

2009 ICL FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During April 2009 ICL conducted four Focus Groups, with a total of 34 participants. The Focus Groups were moderated by Bob Masterson, (President), and Sue Harty (Vice-President).

All the participants were open and candid in their comments, and many good suggestions were offered. We greatly appreciate their participation and thoughtfulness.

Overwhelmingly, the participants agreed that the ICL offers a good product and is well worth their time and money. The things most appreciated are the people of ICL, the learning opportunities provided, and the Roosevelt University facilities. But, to be expected, the difficulty in getting into desired study groups is a great concern.

DISCUSSION OF FOCUS GROUP TOPICS

■ What do you like most about ICL?

The biggest response received was that the ICL taps into the natural curiosity of its members and helps them to expand their knowledge. Many members felt that they learned more about themselves. The next biggest responses regarded the friendliness of the members and the diversity of the members and their philosophies.

In the area of Study Groups, participants most appreciated the diversity of subjects offered, the number of classes offered and their availability on different days of the week. Seminars and the Lecture series are very popular. Both large and small groups are favored and many feel the Teaching Company DVD's are of good quality.

Many specific study groups have been appreciated: Rem Stokes classes, History study groups, Supreme Court study group, Plato's Place, Movies, and others.

The Coordinators are also greatly appreciated. Specifically, the participants like the quality of the Coordinators and their ability to answer questions. All the different presentation styles are enjoyed.

■ What do you like least about ICL?

As mentioned earlier, what bothers people the most are the closed study groups and waiting lists. Some feel that classes are too large. Some people feel more time is needed for discussions in study groups, and of course, problems with the equipment are a concern.

A major concern is that at study groups we are not consistently using name cards for participants. This hampers the ability of members in getting to know as many people as they can. We should start using them again in all study groups.

There is a difference of opinion on the size of the ICL. Some feel we are too large, others feel we should not limit the size of the membership.

A few facilities problems exist. The café closing at 2:00 PM does not allow for refreshments at afternoon break and the coffee machines are always broken. A major issue is not enough handicapped parking spaces near Door #3.

■ What would you like to see the ICL start doing?

In the area of study groups, many people would like to see popular study groups repeated because they missed them the first time around. Also, for full study groups, they should be offered multiple times during the semester. Some said we should expand the availability of study group days to the weekends. Evening social activities should be considered.

More field trips are desired. Some should be offered in conjunction with study group topics, and perhaps there should be another foreign trip.

ICL should consider more “extra curricular activities” such as book clubs, a choir, a drama group, and walking groups.

■ What do you think of Alternate Locations?

Study groups on the Roosevelt University campus are a high priority for many people. Many are willing to go offsite for events such as the Lecture Series, but parking at alternative locations is important.

■ How can we get more peoples to participate in the ICL?

This needs to be emphasized at New Member Orientations. “Mentor” lists need to be developed. Small assignments need to be identified for people to get involved in.

CONCLUSION

Once again, we appreciate the thoughtfulness of all the attendees. If anyone else has any comments on the material mentioned, or if they have any thing new to add, please contact Bob Masterson or Sue Harty. All comments are kept confidential.

Bob Masterson, President
Sue Harty Vice-President
June 8, 2009