

Civics for Adults

Workshops to Enhance Civic Knowledge and Inspire Political Engagement

An Occupy Portland – “Our School” Workshop Series

Participatory democracy is an illusion if people aren't involved. Understanding how government works, and meaningful civic engagement is necessary, especially in these times of powerful anti-democratic interests. We can't just give up. If anything, we have to work harder. And, be smarter. And, work together. That's what we'll do in these workshops. These workshops are free.

Facilitator: Donna L Cohen, M.Ed. M.L.I.S. dcohen@dcoheninfo.com

Tuesday nights, 6:30-8:30, June 19, 2012 – July 31, 2012 [except for July 3]

Concordia University, George R. White Library [NE 29th and NE Rosa Parks Way] Community Room [Ground floor, east end of the library, 29th St side.]

Come to any or all – space holds 20; regulars and people who arrive early will get preference

Every class will include: Topical discussions; analysis of a news article or similar; resources; Some classes will include: Guest speaker(s); debates [informal]; games; research [including surveys]; primary source materials [historical and current]; designing a civic action; designing a media item. *Guest speaker topics may be on different days depending on the guest's schedule.*

June 19 - Workshop One Overview, Civic Literacy, Critical Thinking

Civic Literacy. 27% of citizens in a Newsweek poll couldn't name the Vice-President. How is our nation's civic literacy?

Civic Dialog. How to dialog

Information Literacy and Critical Thinking. How does one evaluate information for authenticity, accuracy and usefulness? How do we encourage critical thinking? How to evaluate poll data. Taught by an information professional.

Access to Government Information, and Quality Government Information Resources. How to find information, and strategies for keeping up to date.

June 26 - Workshop Two Government Basics / Citizen Rights

Quick chronology of the essential founding dates/events.

Looking at foundational documents.

What were some of the main disagreements at the founding? Did they get resolved?

Bills of Rights. There are actually many.

Possible guest speaker – legislator or local gov official.

July 3 – No workshop

July 10 - Workshop Three Voting / Budgets and Taxes

Voting. Voting rights – history and current state of affairs. Voting processes. Elected vs appointed government officials.

*Government revenue and spending. Budgets and Taxes. **Guest** from Tax Fairness Oregon.*

July 17 - Workshop Four Influencing Governments / Social Change

Influence of money on government

How to Influence Government – from within

How to Influence Government – from without

Guest: Senator Chip Shields

July 24 - Workshop Five 2012 Election

Tracking election and campaign finance information

Candidate and campaign information; how to find, how to analyze

July 31 - Workshop Six Now What?

Take some action around an issue? Which? How?

Continue education efforts, be part of it?