

What is the difference between Deafness and Hearing Loss?

Deafness relates to the inability of an individual to communicate using the sense of hearing. A **hearing loss** can be any degree from mild, moderate, to profound. Individuals with hearing loss may use hearing aids, rely on lip reading, or require the use of a qualified Sign Language Interpreter.

About 20% of Americans, approximately 48 million people, report some degree of hearing loss.

www.hearingloss.org

Best Practices for Instruction

- Preferential seating at the student's discretion.
- Provide Closed Captioning on **all media** containing audio
- Look at the student when speaking and do not over enunciate.
- Establish a Note taker during class lectures.
- Testing accommodations could be; extended time and access to Word for spell check and sentence structuring software.
- Make use of visual aids to enhance communication.
- Use Accessible Technology such as: sound amplification such as FM systems, live captioning (CART services), classroom sound fields.
- Flash the lights in a classroom or lightly touch the person's shoulder to get their attention.
- Pause speech when student is asked to write; students cannot watch the Interpreter and write at the same time.
- Be aware of lighting; a dark room prohibits a student from seeing the Interpreter.

Using an Interpreter or Captionist:

- Interpreter and Lecturer should be in clear view of student and/or Captionist.
- Lecturers should speak clearly and at a normal rate.
- Add the Interpreter/Captionist to the D2L system, include them in email announcements, and provide handouts to help the individual prepare for classroom instruction.
- **Interpreters are not classroom aides and are there to provide communication access only.**

Classroom Tips to Encourage Inclusiveness

Classroom discussion can be very challenging for a student with hearing loss but also for students with other disabilities as well. Keep the following tips in mind when communicating in your classroom.

- **Face the class** when speaking. Refrain from talking with your back turned or looking down at the computer.
- **Speak** clearly and **write** legibly.
- **Pause** when asking a question. Allow the student to have time to comprehend, process, and respond to a question or comment.
- **Repeat** questions or comments that students have spoken.
- **Manage discussion** in the classroom. Students should practice turn-taking so that the Interpreter/Captionist and the deaf student can follow the conversation.