

project 1

“We need to think about our hearing health just like we think about our overall health... Hearing loss is one of those invisible problems—until you have it, you don’t even think about it. Once you have it, it impacts everything.

...People need to start viewing cumulative hearing loss the same way they think about an equally passive but very real health concern like sun damage.

...We used to put on suntan oil and go as dark as we could, but you look at parents and schools and daycares and it’s now part of the routine to put sunscreen on a child.”

-Bill Hodgetts, Associate Professor, Communication Sciences & Disorders
from “Pop! goes the hearing, balloon study suggests” by Bev Betkowski

Sound. Hearing. Loss.

How does sound impact your relationships, mental wellness, hobbies or career? There are links between hearing loss, cognitive decline and dementia. A shift from invisibility to visibility is imperative for current and future generations to build awareness regarding hearing health.

Can we design hearing products that provide more meaning to the wearer, services that change the perception of hearing health, systems to educate before problems arise or experiences that help us appreciate the significance of hearing and the impact on our lives?

Working in groups of three, your team will research opportunities and envision interventions that address a specific context under the umbrella of hearing.

Groups will develop prototypes/mockups that effectively communicate the need for design intervention and may focus on (but are not limited to):

- **Perception** (hearing aids are seen as devices related to disability. Glasses once held this distinction. How can hearing aids change?)

- **Health Education** (designing appropriate systems to build awareness and prevention. Why do people disregard their hearing health until it becomes a problem?)
- **Behavioural change** (shifting attitudes in regards to hearing health, and the role hearing professionals can play in your overall health. How has dentistry effectively communicated their value to an individual's overall health?)
- **UXD** (improve the user experience of existing products/services/systems, or design a new experience to change perception or provide education. What are examples of positive experiences related to health?)

Research and opportunity identification must be considerate of the gamut of people involved such as individuals, families, communities, healthcare professionals and industry. Each of these players are connected, and will present their own forms of considerations and constraints. Most issues, particularly related to health, are complex. The complexity of these connections will impact the individuals you are designing for and the context that they experience. Be aware that every change you suggest has a potential impact on multiple stakeholders and can create new issues that did not previously exist.

Objectives.

- Learn how to identify potential opportunities.
- Plan a design research project.
- Incorporate research methods to inform and inspire design interventions.
- Organize complex problems with multiple users, contexts and limitations.
- Distill research and interventions into persuasive presentations and reports.
- Develop project management skills.
- Experience the dynamics of group work.

Deliverables.

- Final Presentation - 15 minutes (+15 minutes discussion)
- Report
- Prototypes (2D or 3D - included in report and presentation)

Final Presentation (15 minutes). Must Include:

- The focus of your research
- A thoroughly researched discussion of the opportunity for design
- Discuss your primary and secondary research
- Ideation related to these areas of opportunity
- A concept supported by a prototype/appropriate visualization
- Discussion of how you validated your concept
- Bibliography/Sources

Report:

Elements of the report should build upon the elements from the presentation.

They can include but are not limited to:

- thorough examination of the overall product/service/system/experience
- implementation of research methods and changes in direction
- explaining the rationale behind the use of these methods
- ideation related to research methods that shows a range of ideas
- thorough, written and visual progression of your final design proposal

Late assignments/presentations will result in a failing grade.

Timeline

May 08 Mon - Intro course. Discuss topic. Content expert Q&A.
May 09 Tue - Intro to framework. Design Sprint.
May 10 Wed - Design Sprint continued. Form Groups.
May 11 Thu - Group Sprints. Formulate research question.
May 12 Fri - Group crit. Pizza.

May 15 Mon - How to interview. Work period (research).
May 16 Tue - Work period (ideation). Elevator pitches.
May 17 Wed - Work period (ideation).
May 18 Thu - Work period (ideation/prototyping).
May 19 Fri - Group crit. Potluck.

May 22 Mon - Victoria Day. No Classes.
May 23 Tue - Work period (prototyping/validation). Consults.
May 24 Wed - Work period (validation). Consults.
May 25 Thu - Project 1 Final Presentation. Report/Proc docs due.
May 26 Fri - Consults.

TBD - relevant site visits and meetings/lectures from content experts.

Grading.

50% Report
50% Final Presentation

Grading Considerations.

25% Research
25% Feasibility
25% Innovation
25% Communication