

# **Academy for Lifelong Learning**

## **Wednesday Forums Survey**

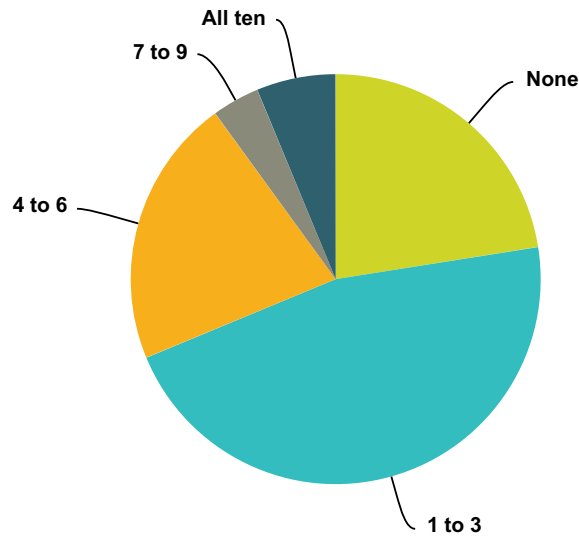
### **SUMMARY OF RESULTS**

#### **Background**

- The initiative grew out of Talks Committee's concern about low attendance at some recent forums.
- A short online questionnaire was developed to establish members' perception of the program and elicit their ideas for how it could be improved.
- The invitation to participate in the survey went out by email to all members on March 19, 2016.
- The survey closed on March 24.
- Eighty members completed the survey, a 23% participation rate.
- Talks Committee discussed the survey results at a meeting on March 30.

### Q1 How many Forums did you attend during the 2015-2016 academic year"

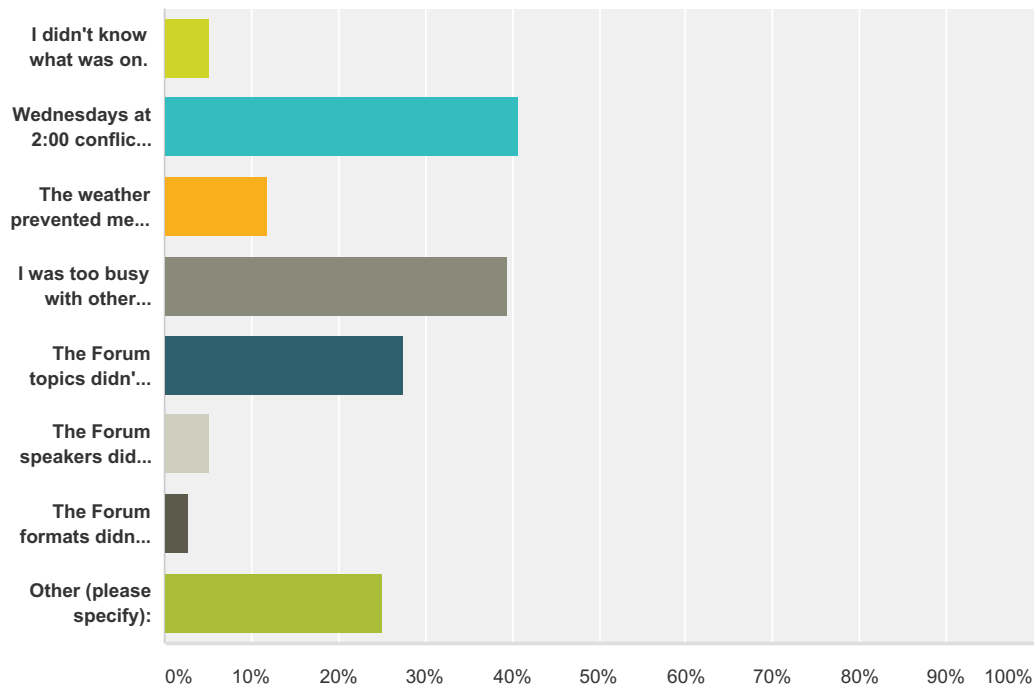
Answered: 80 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
None	23%	18
1 to 3	46%	37
4 to 6	21%	17
7 to 9	4%	3
All ten	6%	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>80</b>

## Q2 What factors limited your attendance at the Forums? [check all that apply]

Answered: 76 Skipped: 4



Answer Choices	Responses
I didn't know what was on.	5% 4
Wednesdays at 2:00 conflicted with my schedule.	41% 31
The weather prevented me from getting to Knox.	12% 9
I was too busy with other things at the Academy and otherwise.	39% 30
The Forum topics didn't interest me.	28% 21
The Forum speakers didn't interest me.	5% 4
The Forum formats didn't interest me.	3% 2
Other (please specify):	25% 19
<b>Total Respondents: 76</b>	

**FORUMS SURVEY**  
**Topics Ranked by Order of Preference**  
***All Respondents***

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Rating</b>
International scene	60
Social issues	52
Politics	48
History	47
Literature	45
Music	43
Environment	38
Health	38
Theatre	37
Film	36
Economy	36
Visual arts	33
Science	28
Law	21
Religions	17

Note: The rating shown is the total of 4 and 5 ratings given to each topic on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = low preference and 5 = high preference.

