

A Case for Institution-Specific UDL Research

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Today



Who We Are



Who We Are

Darla Benton Kearney

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- Mohawk College, Hamilton

Leslie Marshall

- Associate Dean
- Centre for Teaching & Learning
- Mohawk College, Hamilton

All of you...

Who We Are | Mohawk's Context

Very diverse learner population

- High accommodation needs
- Large international student population
- Indigenous education initiatives

Blended learning institution

- D2L branded as eLearn

UDL is a strategic priority for Mohawk College

- However, we lacked a data-informed strategic direction for implementation and tools to measure implementation.

What We Did



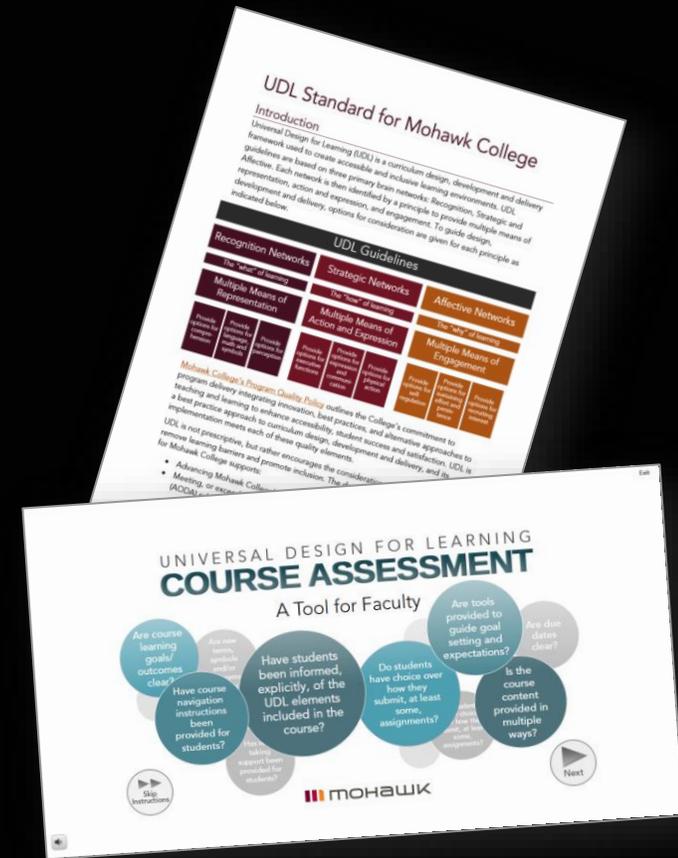
What We Did | Overview

Universal design for learning for technology-enabled post-secondary courses at Mohawk College research project

- eCampusOntario Grant - \$100000
- Completed March 2018
- Provided data to support our strategic direction for UDL implementation

Project deliverables included:

- UDL Standard for Mohawk College
- UDL Course Assessment



What We Did | Process

The research project included:

