

Encore Learning Instructor Guide Spring 2017

Encore Learning's academic courses form the foundation of our success and we thank you for your generous participation in our program. This guide should answer most of your questions but we are always ready to clarify any questions or issues you may encounter during the next few months.

Encore Learning has three part-time paid staff:

- Marjorie Varner, Executive Director
- Molly Geary, Administrator
- Beth Dowd, Communications and Data Management Specialist

This staff is supported by a large and enthusiastic volunteer base. All our volunteers, including our Board of Directors, are members of Encore Learning. Approximately 70% of our members register for our courses each semester.

Your Benefits

Encore Learning can never thank you enough for the time and effort you spend developing and delivering your course to our members. However, there are benefits extended to our instructors which we hope you will take advantage of during your instruction time with us.

- **As a current instructor, you receive an annual membership gratis.** Your free membership begins January 1, 2017 and ends December 31, 2017.
- **Your instructor benefits include registration for any course(s) this spring and next fall with your fees waived.**
- **You will have two students who will serve as your class aide.** The aides will take attendance, assist in providing audiovisual support and handle course evaluation distribution and collection.
- **You receive free parking while teaching your course and while attending courses for which you are registered.**

General Information

Course Preview

On the Saturday before course registration begins each semester, Encore Learning hosts its instructors and members in one of our best attended events of the year: the course preview. Instructors are invited to give a brief (five minutes or less) presentation on the material they intend to cover in their upcoming course. The audience usually numbers 120-150 at any given time over the 2 ½ hour session. Refreshments are available and most take the opening, closing and break time to socialize.

This semester the event will be held at Mason's Founders Hall on their Arlington campus on February 4 from 9am to noon. Free parking is provided. You will receive an email with complete details with a request for your preferred speaking time in late August.

Class aides

Each course is assigned two class aides. Aides are Encore Learning volunteers recruited from course registrants and so are not identified until a week or two after February 6. *Your class aides will contact you to exchange information (cell phone, best email address, etc.) at least one week prior to your first class session.*

The class aides are our principal point-of-contact with you and should handle all support requests themselves or forward the request to the appropriate Encore Learning contact. Aides provide parking information to you, take attendance, contact students with emergency schedule changes and assist in audiovisual setup. They also assist the Academic Programs Committee in distributing and collecting the course evaluations; any questions you may have regarding the evaluations should be directed to your Academic Programs course coordinator (see **Course Evaluations** below).

Supplemental Reading Material

Encore Learning uses *electronic distribution of all supplemental reading materials* versus paper handouts. It is more environmentally friendly, less costly to produce and more efficiently distributed. We encourage you to carefully consider the amount of material provided: sometimes less material is better absorbed than copious details which overwhelm. (Note to self!) Also, consider the use of a document camera within your classroom for projection from rare or unavailable books, etc. The students do not need a copy of everything presented in class.

All supplemental material must go directly to staff for posting to Encore Learning's Member Account Manager, linked on our website. Each enrolled student will have access for viewing or printing the material for their class. *Please provide all supplemental material in electronic form two weeks in advance of your course start date* to info@EncoreLearning.net. *Label each handout with your course code, a short document title and a 'read by' date.*

If your material is not available in electronic format, please contact the office **immediately**.

If you have access to free photocopying service, please feel free to bring handouts yourself. We do not reimburse for copy/print services done outside our office.

Audio-Visual (A/V) Equipment Requirements

Your assigned classroom contains the A/V equipment you requested. Please notify us immediately of any changes. We may or may not be able to accommodate additional equipment. Your class aides receive training in basic audiovisual support. Please notify staff if you are unfamiliar with any equipment you have requested.

Visitors

Please note that Encore Learning enforces a [formal visitor policy](#). If you plan to bring in additional lecturers not noted in your course proposal form, please contact the office **immediately**.

Parking

Parking is dependent upon the classroom site. At George Mason University's Arlington campus, parking is available in the underground garage at Founders Hall; you will receive validations from your class aide. At other sites, parking is free and adjacent to the building. See the end of this document for more parking details.

Online Course Information and Registration

Encore Learning publishes its catalog and provides information on class schedules on the Encore Learning website www.EncoreLearning.net. Courses are filled on a first-come, first-served basis and an automated wait list is now provided. You may monitor how many open seats are available by periodically checking our interactive [Quick Pick List](#).

Instructor registrations are free of charge but do not have priority over member registrations. **THIS IS NEW:** We highly recommend that you follow our instructions to [set up your password on our new system in January](#) then register yourself *online* when registration begins on Monday, February 6 at 10am. This provides your best chance at getting into courses which may fill within minutes of the "opening bell". For step-by-step instructions and FAQs, see pages 24-27 in your catalog or [check here](#).

If you prefer to have staff enter your request, please email your requests to the [Administrator](#) as soon as you have determined which course(s) you would like to attend. Non-online requests are not recommended for courses which may fill quickly as the staff process for entering course registrations is much slower in the new system. You increase your odds of getting into a course by registering yourself online. You will not be charged for the courses in which you enroll.

Canceling Courses

Occasionally Encore Learning must cancel a course due to under-enrollment or the instructor's major personal difficulty, such as acute illness. If the minimum enrollment for the course is not met at least one week prior to the course start date, the course will be cancelled. Instructors can monitor how many open seats are available by periodically checking our interactive [Quick Pick List](#). If cancellation is imminent, the Executive Director will consult the instructor.

