



# INSTRUCTOR HANDBOOK

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*The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas is subject to the University's rules and regulations.*

## Preface and Mission

We are delighted that you are volunteering to lead a class with OLLI at UNLV and hope this manual will serve as a useful resource.

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (OLLI at UNLV) began as the Extended Center for Lifelong Learning (EXCELL) in 1991. OLLI at UNLV remains dedicated to the proposition that learning is a lifelong process. We offer an exciting program of classes for intellectually active people who wish to pursue learning within an inquisitive community Monday through Friday during the fall and spring and Monday through Thursday in the summer.

*The mission of OLLI at UNLV is to challenge the mind and stimulate the spirits of retired and semi-retired adults by offering learning activities designed to enhance understanding of the world- its historic, cultural, and social aspects- utilizing a variety of non-credit academic learning formats.*

## Thank You

We are indebted to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Brandeis (BOLLI) as well as the Curriculum Committee of the OLLI at Furman University. We also thank the Institute for Retired Professionals at the New School University (formerly the New School for Social Research) which has done much of the pioneering research in this field. We also thank the member of OLLI at American University, who worked on the Leader Guide from which some of this material has been constructed.

## Table of Contents

<b>Overview.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Objectives.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Principles of Adult Learning.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Class Proposal Process.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Planning Your Class.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Syllabus.....	6
Class Title Tips from LERN.....	6
Biography.....	7
Planning & Organization Tips.....	7
<b>Presentation Pointers.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Classroom Management.....</b>	<b>9</b>
Strategies to Manage Possible Scenarios.....	9
Planning for Engaging Discussions.....	10
Managing Discussions.....	11
Guest Speakers .....	11
<b>Logistics .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Emergencies.....	11
Our OLLI-ness at UNLV.....	12
Parking.....	12
Attendance Policy and Procedure.....	12
Member Adds & Drops.....	13
Instructor Absences.....	13
Inclement Weather.....	13
Instructor Benefits & Resources.....	13
Evaluations & Measures of Success.....	14
<b>Contact Information.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Additional Resources.....</b>	<b>15</b>

### Overview

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (OLLI at UNLV) is a nationally recognized, volunteer-based learning community of retired or semi-retired adults. Our member instructors help their peers to continue a lifetime of learning by leading classes rich in content, shared interests and life experiences. You and your fellow instructors bring a lifetime of personal and professional experience and passion to your classrooms. Since 1991, OLLI has grown from 129 to nearly 2,000 members, and in 2006, joined the prestigious network of Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes.

### Objectives

As OLLI at UNLV continues to grow and evolve, our instructors remain one of our most critical resources. With more members, more locations, and more class choices for our members, we want to continue to provide the utmost levels of support for our volunteer instructors, and give them the tools they need to provide our members with the highest quality classroom experiences.

### Principles of Adult Learning

OLLI is committed to collaborative peer learning and active participation in which members and instructors work together to share and construct their knowledge in a classroom setting. Some principles of adult learning to guide you as a volunteer instructor with OLLI at UNLV include:

- ✓ Encourage the sharing and construction of knowledge.
- ✓ Respect and utilize differing beliefs, values, and opinions both in and out of the OLLI classroom.
- ✓ Recognize that all OLLI members bring a significant body of knowledge and experience to our lifelong learning community. Remember that you, the instructor, do not need to have all the answers.
- ✓ Focus on the strengths lifelong learners bring to the classroom, and try to bridge the gaps in their knowledge through collaborative methods.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for dialogue within smaller and larger group settings to allow the greatest level of participation.
- ✓ Build curiosity and trigger member interest by providing a brief review of the previous class, an overview at the beginning of each class, and some interesting points throughout to maintain engagement.
- ✓ Be aware of different learning styles and consider using auditory, visual, and participatory teaching methods.
- ✓ Consider inspiring class members by getting them involved emotionally – tap on memories and add real-life stories.

- ✓ Ask class members for feedback – it's motivating to know that your opinion contributes to the course.
- ✓ Many adults prefer teaching methods other than a formal lecture as they bring knowledge and experiences with them into the classroom.
- ✓ Stay positive and focused.

