UDL: Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (or UDL) promotes opportunities to increase access and reduce barriers to learning in order to enhance student success for all learners.

INCREASE ACCESS

UDL is both
- a philosophical belief that all students should have increased opportunities to be successful learners and
- a set of principles and guidelines for implementation.

REDUCE BARRIERS

UDL is supported and implemented in K-12 and universities across the nation.

A **UDL Initiative Team at Oakland University** is exploring ways in which UDL principles can become part of OU's institutional and classroom culture. This UDL initiative promotes student success through diverse and inclusive practices. The team comprises of faculty and students from different schools and staff from academic and student affairs, office of diversity and inclusion, and technology services.

UDL is derived from architectural design principles (e.g. ramps do not just aid those in wheelchairs, but also improve building access to those pushing strollers, carts and luggage).

Universal Design for Learning improves access for everyone.

UDL Supports Diverse Individuals

Learning Needs
- international students
- English language learners
- non-proficient readers
- introverts
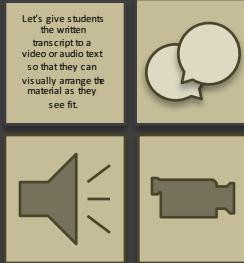- issues of anxiety
- under-achieving students
- veterans

Life Needs
- working students
- parents
- commuters
- non-traditional students

While not a replacement for all disability accommodations, UDL offers a proactive approach to designing inclusive classrooms. Applying UDL principles may reduce both the need for individual accommodations and the associated stigma.

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY™

Judy Ableser, Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Oakland University
Amanda Nichols Hess, CETL Faculty Fellow and Instructional Technology Librarian at OU Libraries
Designed by Christina Moore, CETL

UDL: Universal Design for Learning

COURSE DESIGN

UDL encourages us to be intentional in our design without adding excessive demands on faculty. Many of us are already implementing UDL in our classes but are not calling it as such (e.g. recording lectures so all can review, providing study guides, allowing choice of assignments). UDL can involve high-tech, low-tech and no-tech strategies. UDL does not "water down" curriculum or rigorous learning outcomes; instead, it enhances the ways in which students can meet these outcomes.

GUIDELINES TO OPTIMIZE LEARNING

ENGAGEMENT
WAYS TO MOTIVATE STUDENTS

- Offer both group and individual work
- Engage in-class and online
- Allow students to select topics within a given assignment that is based on their interest and relevancy

REPRESENTATION
WAYS TO PRESENT INFORMATION

- Offer visual and auditory (text, video, visuals, infographics) works
- Provide clear, detailed directions and instructions with rubrics and examples
- Record lectures for review after class

ACTION and EXPRESSION
WAYS TO DEMONSTRATE LEARNING

- Offer flexibility and choice in ways in which students demonstrate learning outcomes (e.g. presentation, essay, video)
- Provide opportunities for feedback and revision of work
- Increase amount of "low stakes" assignments

UDL principles can be applied with
no-tech, low-tech, and high-tech strategies.

Resources for Universal Design for Learning

Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) | cast.org
National Center for Universal Design for Learning | udlcenter.org

Judy Ableser, Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Oakland University
Amanda Nichols Hess, CETL Faculty Fellow and Instructional Technology Librarian at OU Libraries
Designed by Christina Moore, CETL

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY™