

OLLI@AU

HEARING MATTERS

Syllabus- Spring 2021

8 sessions: March 2 - April 20, 2021

Tuesdays 11:45am -1:15pm

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“The effects of hearing loss on communications and, as a consequence, social interactions and functional abilities have serious public health implications for adults of all ages.” *National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (2016).*

The goal of this class is to educate us, as consumers, about hearing to enhance quality of life. We will share experiences, lessons learned, and current information about hearing health; loss; evaluation (audiogram); devices (hearing aids, cochlear implants); assistive technologies (general and hearing specific); large area assistive listening systems; emerging technologies (hearables, PSAPS, OTC); communications strategies; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); and advocacy. In these Covid times, we will explore impact of masks and social distancing

Session 1: Day-to-Day Communications Challenges

- Welcome and introduction
- Zoom ground rules to ensure all hear one another
- Review syllabus, session topics

- Format: Presentation with Q&A; Email resource links
- My journey: Volunteer with Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and Network of Consumer Hearing Assistive Technology Trainers (NCHATT)
- Review hearing loss data (45% of 60 years+; 68% of 70 years+)
- Overview Covid impact: Masks, Social Distancing
- Members introductions, including key course expectations
- Do you think you have a hearing loss?
- For next session, identify your most challenging situations, given your and/or your communication partner's hearing loss
- Q&A

Session 2: Apply Communications Strategies

- Discuss most challenging individual situations
- Explore situational strategies and tools used and/or considered
- Identify key skills to enhance hearing and understanding
- Case study: Restaurant
- Case study: Meeting Room
- How to communicate with Covid: masks, social distancing tips
- Q&A

Session 3: How to Assess Hearing

- Introduce guest speaker: Larry Medwetsky, Ph.D. Gallaudet University, Chair, Graduate Programs. HLAA professional advisor, audiology
- Understand audiogram as basis for hearing assessment and device recommendations (hearing aid, cochlear implant, etc)
- Q&A

Session 4: Hearing Assistive Devices

- Review the latest information in this dynamically changing space
- History of Devices: Ear trumpet to analog to digital to bluetooth
- Cochlear implants
- Hearables
- PSAPs
- OTC aids
- Examples and samples of various high tech and low tech aids
- Q&A

Session 5: HLAA and Cochlear Implant

- Introduce guest speaker, Russell Mishekoff, president of HLAA-DC chapter and cochlear implant user
- Understand the mission of HLAA as voice of those with hearing loss and as an informed, collegial resource
- Learn first-hand about hearing loss journey leading to cochlear implant and that process
- Q&A

Session 6: Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and Accessibility

- Hearing loss as “invisible disability”
- Recognize ADA and your accessibility rights
- Learn about range of public venue accessibility resources
 - Induction loop; t-coils (OLLI at AU; DC public libraries – Tenley)
 - Infrared (IR) (Ken Cen)
 - Frequency Modulation (FM) (National Cathedral; National Presbyterian Church)
 - Movie theater (closed captions; open captions)
 - CART (Communication access real-time translations)
 - Automatic speech recognition (ASR)
- Q&A

Session 7: Hearing Accessible Technology

- Telecommunications overview and demos
- Amplification: Pocket Talker
- Voice to Text: CapTel (landline); InnoCaptions (mobile); Google Live Transcribe (Android only).
- Apps overview and demos (general to hearing specific)
- Safety and Alerting Devices (wakeup; doorbell; phone; fire)
- Other innovations
- Q&A

Session 8: You and Your Hearing Matters

- Check-in and discussion of stated expectations
- Share curated resources for info, support, and self-education
- Share key learnings: favorite strategies; tech; next steps
- Update: DC Law to establish Office on Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing (ODDBHH) targeted FY22
- Q&A
- Wrapup
- Charge to ADVOCATE!
- If you can't hear/understand something, say something!
- Help those with hearing loss to enhance their quality of life – and that of others!

Note: None of the products or services discussed are endorsed by OLLI, N-CHATT, HLAA, nor me. The purpose of any specific references or demos is to provide an opportunity to know about resources, experience a few among many choices, and develop criteria for individual selection and use.