### Class Proposal Process

OLLI at UNLV draws instructors from within our membership and the Las Vegas community. Instructors are individuals with relevant expertise or a passion for a specific topic who wish to share their knowledge with members, and in turn, also learn in the process.

- ✓ An online proposal form is submitted via the OLLI website ([olli/unlv.edu /courses](http://olli.unlv.edu/courses)). All instructors, continuing and new, are asked to submit a proposal so we have all pertinent and up-to-date information.  
*Please note that planning for each academic semester happens far in advance, so proposals need to be submitted very early (see deadlines below).*
- ✓ Instructors are requested to provide specific information regarding their class using the online forms.
  - Instructor Information
  - Class Title and Description
  - Syllabus- final due date provided on form  
*Please upload syllabus using online form provided at [olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources](http://olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources).*
  - Location, Day, and Time Preferences  
*Please note we have high demand for specific days and times and work to rotate classes allowing all members the opportunity to experience a variety of classes each semester. Any instructor that does not provide three different days and times will be placed onto the grid after all other classes, space permitting.*
- ✓ An electronic copy of the proposal will be sent to the instructor following submission.  
*Please provide a working email address for the automated receipt. Additional emails will not be sent after the submission has been completed.*
- ✓ The Educational Programming Committee will meet to review the proposed classes, interview new instructors, and ensure there are no follow-up questions regarding your provided curriculum.
- ✓ The OLLI at UNLV Administrative Team will then develop the curriculum grid for the Paradise Campus and all satellite locations using a combination of attendance data, class popularity data, location capacity, and preference provided by instructors.

Proposal submission deadlines:

**Spring Semester (10 weeks) – October**

**Summer Semester (8 weeks) – February**

**Fall Semester (10 weeks) – May**

## Planning Your Class

### Syllabus

- ✓ All OLLI at UNLV classes are required to have a syllabus for members to have an outline for the upcoming semester.
- ✓ The due date for all syllabi will be provided in the class proposal form and additional reminders will be sent by the OLLI at UNLV Administrative Team. Syllabi should be submitted to OLLI at UNLV Administration using the online form that will be sent out prior to the submission deadline.
- ✓ A syllabus is a framework or a roadmap of what your class will cover each week throughout the semester.
- ✓ All class syllabi will be available during the fall and spring Open House as well as on the OLLI at UNLV website for member access.
- ✓ Syllabi should include
  - Class title
  - Instructor Name and Contact Information
  - Date and Time
  - Weekly topic, guest speaker name, or synopsis of potential discussions/activities
  - “Content subject to change”

### Class Title Tips from LERN

A good course title can mean the difference between a course that zooms off the charts and one that just doesn't live up to its potential. The title is your first chance to catch the reader's interest, so it is one of the most important components of your course description. Below is a list of some tips suggested by the Learning Education Resources Network (LERN). For more details and other tips from LERN on how to develop an engaging class title, please visit [olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources](http://olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources).

- ✓ Make the title interactive.
- ✓ Ask the reader a question?
- ✓ Use humor
- ✓ Keep it positive

### Biography

Your instructor biography in the catalog is an opportunity to give credibility to your course by sharing your expertise, experience, and approach to instruction. An OLLI biography should be brief and relevant, but also express your enthusiasm about your course topic. Instructors will use a single bio for all the courses they teach. Target length for a bio is 3-4 sentences or roughly 50-80 words. For more details and other tips, please visit [olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources](http://olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources).

### Planning & Organization Tips

- ✓ Consider summarizing the course description and syllabus during the first session of the class to confirm expectations. Inform the class in advance if you later decide to make changes.
- ✓ Consider distributing or emailing any reading material prior to the class session making it easier for members to participate in class activities or discussion.
- ✓ Make special arrangements for those members in your class who may not have email (e.g., assign class buddies or have a limited number of copies available).
- ✓ Be judicious in the amount of materials that you email or hand out to members.
- ✓ Begin each week with a summary of what was covered in the previous session.
- ✓ In preparing an agenda for each session, decide which key points you wish to cover. Consider putting the agenda up on the board (or use PowerPoint) to ensure everyone can stay focused on the topic and participate.
- ✓ Consider using bold or large fonts to emphasize key points on handouts and in your own talking points so you can glance at your notes without losing your focus on the class.
- ✓ If you plan to show a video clip/movie, look into enabling the closed captioning, if available. Members prefer this so that they can read the captions if they're having difficulty hearing.