## FORUMS SURVEY

### Topics Ranked by Order of Preference

*Non-Attendees (0 Forums) - 16 Responses*

Topic	Rating
International scene	13
Social issues	11
Film	10
Literature	10
History	8
Music	8
Politics	8
Visual arts	7
Environment	6
Theatre	6
Economy	6
Health	5
Law	4
Religions	3
Science	0

Note: The rating shown is the total of 4 and 5 ratings given to each topic on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = low preference and 5 = high preference.

## FORUMS SURVEY

### Topics Ranked by Order of Preference

#### *Occasional Attenders (1-3 Forums) - 37 Responses*

Topic	Rating
International scene	28
Social issues	27
History	25
Politics	25
Environment	19
Literature	19
Theatre	19
Economy	19
Science	18
Film	17
Health	17
Music	17
Visual arts	14
Law	10
Religions	9

Note: The rating shown is the total of 4 and 5 ratings given to each topic on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = low preference and 5 = high preference.

## FORUMS SURVEY

### Topics Ranked by Order of Preference

#### *Regular Attenders (4-10 Forums) - 22 Responses*

Topic	Rating
International scene	19
Music	18
Health	16
Literature	16
Politics	15
History	14
Social issues	14
Environment	13
Visual arts	12
Theatre	12
Economy	11
Science	10
Film	9
Law	7
Religions	5

Note: The rating shown is the total of 4 and 5 ratings given to each topic on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = low preference and 5 = high preference.

## FORUMS SURVEY

### Topics Ranked by Order of Preference

#### *Newer Members (1-3 Years) - 23 Responses*

Topic	Rating
Social issues	18
History	17
International scene	17
Politics	14
Literature	13
Film	12
Economy	11
Music	10
Health	9
Science	9
Environment	8
Theatre	8
Visual arts	6
Law	6
Religions	6

Note: The rating shown is the total of 4 and 5 ratings given to each topic on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = low preference and 5 = high preference.



## FORUMS SURVEY

### Topics Ranked by Order of Preference

#### *Medium-Term Members (4-7 Years - 17 Responses)*

Topic	Rating
International scene	10
Politics	10
Theatre	9
History	8
Music	8
Social issues	8
Film	7
Health	7
Literature	7
Science	7
Economy	7
Environment	5
Visual arts	5
Law	5
Religions	3

Note: The rating shown is the total of 4 and 5 ratings given to each topic on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = low preference and 5 = high preference.

## FORUMS SURVEY

### Topics Ranked by Order of Preference

*Long-Term Members (7+ Years - 33 Responses)*

Topic	Rating
International scene	31
Literature	24
Music	24
Politics	24
Social issues	24
Environment	23
History	22
Health	21
Visual arts	21
Theatre	19
Economy	17
Film	15
Science	12
Law	10
Religions	7

Note: The rating shown is the total of 4 and 5 ratings given to each topic on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = low preference and 5 = high preference.

# FORUMS SURVEY

## Formats Listed by Order of Preference

### *All Respondents*

<b>Format</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Outside expert speaker/Q&A/discussion*	69
"Presenting Our Presenters"*	41
Guided gallery/museum tour	41
Video lecture followed by discussion	33
Member teams debating a hot issue*	32
Members' town hall meeting	22
Members' art and crafts show	21
Training on how to do presentations	16
"Virtual" forum via the Internet	10

Note: The rating shown is the total of 4 and 5 ratings given to each format on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = low preference and 5 = high preference.

\*Existing format

## Q6 What suggestions do you have for improving the Academy's Wednesday Forums?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 47