Make-up Classes

In the case of a missed session, please tell your aides if you would like to extend the course to make up for missed sessions. If you would like to pursue this option, the aides must contact the office **immediately** to determine if a class extension can be accommodated by the building site.

Reading Assignments

There are **no required** or **assigned** reading assignments. Any **recommended** or **independent** reading assignments provided in the course proposal are listed in the catalog course description. Please note that recommended books are not ordered by Encore Learning. Encore Learning is not in a position to guarantee the availability of texts suggested by the instructor. Most instructors recommend books available in local bookstores, public libraries or online. Please consider the cost of the books recommended: we have had feedback from our students that books which cost more than the course fee are beyond their budget.

Suggestions for Teaching Our Students

Depending upon the nature of your course, it can be helpful to students if you supply summary notes or an outline of the course, and a glossary of names or uncommon terms and maps. Extensive handouts are not required, as noted in the Supplemental Reading Material section above. In planning lectures, try to reserve some class time for questions and for a short restroom break midway.

Consider the interests of the entire class when encountering an “attention hog” during your lecture or any Q&A period; contact staff regarding repeat offenders who are oblivious to normal class management tactics. We have found that handing out index cards for questions makes a separate Q&A period more manageable; it is your prerogative to prioritize and cull the list of questions.

Also, please complete your class in the time allotted as your students may need to leave promptly to attend another course or to retrieve their cars at parking meters, or another class may be scheduled in the room at the conclusion of your class period.

Course Evaluations

Course evaluations are an invaluable means for Encore Learning to determine member satisfaction with their courses. The aides distribute the evaluation forms to the class participants who return them either to the aide or directly to Encore Learning; instructors are not involved with the collection. The Academic Programs Committee analyzes the forms in detail and then passes facsimiles on to the instructors after the conclusion of the semester.

Building Management

Encore Learning is a guest in each of the buildings in which it holds classes. Encore Learning has made every effort to schedule classes and their locations to avoid noise interference from other users of the building. If an issue arises, ask your aide to contact the appropriate person.

Discrimination and Academic Freedom

Encore Learning does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion or national origin. As an educational organization, Encore Learning subscribes to the American Association of University Professors principle of academic freedom: All views should be respected, regardless of their conformance with generally or currently accepted views. Sensitivity to our diverse population, including those of the LGBT community, should be considered during course lectures and discussions.

Building Closures and Delays

Encore Learning classes may be cancelled or delayed due to weather depending upon the decisions made by our hosting sites. Please access local media outlets for updates, [visit our website](#) or call our office at [\(703\) 228-2144](#) when in doubt. Always contact your aides if an emergency prevents you from attending your appointed class session so that they can notify the students immediately.

Contacting Staff

The main Encore Learning office is in the Syphax Education Center, 2110 Washington Boulevard, Arlington VA 22204. Our main office is staffed Monday - Friday, 10am to 2pm. Our main phone is [\(703\) 228-2144](tel:7032282144). The email address info@EncoreLearning.net will reach all staff members. We recommend that any meetings with staff be arranged in advance due to the office access protocol at the Syphax Education Center.

Parking

Encore Learning validates or reimburses parking for instructors, enrolled instructors and class aides performing their duties at locations requiring paid parking. *No parking validation or reimbursement is provided for other class participants.* The course catalog contains a list of class locations with maps and public transportation options.

George Mason University - Arlington campus

3351 Fairfax Drive, Arlington VA 22201 (See the map on page 35 of the course catalog.)

Encore Learning provides 3-hour parking validations for Mason's Founders Hall garage to instructors teaching and taking courses at GMU. [The entrance to the garage is an alley off North Kirkwood Road](#). Please discuss handover of validations with your class aides.

Note: these validations are very sensitive to magnetic and electronic disturbances; please keep away from keys, phones, and, of course, magnets. Please return any validation tickets that you do not use so that we can revalidate them for next semester. Lost validations will not be replaced – please keep them safe.

Arlington Mill Community Center (AMCC)

909 S. Dinwiddie Street, Arlington, VA 22204 (See the map on page 33 of the course catalog.)

Free parking is available below the building. [Garage is the second parking entrance behind the building on S. Arlington Mill Drive](#). Plentiful parking is available below the entrance level, on G2 level. Retain your parking ticket for free exit.

Fairlington Community Center

3308 South Stafford Street, Arlington VA 22206 (See the map on page 34 of the course catalog.)

There is a free parking lot adjacent to the center. There is street parking on the neighboring streets but be aware of the restricted zone directly across the street from the center.

Syphax Education Center (Sequoia Building)

2110 Washington Boulevard, Arlington VA 22204 (See the map on page 36 of the course catalog.)

Note to GPS users: Some mapsites require another address, including 100 Walter Reed Drive.

Free parking available in adjacent garage. Enter the garage off Walter Reed Drive ([road which runs between the two office buildings](#)) and park on the B1 or B2 level. Parking on all other levels is reserved for county staff only. To enter the building, take the garage elevator to the Lobby level. Exit the elevator and enter the doors to your left. You will be on the first floor of the Syphax Education Center. Your classroom will be on this level. Proceed to the clear glass doors on your right marked "Learning Suite." For directions to a specific classroom, walk past the cafe and ask at the Arlington Public Schools Adult Education desk.