Literature review

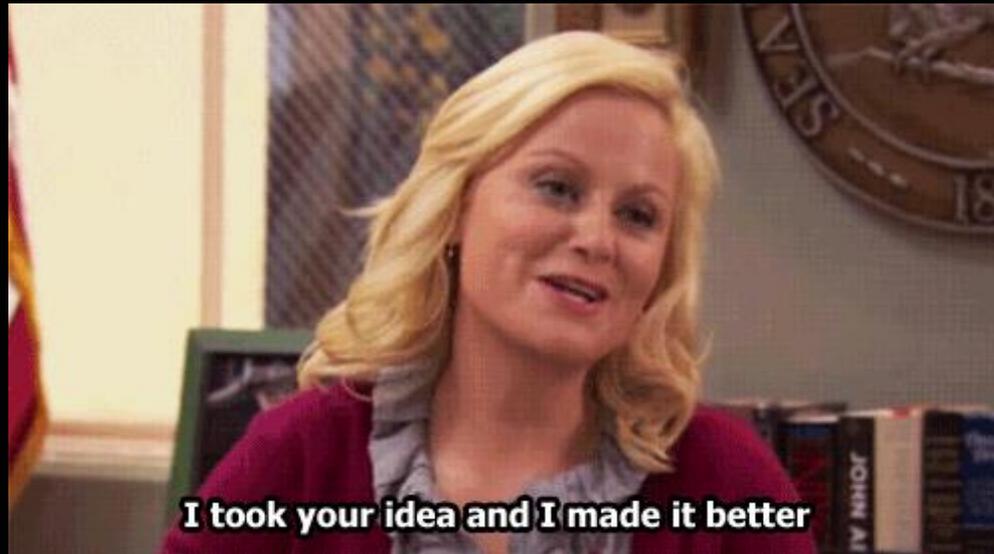
Pre- and post- surveys for students

Pre- and post- surveys for faculty

Audit of eLearn

Audit of disability-related accommodations

Why We Did It



Why We Did It | Issues

As Mohawk College started UDL implementation issues became apparent:

- We did not have a measurable UDL standard for our context.
- Faculty had no way to evaluate their use of UDL in their technology-enabled courses.
- Research was needed to target UDL implementation efforts.

We could not find current research that directly applied to our needs.

Why We Did It | Needs

We needed:

- To understand the priorities of our learners and faculty
- A data-informed strategic direction for further UDL implementation
- A clear implementation goal for Mohawk College to strive for
- Direction regarding resource allotment
- To ensure faculty had autonomy to employ UDL as they deemed appropriate in their course(s)
- A measurement tool for faculty based on their implementation of UDL

What Worked...What Didn't



What Worked

Upon completion of the project we gained:

- Validity of:
 - UDL in higher education
 - Our implementation priorities and process
 - Developed resources and tools
- Access to information
 - Accommodation statistics
 - eLearn audit
- Determined priorities that meet the needs of Mohawk's context

What Worked

We also got:

- Lasting resources
 - Faculty champions
 - Project deliverables and UDL initiatives
 - Specific to accommodation needs
 - Technology investments
- Future plan
 - Mohawk College's CTL now has a strategic plan for UDL implementation and development for the next 1-2 years and 3-5 years
 - We have a baseline for research replication

What Worked | UDL Standard

The UDL Standard is meant to:

- Promote the advancement of Mohawk College's commitment to accessibility and inclusion in all learning environments
- Provide consideration options to support the design, development, and delivery of our educational opportunities
- Give faculty flexibility regarding implementation

The application of UDL is not prescriptive and neither is the intention of the UDL Standard.



What Worked | UDL Course Assessment

In order to determine if the UDL Standard has been met a measurement tool for faculty was developed.

The UDL Course Assessment is:

- Meant to provide implementation ideas and resources
- A way for faculty to measure their UDL implementation



What Didn't

Barriers

- Obtaining a significant sample
- Timing
 - Project started mid-winter
 - Work stoppage
- Getting data
- Navigating a hierarchical system

Solutions

- Partnering
 - Faculty
 - CTL
 - Student Services
 - Institutional Research
- Administrative support
- Operational Support

Why You Should



Why You Should

Why you should embark on this UDL research journey:

- UDL is highly contextual and so is its implementation
 - Current resources focus on general implementation and technology applications vary
 - Implementing UDL is a massive undertaking, it needs to be right
- Canadian higher education needs more data
 - Much of the current research is:
 - An extrapolation of K-12, not specific to post-secondary education
 - Is focused on American legislation and education system
 - We will all benefit from your data and best practices
- The benefits outweigh the effort and time involved
- **You have help!**

Why You Should | Tips

1. Set clear goals and concise deliverables.
2. Find your supports and champions before you start (or very early on).
3. Plan/start your Research Ethics Board (REB) application early.
 - When working with semesters, a late REB application can have a significant impact on data.
4. It does not have to be all or nothing. With minimal time and/or funding you can:
 - Do a review of common accommodations
 - Audit LMS capabilities
 - Informally survey faculty at professional development offerings or departmental meetings

Questions

What else would you like to know?

What else can we tell you to convince you to take this research journey?



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