

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): Engaging Diverse Learners

UDL: a framework to make learning accessible for all types of learners through multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement.

Unpacking the UDL Framework to Provide Multiple Means of:

1. **Engagement: Why** do you as an instructor need to engage students by giving them choices and responding to their needs and wants?

Student Surveys & Assessments via Qualtrics, Canvas, & Google Forms

- **Interest Surveys:** Pre-Course
- **Feedback Surveys:** Post-Course Session, Mid-Semester, Post-Semester
- **Non-Traditional Forms of Assessment:** Student Exhibition, Website, Digital Portfolio

2. **Representation: What** course content are you as an instructor representing through multimodal learning?

VARK Learning Styles

- **Visual:** Look at Photos, Videos, Art
- **Auditory:** Listen to Audio Podcasts
- **Reading/Writing:** Read/Write Stories, Articles, Blogs
- **Kinesthetic:** Move for a Stretch Break

1 Topic through Multiple Means of Representation

- **Infographic:** Visualize a Concept
- **Video:** Introduce Authors/Instructors & their Book/Online Course Modules
- **Book:** Read Selected Chapters

3. **Action & Expression: How** can your students express themselves and share their learning in different ways?

Provide Choices of Formats with a Writing Prompt

- **Google Slides:** Presentations
- **Animoto:** Video Slideshows of Photos
- **Camtasia:** Video Recording & Editing
- **Adobe Spark:** Digital Storyboards
- **Soundtrap:** Podcasts & Recordings of Sound & Music
- **Canvas:** Discussion Boards
- **Blogger:** Online Written Reflection & Journaling Posts
- **Padlet:** Written Posts, Audio Recordings, Video Clips
- **Google Jamboard:** Digital Post-Its of Thoughts & Photo Collages
- **Backchannel Chat:** Anonymous Live Chat
- **Zoom Polls:** Anonymous Live Polls

Understanding UDL Pedagogy from Literature to:

1. Give Students Choice & Voice through UDL & Anti-Racist Practices

Community Agreements From Instructor to Students

- *You are more important than the systems we serve.*
- *You are more important than my personal preferences.*
- *You are more important than the way the content is packaged.*
- *I am willing to learn about you to help you reach your life goals.*
- *You are important and I will honor you with instruction that holds you accountable and empowers you to take ownership of your own learning.* (Fitzgerald, 2020).
- **Resource:** [Adratesha Fritzgerald, *Antiracism & UDL: Building Expressways to Success* \(2020\)](#)

2. Create a Pathway to Equity through UDL & Differentiation

- **UDL vs. Differentiation:** Do not just start with your course content and structure in place and then make adaptations, which is differentiation. Through UDL, you can design your courses based on your learners and let them make choices.
- **For International Students:** Think about how students will respond to your language and how to integrate their cultures into the curriculum.
- **Combine UDL & Differentiation:** Support your students to have autonomy and power in the learning process by allowing them to self-differentiate.
- **Resource:** [Katie Novak & Mirko Chardin, *Equity by Design: Delivering on the Power & Promise of UDL* \(2020\)](#)

3. Integrate Course Accommodations through UDL to Avoid Add Ons

- **UDL vs. Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:** Do not just ask students about their accommodations, integrate UDL into your teaching practice and course.
- **Ableist Thinking:** *discrimination of and social prejudice against disabled people based on the belief that typical abilities are superior) is at the heart of institutional elitism* (Arcella-Panillo & Dyjur, 2021).
- **Resource:** [Mayi Arcella-Panillo & Patti Dyjur, *Incorporating UDL in Disciplinary Contexts in Higher Education* \(2021\)](#)

Evaluating Your Teaching through the UDL Checklist for Instructors:

1. **Engagement through Student-Centered Learning Goals**

How are the learning goals for my courses student-centered ensuring that I engage all students including international students and students with disabilities by giving them **choices** and responding to their **needs and wants**?

2. **Representation through Multimodal Course Content & Materials**

How am I representing course content and materials through multimodal learning that provide opportunities for **visual** (imagery/video), **auditory** (podcasts/interviews), **reading/writing** (articles/prompts), and **kinesthetic** (movement activities/stretch breaks) learning?

3. **Action & Expression through Diverse Formats for Assignments & Activities**

How am I designing assignments and activities in diverse formats that let students share their learning through **different forms of expression** (presentation, video essay, podcast)?

Setting an Intention for Your Practice by Reflecting on:

- How will you implement UDL in your **teaching, learning, and assessment practices**?
- One **UDL strategy** I will infuse into my practice is.....

Additional Resources:

- [Instructor Spotlight: Max Krasnow on UDL](#)
- [Inclusive Teaching Institute](#)