

Dear 5th grade parents:

We know from past experience that class size is important to OWL classes because of the group exercises involving interactions within the group and because of intimate discussions that occur there. The classes are covenant groups, like the adult covenant groups, and should have guidelines that support their unique goals. A key element of a covenant group is size.

For several years, the pool of possible 5th and 8th OWL participants has been, in many instances, much larger than it should be for effective functioning. Therefore, although still above the ideal, we have decided to limit the maximum class size next year to 15 students for each time period - 9:15 and 11:15.

We've had meetings with 5th and 8th grade parents. Based on their ideas and ones from the OWL Committee and the DRE, we've developed a process for determining the 15 students for each service. Although imperfect, here is what we have decided.

*-- During the registration period between now and COB Wednesday, May 28th, please indicate your interest in your child participating in OWL next year, your preferred service-- 9:15 or 11:15--and whether you have the flexibility to attend the other service. (Fifth grade OWL is the first 9 weeks of RE in the fall.) Please email the DRE at [dre@uucava.org](mailto:dre@uucava.org).*

*~ For those of you who have already sent an e-mail to Erica, you are covered. (If you haven't indicated your preferred service and flexibility, you should do so.) The e-mail reflects your interest and commitment to bring your child during that period.*

*-- If there are 15 or less registered for **each** class then there is no issue, except that, if others want to sign up later, the 15 size limit will be maintained. If there are more than 15 registered for a service, than the following priorities will be followed:*

- a. Youth whose parents have taught OWL within the last 3 years*
- b. Youth whose parents who have taught RE within the last year or are currently signed up to teach next year.*
- c. Youth who attended the 7th grade class this year 70% of the time (according to the attendance records).*

*The remaining slots in each class will be filled by a random drawing with gender balance given priority.*

*Additionally, a youth who is not chosen for a particular service according to these guidelines may choose to attend the other service if that service has slots remaining.*

*In the unlikely event there was an extremely large number in one class period, as a very last resort we would consider creating a second class at that time. This is a last resort because it requires finding 4 more qualified volunteers to facilitate the class (thank you to those who volunteered to support this idea). We've also found over several years of having two classes at one service that the communication required for the coordination*

*between the 3 resulting OWL classes (and as many as 12 facilitators) causes all kinds of organizing difficulties.*

As Solomon said, we understand this is an imperfect solution, but it is an attempt to balance the respective interests in a manner that is fair. We feel based on feedback over the years that a preventative solution creates more fairness than an arbitrary one.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Sincerely,

OWL Committee & Erica Shadowsong, DRE