Universal Design for Learning 101: What it is and why you should care

Fall 2019

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Introduction

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Universal Design for Learning = UDL
Learning Outcomes

Goals

- Discuss the importance of UDL in higher education.
- Describe the fundamental elements of UDL.
- Explore UDL implementation and resources.
What UDL Is (and Isn’t)
What UDL Is and Isn’t

**UDL Is**
- A best practice approach to curriculum design, development, and delivery
- Intentional and proactive
- A guide for more authentic assessment
- About options driven by students and faculty
- A dynamic process
- About creating expert learners

**UDL Isn’t**
- In addition to your design, development, and delivery
- Prescriptive
- A checklist
- One size fits all
- About ‘spoon feeding’
- AODA, legislated or about “compliance”
**Affective Networks:**
The **Why** of Learning

**Engagement**
For purposeful, motivated learners, stimulate interest and motivation for learning.

**Recognition Networks:**
The **What** of Learning

**Representation**
For resourceful, knowledgeable learners, present information and content in different ways.

**Strategic Networks:**
The **How** of Learning

**Action & Expression**
For strategic, goal-directed learners, differentiate the ways that students can express what they know.
### UDL Guidelines

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Affective Networks</th>
<th>Recognition Networks</th>
<th>Strategic Networks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The “why” of learning</td>
<td>The “what” of learning</td>
<td>The “how” of learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple Means of Engagement</td>
<td>Multiple Means of Representation</td>
<td>Multiple Means of Action and Expression</td>
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<td>Provide options for recruiting interest</td>
<td>Provide options for perception</td>
<td>Provide options for physical action</td>
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<td>Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence</td>
<td>Provide options for language and symbols</td>
<td>Provide options for expression and communication</td>
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<td>Provide options for self regulation</td>
<td>Provide options for comprehension</td>
<td>Provide options for executive functions</td>
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What UDL is | Examples

**Multiple Means of Engagement**
- Allow choice of assignment topics (or from a list of topics).
- Provide note taking support.
- Include a variety of assessment methods.
- Offer opportunities for reflection.

**Multiple Means of Representation**
- Include a legend, terms, symbols or acronyms.
- Interactive learning activities.
- Use multimedia resources to deliver content.
- Link new information to previously learned content.

**Multiple Means of Action and Expression**
- Develop a clear learning plan and follow it.
- Provide submission options.
- Include a variety of communication options.
- The option to work in pairs, in groups and/or individually.
Why You Should Care
Typically, UDL implementers find:

• A reduction in the need, and time required, for individual accommodation arrangements, for both faculty and students.
• The proactive design supports a more diverse student population.
• A greater opportunity for learners to more fully demonstrate knowledge.
• Creates more self-aware, knowledgeable learners.
• More accurate assessments.
Why I care about UDL in higher education:

- UDL elements set a tone for the course.
- I have more engaged learners.
- We start a dialogue that lasts for the semester.
- I get higher quality assessments to grade.
- I feel empowered.
- I am not just teaching them course content, I am teaching them how to learn.
What Now
Find the pain!

As you start on your UDL implementation journey, don’t be hypothetical.

- Choose an issue that is happening in your learning environment, currently.
- Review the elements you are able to control and determine barriers.
- Apply UDL to determine which options you can provide to resolve the issue.
Determine what you can do:

• Immediately with little effort
  • For example creating a list of topics for an assignment, making a legend, including additional multimedia options, etc.

• In the near future
  • For example varying assessment methods, tightening learning outcomes/goals, finding additional resources for units, etc.

• When you redevelop or create a new lesson/module/class
  • For example designing a course website with interactive learning activities, creating assessments that include a range of submission options, developing experiential learning opportunities within the community, etc.
Resources

Today offered a general overview of UDL.

For more UDL information you can connect with me, Darla Benton Kearney:

- darla.benton@mohawkcollege.ca
- 905-575-1212 extension 3688

Or check out these websites:

- UDL on Campus
- Centre for Applied Special Technology (CAST)
- UDL Center
- Mohawk College’s UDL webpages
Resources

Or these videos:

• CAST UDL Introduction
  • by CAST

• UDL: Principles and Practice
  • by the National Center on Universal Design for Learning

• The Myth of Average TEDxTalk
  • by Todd Rose

Or these Twitter feeds:

• @UDL_OnCampus
• @CAST_UDL
• @UDLIRN
• @UDL_Universe
• @UDL_Center
Resources

Or these books:

• Universal Design for Learning: Theory and Practice
  • Meyer, Rose, and Gordon
• UDL Navigators in Higher Education: A Field Guide
  • Black and Moore
• Universal Design in Higher Education – 2nd Ed.
  • Burgstahler
• Universal Design for Learning in the Classroom
  • Hall, Meyer, and Rose
References