### “Presentation Pointers”

- ✓ Introduce yourself at the beginning of the first session. Briefly state your name, a little about your background, how you became interested in your subject, etc. Consider giving class members your email address should they need to contact you.
- ✓ Give class members an opportunity to briefly introduce themselves in smaller classes. This could include name, prior occupation, and why they selected this course.

- ✓ Encourage everyone to wear name badges so you can call upon them by name during discussion.
- ✓ Begin and end on time.
- ✓ Treat each person with respect. There is a large knowledge base from the members within your classroom.
- ✓ Be animated and enthusiastic.
- ✓ Review regularly. At the start of class, briefly review the previous session.
- ✓ Avoid jargon. Make the complex simple, especially at the beginning of the semester.
- ✓ Pause to ask for questions. If some students are frowning or shaking their heads, say something like, "Some of you seem puzzled. What needs to be clarified?"
- ✓ Repeat questions so everyone has the opportunity to hear and comprehend.
- ✓ Don't ignore a member who has his or her hand up.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to ask other participants if they have answers to the questions.
- ✓ Listen carefully to members' questions or comments. Check whether you really understand by rephrasing the questions. Feel free to ask people to repeat themselves, or to clarify.
- ✓ Repetition may be useful for presenting complex matters. Relate complex subjects to common ideas or interests. Try to use fresh approaches to clarify the mundane, the obvious, or the conventional.
- ✓ Talk to the class. Try to avoid reading straight from notes, PowerPoint slides, or from assigned readings except for extremely brief excerpts.
- ✓ Allow spontaneity. You want to be organized and ready but maintain some flexibility however, it is okay if you didn't get everything done that you had planned if your class is engaged.
- ✓ Encourage interaction and involvement during the class, allowing others to share with you and the group. Try to learn more about members' backgrounds, particularly for courses in which members may have some expertise.
- ✓ Try to expand on comments and generalize if a group member tends to relate all issues to him/herself.
- ✓ Have extra material ready in case you finish early. It's always a good idea to have more material available than you can present in 90 minutes.

- ✓ Operation of A/V should be smooth and not take up class time. There are technology guides specific to each classroom available on the OLLI at UNLV website. Individual appointments are available at the beginning of the semester and can be scheduled in the Administrative Office (Bldg 500).
- ✓ Enjoy yourself!

## Classroom Management

Classes vary in size as our classrooms have a capacity from 15 to 149 students throughout our Paradise Campus and satellite locations. We encourage instructors to select the format and management their classroom how they feel it will work best with the type of material you wish to share and your style.

We suggest Instructors review the OLLI at UNLV rules of courtesy at the start of their class and emphasize they plan to follow them.

### **OLLI at UNLV rules of courtesy:**

- ✓ Instructors set the format for the class
  - ✓ Each person's opinion counts
- ✓ Everyone participates: No one
- ✓ It's OK to disagree but not to be disagreeable
  - ✓ Speak positively; Stay focused
  - ✓ Help begin and end on time

### Strategies to Manage Possible Scenarios

#### ***Scenario 1: One or two people are dominating the conversation/discussion.***

##### Potential Solutions:

- If necessary, set time limits for comments.
- Acknowledge the point the person has made and then say you need to move on:
  - "I'm sorry to interrupt you, however..."
  - "I'm going to have to interrupt and stop you here because others have thoughts to share/we seem to be straying too far from the topic at hand."
  - "Let's take some comments from people we haven't heard from yet."
- Jump in and ask, "How do the rest of you feel about what he/she is saying?"

#### ***Scenario 2: A participant appears to be antagonistic or hostile.***

##### Potential Solutions:

- If the person's attitude is towards you as the instructor, you might try to ignore it at first and move on.
- In any case, you can try to speak to the person after class. Explain what seems to be going on from your point of view and discuss moving through the remainder of the semester with civil discussion and respecting everyone's opinions.
- If civility and a solution does not seem possible, please speak to the OLLI at UNLV Administration for assistance.

