Universal Design for Learning
and
Accessibility

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Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) provides a framework to create learning materials, activities and classrooms that meet the needs of our diverse learners.

- Minimizes barriers and maximizes learning for all students.

- Accommodations help all everyone, not just those with disabilities.

- Flexible curriculum: goals, methods, materials and assessments

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How to apply UDL

- What is the learning goal?

- What are the barriers that may prevent students to reach the goal?

- 3 principles: Representation, Action & Expression, Engagement

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Multiple Means of Representation

How do you present content?

- Use multiple media

- Video Lecture Example:
    - Students can SEE and HEAR the lecture.
    - Add Closed Captioning and Transcript files to round out the representation.

- Provide a "content buffet" to give students options when going through the content

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Multiple Means of Action & Expression

How can learners show what they know?

• Use multiple assessment types

• Final Project Example:

  • Students can WRITE what they know in a final paper

  • Students can EXPLAIN what they know in a final presentation

  • Add a student-created DIAGRAM to the project to round out the representation.

• There is no one way to assess learning!

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Multiple Means of Engagement

How can learners interact with the content? the other students? the instructor?

• Include all three learner interactions:

  • student-student, student-content, student-instructor

• Use different types of Learning Activities throughout the course

• Unit Example:

  • Students interact with the content on an auto-graded quiz and in a lab assignment.

  • Students interact with the other students in a discussion.

  • Students interact with the instructor through lab assignment feedback, instructor videos and communications.
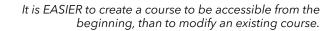
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Accessibility: Do it Now

- Include Accessibility statement in your syllabus and online course

- How do students share accessibility needs with you?

- Identify supports available at your institution

- Don't wait for a student with an accessibility need…

It is EASIER to create a course to be accessible from the beginning, than to modify an existing course.

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Accessibility: Text Design

- Use only one font style in your course.

- Choose sans serif fonts (e.g. Arial)

- Use black font on white background.

- Use **BOLD** and *italics* sparingly

- Avoid the use of colored fonts

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Accessibility: Images and Graphics

Alt. Text: Image of a falcon landing.

• Must be relevant to the content

• Include Alternative Text (Alt Text) for all images

• Use high resolution images

• Provide explanations of photos and videos in presentations

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Accessibility: Audio/Video

• Audio and Video must be clear

  • Reduce background noise, consistent volume, limited refocusing

• Use short audio/video segments (< 10 minutes)

• Must include closed captions (transcript files)

  • Some institutions provide help with captioning

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Accessibility: Documents

- Text files must be searchable.
    - Check your PDF documents

- Tables and charts need to use headers, labels and summaries

- Follow Accessibility notes in "Text Design"

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