

Hi Pete and Jolena

Regarding the Universal Design Professional Development project, I want your Senates to know that this would be a completely voluntary (not required) activity, that would have nothing to do with contractual responsibilities.

I would like your Senate to answer 3 questions:

1. Would your Senate be supportive of a completely voluntary Professional Development project that focuses on Universal Design?
2. Does each of your Senate believe that 25 faculty would be interested in participating in a project like this?
 - Can be full-time or adjunct faculty.
 - Note: I am working with administrative staff on providing compensation for the workshops. Participating faculty can expect to participate in 2-3 workshops over the course of a year and a half.
3. Would it be possible for your Senate to work with your administration to identify faculty who would be interested in the project?

Now, why would we do a project like this?

- Universal Design is completely focused on students and student success & equity, in a pragmatic way that directly impacts the learning environment.
- If you want your instruction to be most effective with students who have diverse learning styles and strengths, and your instructional space to be the most accessible to all students, you will love Universal Design!

The concept of a Universal Design Project is easy to understand. We want experts in Universal Design to come to our campuses, take a look at what we do (they will sample our curriculum, instruction, instructional space, technology, etc. based on faculty who want to participate in the project), make recommendations on how we can integrate universal design into all aspects of instruction, and work with faculty to gain the tools they need to build universal design into their instructional practices.

Nobody will be required to implement universal design. Many people already implement aspects of universal design (even if they do not realize that they are). If there are enough people utilizing universal design on our campuses, then other faculty will have opportunities to take a closer look at specific universal design strategies, and choose for themselves if they want to try any of them.

From the definitions on the next page, universal design involves multiple means of: representation, expression, and engagement. An example of representation might include a lecture, a chapter in a book, a captioned video, and a diagram that provide students with the same information, but in different modalities. (I have included 3 excerpts on the next page for those who want a clear definition of Universal Design.)

Definitions:

What is Universal Design?

Public Law 108–364 (118 STAT. 1714), 108th Congress: `` (19) Universal design.--The term `universal design' means a concept or philosophy for designing and delivering products and services that are usable by people with the widest possible range of functional capabilities, which include products and services that are directly accessible without requiring assistive technologies) and products and services that are interoperable with assistive technologies.

Universal Design in Higher Education, From Principles to Practice (2nd edition), Burgstahler (2015): “The common thread in all these applications is that a diverse group of potential users can fully benefit from a product or environment in an inclusive setting (National Council on Disability, 2004). With UD, the user is not expected to adjust to the limitations of an inflexible product or environment; rather, the application is expected to adjust to the needs and preferences of the vast majority of its potential users. ...UD integrates both accessible and usable design features and seeks to make it possible for everyone to participate in an inclusive setting without being singled out. “

Universal Design for Learning

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an educational framework based on research in the learning sciences, including cognitive neuroscience, that guides the development of flexible learning environments that can accommodate individual learning differences.^[1]

Recognizing that the way individuals learn can be unique, the UDL framework, first defined by David H. Rose, Ed.D. of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) in the 1990s,^[2] calls for creating curriculum from the outset that provides:

- *Multiple means of representation* to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge,
- *Multiple means of expression* to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know, and
- *Multiple means of engagement* to tap into learners' interests, challenge them appropriately, and motivate them to learn.^{[3][4]}

Curriculum, as defined in the UDL literature, has four parts: instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments.^[5] UDL is intended to increase access to learning by reducing physical, cognitive, intellectual, and organizational barriers to learning, as well as other obstacles. UDL principles also lend themselves to implementing inclusionary practices in the classroom.

Universal Design for Learning is referred to by name in the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008 (Public Law 110-315).^[6] It is also mentioned in the 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which in turn refers to a legal definition of the term in the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. The emphasis being placed on equal access to curriculum by all students and the accountability required by IDEA 2004 and No Child Left Behind legislation has presented a need for a practice that will accommodate all learners.^[7]