A Practical Approach to UDL

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Elizabeth Gray | Indigenous Counsellor
Leah Hogan | Indigenous Education Manager
Darla Benton Kearney | Universal Design for Learning Curriculum Consultant
Introductions

Darla Benton Kearney
• Universal Design for Learning Curriculum Consultant
• Centre for Teaching & Learning

Leah Hogan
• Indigenous Education Manager
• Academic Quality / Centre for Teaching & Learning

Elizabeth Gray
• Indigenous Counsellor
• Counselling Services / Indigenous Education and Student Services
Learning Outcomes/Expectations

By the end of our time together, we hope you will feel comfortable to:

• Explain the fundamental elements of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), including benefits.
• Discuss practical UDL implementation as it relates to your teaching and learning context(s).
• Identify applicable UDL elements and plan for implementation.
UDL Fundamentals

Overview | Benefits
UDL Fundamentals | Overview

**UDL Is**
- Based on cognitive neuroscience and learning science research
- A best practice approach to curriculum design, development, and delivery
- Focused on authentic assessment
- Intentional and proactive
- Driven by students and educators
- About providing options

**UDL Isn’t**
- Prescriptive
- About “compliance”
- A checklist
- One size, fits all
- Static or a one-time implementation
UDL Fundamentals | Overview

UDL guidelines are based on three primary brain networks.

- Affective
- Recognition
- Strategic

Each network is identified by a principle to guide design, development and delivery.

- Multiple means of engagement
- Multiple means of representation
- Multiple means of action and expression
Multiple means of engagement
  • Options for self-regulation
  • Options for sustaining effort and persistence
  • Options for recruiting interest

Multiple means of representation
  • Options for comprehension
  • Options for language, math and symbols
  • Options for perception

Multiple means of action and expression
  • Options for executive functions
  • Options for expression and communication
  • Options for physical action

Each network contains three checkpoints to guide options.
UDL Guidelines

**Affective Networks**
The “why” of learning
- Multiple Means of Engagement
  - Provide options for recruiting interest
  - Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence
  - Provide options for self regulation

**Recognition Networks**
The “what” of learning
- Multiple Means of Representation
  - Provide options for perception
  - Provide options for language and symbols
  - Provide options for comprehension

**Strategic Networks**
The “how” of learning
- Multiple Means of Action and Expression
  - Provide options for physical action
  - Provide options for expression and communication
  - Provide options for executive functions
**Engagement**
For purposeful, motivated learners, stimulate interest and motivation for learning.

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

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

• How are you providing multiple means of engagement already?

Common examples include:

• Use and share a clear lesson plan with your learners.
• Give students choice regarding how they submit some assignments.
• Offer students the option to work individually, in pairs or in groups.
• Allow students to choose assignment topics, or from a list of topics.
• Administer assessments that specifically evaluate the learning outcomes/expectations.
Quick Chat

• How are you providing multiple means of representation already?

Common examples include:

• Provide content in multiple, accessible ways.
• Offer a legend of commonly used terms, symbols or acronyms.
• Include interactive learning activities online, in the classroom, home tasks, etc.
• Use multimedia resources to deliver content.
• Link new information to previously learned content.
Quick Chat

• How are you providing multiple means of action and expression already?

Common examples include:

• Give explicit instruction for activities and assessments.
• Provide note taking support.
• Include a variety of assessment methods within each subject or class.
• Encourage students to communicate with you, and each other, in a variety of ways.
• Offer interim due dates or completion plans for large assignments.
• Proactively offer additional time for quizzes and/or tests.
UDL Fundamentals | Benefits

Benefits for Learners

• Reduction in the need for individual accommodations.

• Proactive design that supports a more diverse student population.

• Greater opportunity to more fully demonstrate knowledge.

• Creates more self-aware, knowledgeable learners.

Benefits for Educators

• Reduction in the need, and time required, for individual accommodation arrangements.

• Learning elements that improve learning for all students.

• Proactive removal of learning barriers.

• More accurate assessments.
UDL Implementation

Practical Approaches | Barriers | Example | Planning
Two quick approaches to get started:

1. Learning outcomes/goals
   - Choose a learning outcome/goal that you currently have.
   - Brainstorm all the ways a learner could meet that outcome/goal within your teaching context.
   - Narrow possible implementation options by considering the barriers you may face.