#### ***Scenario 3: Several people with differing opinions are arguing about a hot topic.***

##### Potential Solutions:

- Acknowledge that this issue is controversial/difficult, but it's important to listen

and respect peers' opinions.

- You might also say, "Let's take a time out for a moment. This is sounded a bit heated and our ground rules require us to avoid being disagreeable. Let's move on here."
- If you choose to do so, you might act as a moderator. Just don't let your own biases show.
- An alternative is to take a 5 minute break and then regroup.

***Scenario 4: A class member is veering off on a tangent with their comment.***

- If necessary, set time limits for comments.
- Jump in and acknowledge what the person is saying, but say you need to get back on the topic.
- You might say, "Your story is very interesting but we need to get back to the subject at hand/move on."

***Scenario 5: Only a few people are participating in a discussion***

- Try to draw out quiet members without putting them "on the spot." You might say:
  - "Are there some ideas we might be missing in this discussion?"
  - "Is there anyone who hasn't spoken yet who would like to speak?"
  - "Let's take comments from people we haven't heard from yet."
  - To bring out quiet members, encourage interaction among the study group members, and vary the learning experience, it is sometimes useful to break the class into smaller groups of 4-5 and give them specific issues to discuss.

We encourage you as the leader of your class to try to handle any enduring difficulty through a private conversation with the member involved. If you encounter an especially difficult situation pertaining to a study group member, please contact the OLLI office.

### Planning for Engaging Discussions

- ✓ One way to promote good discussion and heighten interest is to structure part of the material around surprising, counterintuitive, or controversial issues.
- ✓ Almost any subject area can have a controversial aspect. For example: "Greenwich Village was the original suburban sprawl," or "Churchill's caution extended WWII by a year," or "A high minimum wage may reduce total income for the working poor."
- ✓ Try to find the most interesting issues that are relevant and which, of course, have a reasonable rationale on both sides. Then the controversy can be set up through readings or video or class presentations.
- ✓ It is best to introduce controversies that are not closed issues. That is, they should be questions that the Instructor does not know "the answer" to. The questions should be issues that well-informed people can disagree on.

### Managing Discussions

- ✓ A clear agenda for each discussion allows all members to participate fully.
- ✓ Acknowledge an individual's contribution (e.g., "That's an interesting idea"), and then follow up with a question that helps the individual share how that idea evolved from the topic.
- ✓ Discourage side conversations by saying, "Please, only one conversation at a time."
- ✓ Summarize the discussion occasionally, particularly as you move from one point to another.
- ✓ You might write down the names of those who raised their hands and call on them in order.
- ✓ Say, "You have 60 seconds left," if a participant is taking too long to make a point.
- ✓ End with a brief summary of what has been covered.

### Guest Speakers

OLLI at UNLV encourages Instructors to recruit guest speakers for their class to expand upon the regularly scheduled curriculum. This allows our members the opportunity to hear from and interact with experts or community members in an engaging discussion or activity. We request notification of guest speakers in advance to provide the information in our bi-weekly e-newsletter to the membership, schedule photos with our marketing department, information administration if necessary, and provide a gift of appreciation upon request. All speakers must have a guest parking permit which can be obtained through the information Desk at Building 100 on the day of the special presentation.

## Logistics

### A. Emergencies

- ✓ Fire Drill
  - Ensure you or your Classroom Host has your Attendance Sheet
  - Have your students collect their valuables
  - Calmly exit the building and guide your students to emergency evacuation point (designated by the star)
  - Wait at the emergency evacuation point for further instruction from UNLV
- ✓ Staff or First Responders Medical or other Member related Issue
  - Illness or Injury at Satellite Location
  - Immediately notify on-site staff
  - Call OLLI at UNLV Administrative Team at 702-774-6554

- ✓ Active Shooter
  - Remain Calm
  - Classroom doors will automatically lock- NO ONE IS ALLOWED IN OR OUT
  - Turn off all the classroom lights and technology
  - Have students remain out of sight
  - Wait for an all clear from University Staff or First Responders

