentation focused and forward moving.

Practice your presentation - If you practice what you intend to present, you can assess if you have too much or too little information for the time allotted. Make sure you cover the essentials but also prepare some secondary content in case the class moves along faster than you anticipated.

Use handouts - In addition to providing a place for students to write their own notes and questions during the course, handouts are an excellent reminder of what was taught. Including resources for additional information and further study adds another level of value to the handouts.

Review - If you teach a multi-session course, use the first few minutes of each class to review what you did in the previous class. This creates a better sense of continuity from one session to the next.

Give homework - This helps maintain continuity between class meetings and enables students to practice newly learned skills.

End on time - Your course is a “contract” with the students - stick to it. You do not enhance the value of the class by running late. They may conclude that you did not plan your time well.

WHAT MOTIVATES ADULTS TO LEARN?

Malcolm Knowles, considered the father of adult education, is credited with developing the theory of androgogy. Adults are pragmatic learners who have a strong need to apply what they know and be competent in that application. As a result, Knowles says, adults increase their sense of self-esteem.

The quality of your presentation is as important as your command of and comfort with the learning environment. But, HOW you present your material requires as much of your time and effort as WHAT you present. Effective teaching is more than simply the information or skills you have to share, but the means by which you do it. A good teacher develops a repertoire of instructional techniques that creates a motivating environment that enhances students' learning abilities.

In "Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn," educator and researcher Raymond Wlodkowski puts forth a simple formula to convey the elements necessary for a motivating learning experience.

Success = Volition (or choice) + Value + Enjoyment

Adults who CHOOSE to enter into a learning experience start out more motivated than those for whom it is a requirement (e.g., professional continuing education for licensure). OOB/Saco Adult Education students, who receive no credits for taking your class, enroll because they are personally motivated to do so.

Adult students may not like the learning experience, but at minimum, they must be convinced that there is VALUE or meaning before entering into the experience. Therefore, focusing on the benefits and outcomes of their participation in your class is of utmost importance.

And finally, adults cannot keep their motivational level high unless the learning experience is enjoyable. Think about how your course will be fun for students.

Quite naturally, if a class does not go well, many instructors will say it was because the students were not motivated. Wlodkowski views motivation differently. Here are some basic motivational assumptions that Wlodkowski believes define adult learning:

People are always motivated - If you experience resistance from students, it is usually not due to lack of motivation, but rather a problem they are experiencing with your instructional plan.

People are responsible for their own motivation - You cannot motivate students to learn. You can make the learning experience more stimulating and enjoyable by providing opportunities and incentives, but you cannot control another person's motivation.

If something has to be learned, it can be learned in a motivational manner - no one learns in exactly the same way. Every adult is triggered by different motivational buttons (e.g., demonstration, learning by doing, discussion, etc.). Your responsibility is to isolate the motivational button that works for each student.

Every instructional plan needs a motivational plan - In many cases, the unpredictable variables that impact learning are human: needs, emotions, impulses, attitudes, and cultural context. These variables are intrinsically tied to motivation as well. Your course outline and material may be perfectly stable and controllable. It may have a logical structure or sequence, but it cannot account for human variables.

Something as simple as the particular make-up of your class can wreak havoc on the best-prepared teacher if you are not able to adjust your preparation to the particular audience.

Every time you conduct a class it is a different course because the audience is new. Your instructional plan is a guide, which then enables you to integrate the experiences and expectations of that new class into your curriculum, not the other way around! Effective teachers combine their instructional and motivational plans.

ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE MOTIVATIONAL PLAN

Know your audience! Start by understanding your students' needs and pre-conceived attitudes about learning.

Plan to change your teaching methodology at different times throughout the class. After about 20 minutes, most adults start to lose their focus unless something new is introduced. Refer to suggested methodologies below.

Plan maximum opportunities to incorporate students' experiences in class. Use participatory exercises.

Break the learning activity into smaller pieces to reinforce what students are learning. Encourage group activities that provide opportunities for students to achieve a sense of competence.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS TO SUSTAIN ADULT MOTIVATION AND ACHIEVE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Conceived by Tracy Dunning
Educational Consultant
Denver, Colorado

Course Designed to Deliver Information	Courses Designed to Convey Values
Lecture Panel Reading material, books Programmed instruction Discussion Review and translation Writing essays Computer-based lessons Summaries Bibliographies Charts/graphs Audio/visual: slide, film, TV, video	Discussion Self-analysis and reflection Games Role-playing Case study Counseling and consultation Biographies Values clarification exercises Film Metaphor
Course Designed to Develop Behavioral Skills	Courses Designed to Enhance Creativity
Demonstrations Exercises Role modeling Games Observation Videotape Role-playing Case studies Experiments Trial and error	Demonstration Experimentation Critique Field trip Film Show or recital Metaphor



SEVEN STEPS TO BETTER TEACHING

By Florence Nelson

Florence Nelson is the author of “Yes You Can Teach!” and several other handbooks for teaching adults including: “How to Write a Lesson Plan for Adult Classes,” “How to Teach a Demonstration-Style Subject,” and “How to Use Seven Professional Teaching Techniques.”

Prepare

Before each session, study and practice your presentation. Make a checklist of the materials you will need to bring to class.

Pace

Separate your presentation into units within each session. Go so far, then do a demonstration, a recap, or review. Go to the next unit when you are satisfied your students have caught on. Avoid tangents.

Repeat

We all learn in different ways, so you must repeat new instructions of key ideas using a variety of techniques. Explaining a process, giving demonstrations, and showing a photograph are three different ways to repeat an idea.

Question

During a presentation, address questions to your class as a whole. Asking, “Do you feel the tension in the line?” alerts your students to the fact that there SHOULD be tension. It also varies your tone of voice and keeps your teaching interesting.

Humor

Be of good humor. Create an atmosphere that helps your class enjoy and look forward to each session.

Enthuse

Let your own enthusiasm for your craft shine through. If you are not enthusiastic, why should your students be?

Inspire

For the beginner, especially, mind/body coordination can be difficult to achieve. You must help by being positive and encouraging.