



# Rehabilitation of the Blind O&M Program

By Dr. John W. McAllister

# Brief O&M History

- The O&M program was started on the campus of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 1975 by Dr. Bill Jacobson.
- In 2002 Dr. Jacobson propelled the field forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by being the first to offer a Masters degree and Certificate in O&M online.

# New O&M Course

- The University of Arkansas at Little Rock strives to continue to be a leader in the field of Orientation and Mobility by addressing blindness and Orientation and Mobility on a Global scale.
- Therefore Dr. John W. McAllister UALR is introducing two new aspects to the current Orientation and Mobility curriculum.
- The first is a new course that addresses the underserved population of Infants from *Birth to four years old* and *Older Adults*.

# New O&M Course Text Books

- This Course Recently Passed the Curriculum Committee at the University and is a Permanent Elective Course RHBL 7326.
- I use 3 different text for this course: Hall Lueck, A., Chen, D., Kekelis, L., S., (2016) Developmental Guidelines for Infants with Visual Impairments: A Guidebook for Early Intervention, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. APH Press: KY.
- Wright, T., (2010) Experiential Learning: Activities for Concept Development. APH Press: KY.

# New O&M Course Text Books

- For the Older Adult section of the course I use : Griffin-Shirley, N., & Bozeman, L., Eds. (2016). *O&M for Independent Living: Strategies for Teaching Orientation and Mobility*, AFB Press: New York.
- Currently I am working to integrate videos of O&M specialist working with infants teaching concept development. These Videos will be provided by the Birth to 3 year old program at the Arkansas School for the Blind and visually impaired.

# The Future of O&M: Global Internship

- In 2018 the Rehabilitation of the Blind Orientation and Mobility program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock will usher the field of Orientation and Mobility and blindness into a new era by being the first program in the history of the field of Orientation and Mobility to offer a study abroad track in the curriculum.
- The study abroad portion is for the students who will have completed RHBL 7317 Introduction to the Methods of Orientation and Mobility, RHBL 7390 Supervised Practice (student teaching) and RHBL 7395 Advanced Methods of Orientation and Mobility.

# The Future of O&M: Global Internship:

- I am working through the Study abroad office on campus
- The teaching hours will also count towards the student's 350 internship hours.
- This Global internship will last for a 3 week period and will be supervised by myself and and Adjunct.
- Titling it a Global Internship will also make it able to be paid for by financial aid.

# The Future of O&M: Global Internship

- Currently, the study abroad program will focus on building a relationship with 4 countries: Havana Cuba, Guadalajara Mexico, Nigeria Africa and Ecuador.
- These Cities and Countries were chosen because they have schools for the blind or Deaf-blind and they could benefit from our students and staffs expertise.
- We are also interested in learning their countries culture to be able to better serve their blind and visually Impaired population.

# Funding: Global Internship

- Currently I am working with CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchange to get funds that would help to offset the cost and assist students who participate in the Global Internship.
- I also have private donors who are interested in making donations to the university to permanently assist with the cost of the global internship for faculty and students.

- Since its inception UALR has been a leader in the field of Orientation and Mobility and will continue that tradition with the introduction of the study abroad track.
- Here at UALR we strive to continue to graduate well prepared and well-rounded Orientation and Mobility instructors.

# Contact Information/Questions

Dr. John W. McAllister, Assistant Professor/ Program Coordinator  
University of Arkansas Little Rock

[Jwmcallister@ualr.edu](mailto:Jwmcallister@ualr.edu)

2801 S. University

Little Rock AR, 72204

Office: 501-569-8506