### B. Our OLLI-ness at UNLV

- ✓ OLLI members address each other by their first names in order to reinforce an atmosphere of peer learning.
- ✓ Name Badges must be worn at all times to identify membership. We request instructors wear their badges when on campus and in the classroom to assist us in enforcing this policy.
- ✓ Classes on Paradise Campus are 1 hour and 45 minutes. Satellite location classes are generally 2 hours. We suggest incorporating a break at your discretion.
- ✓ Please note food and beverages are allowed in the classrooms on the Paradise Campus as long as they are cleaned up when leaving. Please refer to the specific satellite location for their food and beverage guidelines while using their facility.

### C. Parking

The parking in the Paradise Campus lot is enforced by UNLV Parking Services. All instructors, members, and guests are required to have a permit to park in 'Student' spaces. Guests and guest speakers are always encouraged to join an OLLI at UNLV. All guests should sign in at the Information Desk in building 100 to obtain a Guest Name Badge and one-day OLLI Parking Permit.

Please note all 'Staff' spaces are designated for university faculty and staff who pay for their permits.

All satellite locations have designated parking open to OLLI at UNLV members. Please note, some spaces may be reserved for residents are specific facilities and we ask that all instructors and visiting members respect the location parking policies.

### D. Attendance Policy & Procedure

OLLI at UNLV tracks attendance for reporting, emergencies, and maintaining the most up-to-date records for member communication.

Attendance will be tracked using a weekly sign-in form that will be tracked on a semester-long, electronic roster that will continuously updated as needed by the Administrative Office.

*Classroom Hosts-* OLLI has a volunteer position titled Classroom Host to assist the instructor with attendance, announcements, handouts, microphone distribution, etc.

## OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE: INSTRUCTOR MANUAL

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These hosts are requested for each class using the roster of those signed-up through the Volunteerism & Community Outreach Committee. A list of the volunteers will be distributed to the Instructors as they are established.

### E. Member Adds & Drops

OLLI at UNLV members pay a membership fee to join our program and partake in all of the provided benefits of being a member of our lifelong learning community. While our membership fee allows members to select as many classes as they would like to attend, not all members are able to select every class they would like at the beginning of the semester due to location capacity.

**Adds-** Members are welcome to add their name to any class roster, as long as there is an available seat within the university's fire code that is posted in each classroom.

**Drops-** Members will be dropped from a class after two consecutive unexcused absences to allow another member the opportunity to attend the class. Members may also drop a class by notifying the OLLI Administrative Team or making a note on the roster.

### F. Instructor Absences

Please notify the OLLI at UNLV office at 702-774-6554 or [olliatunlv@unlv.edu](mailto:olliatunlv@unlv.edu) if you will be absent or late. You should also email your class if there is not enough time for the OLLI office to contact them. Please let the office know if you will be missing a session, even if you have already notified your class.

***While we understand life is not always predictable, we request you inform us as far in advance as possible so we can ensure your class is notified and the proper information is distributed.***

### G. Inclement Weather

OLLI follows UNLV's weather policy. If UNLV has a delayed opening or is closed, OLLI is also delayed or closed for the day and all classes are cancelled. Please note these classes will not be rescheduled.

### H. Instructor Benefits & Resources

OLLI at UNLV Instructors receive a membership fee waiver for each semester they are volunteering with our program.

All Instructors have access to the OLLI library, computer lab, online access to class rosters and student communications, copies of class related handouts, class material orders, and general instructional supplies as provided by the program. All electronic forms and resources are available to Instructors at [olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources](http://olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources).

- ✓ *AceWare Access-* Instructors have access to their class roster using the AceWare website (<https://register.edoutreach.unlv.edu/Instructor.awp>) which is available through the online Instructor Resources. Using this web portal, Instructors are able to directly communicate with their class and have access to the most up-to-date rosters.
- ✓ *Computer Lab-* The OLLI at UNLV computer lab is available for Instructors to develop class PowerPoints, preview media, and research additional material.