#	Responses	Date
1	Those I have been able to attend have been very good.	3/24/2016 4:06 PM
2	The ones I attended were excellent and the topics were ranging. Perhaps a longer Q&A session, since there never seems to be sufficient time to include everyone?	3/23/2016 7:16 PM
3	Either move the Forums to another day or start later than 2 PM.	3/23/2016 6:13 PM
4	No suggestions at this time; there is lots of variety; we have lots of articulate members who ask questions.	3/21/2016 11:10 PM
5	More use of the expertise of our members rather than outsiders	3/21/2016 3:36 PM
6	I think the Forums are generally excellent and the Presenting our Presenters are usually good but I was very disappointed in the one on Graham Greene. On the other hand the one on The Silk Road was excellent.	3/21/2016 2:21 PM
7	Maybe each person who is a regular to the Forums, try to bring at least one other person with them. Kind of a buddy scheme. It wouldn't matter if it were someone they were friendly with in class or a friend from outside. I think the problem is to snag someone in the first place.	3/21/2016 2:17 PM
8	Thank you for your hard work in organizing the forums – I know it's not easy to find compelling speakers on topics of wide interest. I come whenever I can, which is most of the time, and always find something of interest.	3/21/2016 11:20 AM
9	If you find attendance low, you might have fewer forums.	3/21/2016 10:08 AM
10	Would it be possible to provide coffee/tea that people could pay for?	3/21/2016 9:15 AM
11	I think the forums are fine the way they are...it's just the time.I hope to do fewer workshops as I get older and find presentations more burdensome...then I look forward to forums	3/20/2016 6:55 PM
12	The posters are very effective - I always knew what was coming, but wasn't usually willing to come downtown to attend. The forums are nice if I am already there, but not usually so fascinating as to tempt me on a non-academy day	3/20/2016 6:13 PM
13	More Video with presenters and leaders	3/20/2016 4:53 PM
14	Somehow encourage people who are ostensibly asking questions, to actually ask questions, rather than telling personal anecdotal stories. Your moderators should be tougher on this type of thing. They should break in after a couple of sentences and ask "And what is your question for our speaker?"	3/20/2016 4:48 PM
15	Perhaps recognizing which forums were most popular and concentrating on the kind of issues they presented.	3/20/2016 4:34 PM
16	Use the material obtained in this survey	3/20/2016 2:03 PM
17	Having the forums at 10:00 a.m. rather than 2:00 p.m. would allow for socialization over a lunch afterwards - as Spring Talks do and as Academy Walks do.	3/20/2016 1:14 PM
18	Some years ago when the Forum was held on Thursdays, I asked at a Board Meeting (as a result of comments made to me) why could the Forum day not be changed from time to time to allow members who could not attend on the designated Forum day have a chance to attend if another day was chosen. Thus the Forums began to take place on Wednesdays. Perhaps it is time to find out whether again a different day might suit more members.	3/20/2016 12:11 PM
19	The forums I've attended have been very good. Change in the day might bring people who are not available on Wed. People who have spent 4 hrs at the Academy prior to the Forum are often unwilling or unable to stay longer. More interaction & time to talk with other members might be welcome.	3/20/2016 12:07 PM
20	I like the way they are now, but new ideas are worth considering.	3/20/2016 11:58 AM
21	Sorry - I have none - I think this is a great start though.	3/20/2016 10:28 AM
22	If possible, to offer one or two on different weekdays ... although I do understand that having them on the same weekday is easy for planning and remembering. I will keep trying.	3/20/2016 6:45 AM
23	No ideas. My problem is with the time. I work Wednesdays.	3/20/2016 6:10 AM

24	Abolish the Wednesday forums but keep the Spring Forums where there are bigger audiences. The Wednesday forum times could then be used for scheduled sign-up technical training sessions and/or extensions of some workshops which could benefit from extra time - eg.: the Art Workshop with Susan Schwartz & Sharon Harris.	3/20/2016 1:36 AM
25	The Key is to get nteresting speakers on interesting topics.	3/19/2016 9:57 PM
26	I know very little of the Forum to have suggestions for improvement .	3/19/2016 8:39 PM
27	Better promotion. Perhaps a brochure like the Spring Talks. Serve coffee and tea.	3/19/2016 4:47 PM
28	Have you ever thought of asking Jasmine Herlt speak - she is the head of the Canadian arm of Human Rights International - very interesting speaker with lots of current information on current hot issues around the world.	3/19/2016 3:41 PM
29	Moving to a day other than Wednesday. Since the doc film class runs from 10 to 2 on Wed. many of the people in that class are Academied out by the time of the Forum.	3/19/2016 3:19 PM
30	It might be better if they were not preceded by a popular four hour workshop	3/19/2016 2:44 PM
31	The Forums this year and previous years have all been worthwhile in my view. I particularly enjoyed outside speakers that spoke of current issues whether it be politics, environment , education etc.	3/19/2016 2:36 PM
32	Off topic- please remove the equipment from room 1 at the breaks - noon or 1:00 instead of disrupting Film A every time during presentations. This is annoying and inconsiderate.	3/19/2016 1:30 PM
33	Topics in the news, or related, such as Margrit's presentation on the muzzling of scientists. Not a year after they are of interest.	3/19/2016 1:26 PM