2. 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.
Quick Chat

• Choose one of the learning outcomes below and brainstorm all of the different ways learners could demonstrate their knowledge.
  • Explore cultural identity & Indigenous ways of knowing while exploring future college and career opportunities.
  • Adopt strategies to strengthen your personal success toolkit.
  • Create a holistic vision for your future educational pathway and career incorporating community supports and funding opportunities.
It is important that we keep in mind:

• UDL is dynamic.
  • Implementation will change with your learners, technology, curriculum, etc.

• Implementation is not going to be done…ever.
  • UDL is a way of thinking about your curriculum design, development, and delivery…every time you design, develop, and deliver.

• UDL will look different in each class.
  • And that is totally okay.

• There will be barriers.
Its important to proactively consider the barriers you may encounter while implementing UDL.

Common UDL barriers include:

- Time
- Technology
- Space
- Support
- Consistency
Indigenous College 101

- Credit course to create a pathway to college.
- Provides fundamental learning skills and college experience.
- Offers a holistic approach to education that includes traditional and cultural teachings.
- Designed for Indigenous learners to meet the needs of Indigenous students and to support transition into post-secondary.
- Includes a blend of preparation into post-secondary while exploring identity and art based opportunities in circle pedagogy.
- Is team taught.
Indigenous College 101 learners have included:

- Mature students
- Women lead families at risk of homelessness
- Alternate secondary students
- SHAE students who typically do not thrive in a classroom environment
Indigenous College 101 includes the following UDL elements:

• Provides time for reflection in each class
• Includes opportunities to make decisions on assessments and gives choice regarding how assignments are submitted
• Offers options and models how learners can communicate with each other and their instructors
• Additional assignment time and learning support in each class
• Encourages learners provide feedback on the course as it being delivered
  • Stop/Start/Continue mid-way
Indigenous College 101 includes even more UDL elements:

- Provides course materials
- Engages prior knowledge within course content and assessments
- Encourages collaboration and community building
  - Sharing Circle and closing
  - eLearn reflection amongst peers
- Content provided in multiple formats
- Assessments have comprehensive exemplars and rubrics
UDL Implementation | Example

Indigenous College 101 barriers:

- **Technology**
  - Wifi at the HRIC was not reliable
  - Used eLearn and computers

- **Space**
  - Room locked
  - Used for other purposes

- **Support**
  - Cat Maracle
  - EA’s from HRIC

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- **Time Constraints**
  - Made personal time available for students
  - Extended deadlines
  - Snow days

- **Learner Life Commitments**
  - Transportation
  - Childcare
  - Meetings with support persons
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 class website with interactive learning activities, creating assessments that include a range of submission options, developing experiential learning opportunities within the community, etc.
Learners are variable.
  • You cannot plan for every learner variable. However, if you provide options you will meet the variable needs of learners.

Set a goal and assess that goal.
  • Determine the learning goal and ensure assessments measure that goal.

Give options.
  • Consider what would impede learning and proactively develop options to minimize or eliminate that barrier.

Be explicit.
  • Tell learners how to navigate the lesson, assessment, class, etc. and what UDL features are offered.
Discussion

Questions | Resources
Discussion

What else would you like to know?
Today offered a general overview of UDL.

For more UDL information check out these websites:

- 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:
- @CAST_UDL
- @UDL-IRN
- @UDL_Center
- @KatieNovakUDL
Resources

Or these books:

• Universal Design for Learning: Theory and Practice
  • By Meyer, Rose, and Gordon

• UDL Now!
  • By Novak

• Universal Design for Learning in the Classroom
  • By Hall, Meyer, and Rose

• Teaching to Diversity: The Three-Block Model of Universal Design for Learning
  • By Katz
Resources

Or these Indigenous Education resources:

- **What Matters in Indigenous Education: Implementing a Vision Committed to Holism, Diversity and Engagement**
  - By Toulouse

- **Infusing Indigenous Perspectives in K-12 Teaching**
  - From the University of Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

- **Four Directions Teachings**
  - Produced by the National Indigenous Literacy Association and Invert Media
References