- ✓ *Copies*- Instructors are welcome to make copies of any class related material for handouts, classroom peer editing, artwork, etc.  
All copy requests must be submitted using the online “Copy Request Form” or paper form at least one week in advance. Instructors are welcome to make their own copies using the Xerox machine. If you make your own copies, please fill out the paper copy request form and check the “Copies made by instructor” box so we can track our material use for reporting and inventory tracking.  
***Please note, all copies must be made at OLLI at UNLV. Instructors will not be reimbursed for any at home or offsite copies, paper, ink, etc. Further, OLLI instructors are not authorized to use other copiers than the one located in the 500 building at Paradise Campus.***  
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- ✓ *Instructor Materials*- OLLI at UNLV Instructors are eligible to order supplies for their class as needed. These materials can include instructor books, DVDs, CDs, or other media, supplies for in class projects, and supplies for in class demonstrations.  
All material requests should be submitted through the online “Material Request Form.” Please provide specific material descriptions and url’s when available.  
***Please note, all instructional supplies are submitted for administrative approval. We ask that all instructors to be conscious of their material requests.***
- ✓ *Library*- Instructors have access to check out media from the OLLI at UNLV library for the full semester of their class or the semester before to prepare their curriculum.

### I. Evaluations-

OLLI at UNLV utilizes an online form for members to provide feedback on their classes each semester. At mid-semester, we email out the evaluation link for all registered members to provide anonymous feedback regarding their classroom experience. The OLLI at UNLV Computer Lab on the Paradise Campus is available to members Monday through Friday 8am-3:30pm if they would like assistance learning to use the electronic system.

Members without an email address will be called by the Administration to provide them an opportunity to fill out the form with a member of our team over the phone or by coming into the office.

#### Measures of Success within the OLLI at UNLV Classroom

- ✓ **Attendance**- OLLI at UNLV utilize attendance data as a measure of success within the classroom in order to evaluate if members are enjoying taking the class and participating with their fellow members. While all OLLI classes experience natural attrition, if attendance decreases significantly throughout the semester, it could be an indicator that some internal and external factors are playing a major role. Instructors should be attentive and use this as a measure for classroom improvement.

- ✓ **Feedback-** OLLI at UNLV utilize feedback as a measure of success within the classroom in order to assess if members are learning and constructing knowledge in the classrooms from instructors and their fellow members. OLLI members are highly encouraged to provide feedback through our evaluation process as well as orally within the classroom. It is considered as a sign of class member engagement and active participation. It is important for instructors to listen to members' feedback so that they can improve their classes or provide activities based on the specific group with which they are working.
- ✓ **Class Member Engagement-** Some members come to OLLI at UNLV to actively learn, share and construct their knowledge in the classrooms. On the other hand, there are some members that may come to passively learn through observation and limited engagement in the classrooms. With the knowledge that each member attends OLLI for different reasons, we encourage the sharing and construction of knowledge through varied types of activities and discussions in small or large groups depending on the classroom group size and the focus of your class.

### Contacts

If you have a question that relates to course content, please e-mail the OLLI at UNLV Administrative Team.

#### Program Manager for Educational Programming

Morgan Osburn  
702-895-0453  
[Morgan.Osburn@unlv.edu](mailto:Morgan.Osburn@unlv.edu)

#### Program Manager for Learning Community

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### Additional Resources

For access to all Instructor Resources, please visit [olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources](http://olli.unlv.edu/publications-resources).

For general inquiries or assistance, please email [olliatunlv@unlv.edu](mailto:olliatunlv@unlv.edu).

UNLV does not discriminate in its employment practices or in its educational programs or activities, including admissions, on the basis of sex/gender pursuant to Title IX, or on the basis of any other legally protected category as is set forth in NSHE Handbook Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 13. Reports of discriminatory misconduct, questions regarding Title IX, and/or concerns about noncompliance with Title IX or any other anti-discrimination laws or policies should be directed to UNLV's Title IX Coordinator Michelle Sposito. The Title IX Coordinator can be reached through the online reporting form at [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofNevadaLasVegas&layout\\_id=18](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofNevadaLasVegas&layout_id=18), by email at [titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu), by phone at (702) 895-4055, by mail at 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451062, Las Vegas, NV, 89154-1062, or in person at Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH), Room 555.