

Moderators and Recorders Academy for Western Oklahoma Adults Being Held in Weatherford

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Informed decisions are better made by informed citizens, and the Oklahoma Partnership for Public Deliberation is helping with that effort by hosting an Oklahoma Moderators and Recorders Academy on April 7-8 in Weatherford.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University is one of the co-sponsors of the academy that is designed to teach the skills of convening, moderating and recording deliberative forums.

The academy, sponsored by the Oklahoma Partnership for Public Deliberation, is only one of three that will be held in Oklahoma and is limited to 30 people. The other academies will be in Stillwater and Ada.

SWOSU President John Hays said this is a great opportunity for western Oklahomans to learn to conduct deliberative forums. There is a \$100 registration fee, which includes instruction materials, two lunches and all breaks. Registration is available online at www.OKdeliberates.org or by calling (405) 744-6489.

The academy, which will be held at the Western Technology Center in Weatherford, is for adults and older youth seeking a better way to address important issues in their community and workplace, concerned citizens seeking an alternative to adversarial debate in group meetings, community leaders facing conflict surrounding local issues and public officials who want to promote meaningful dialogue between citizens and government.

"The need for public forums is important to raise the knowledge level regarding many important issues," Hays said.

Hays said one such issue or example is the future needs for water in western Oklahoma.

The OPPD is a partnership of 16 statewide and regional organizations interested in fostering citizen involvement in public decision making through public deliberation. Universities and colleges involved in the OPPD include SWOSU, Oklahoma State University, University of Oklahoma, Redlands Community College and Langston University.