UDL in Practice: Supporting Virtual Learning

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Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support
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What strategies did you use to help your students transition to a remote learning environment (during COVID-19)?
What barriers did you students encounter during this transition?
How did you keep open doors of communication during the transition to remote learning?

Join the Question Box: Go to the Question box to join the conversation.
Our Learning Environment

**Self-Regulate**
- Sit anywhere
- Stand or walk
- Eat anytime
- Fidget

**Perceive**
- Screen shared slides
- Personal copy of slides
- Captions

**Act**
- Agenda
- Chat Box
- Raise Hand
- Doodle
Webinar Series

Webinar 1: The UDL Core Concepts - Recorded
Webinar 2: UDL in Practice - Recorded
Webinar 3: UDL in a Virtual Environment - Today!
Webinar 4: UDL in CTE - May 15th
Goals

- Review of UDL
- Be able to use the UDL framework to design your syllabus in ways that increase accessibility in a virtual learning environment
- Be able to design ways to support self-regulation in a virtual environment
Review of UDL
Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach to improve and optimize teaching and learning for *all* by setting clear, rigorous **goals**; anticipating **barriers**; and proactively **designing** to minimize those barriers.
The barrier is in the environment, not the learner.
Variability is the norm.
Variability is predictable in learning and can be designed for.
Using UDL to Design for a Virtual Environment
Why?
The syllabus is your roadmap, first impression, and a chance for the instructor to set class climate, identify specific learning expectations, discuss options and accessibility.
It starts with the Syllabus

A syllabus is an outline of the key parts of a course and includes important information about policies, dates, assignments, and assessments.

Safety contract
Permission slips for field trips
Calendar
Course expectations
Classroom safety expectations
Grading policies and procedures
Permission slips for photo/video
The route to the Destination

**Communication:** In virtual environments, clear explicit communication is even more essential.

**Expectations:** Provides much-needed structure.

**Support:** Students can slip behind much more quickly due to a lack of in-person contact.

**Climate:** Focus on equity, not punishment. Provide check-ins that make your classroom inclusive.

www.udloncampus.cast.org
Model accessibility in your syllabus

POUR
Perceivable
Operable
Understandable
Robust
POUR: In your syllabus

Perceivable

Can everyone see and hear the content?
Video & Images

Video can be a powerful medium for conveying information and for connecting.

Captions and transcription can make the content from video accessible to everyone.

How to Create Captions in Youtube
Using Video and Images in your syllabus

- Introduce yourself
- Create a space where students can introduce themselves
- Introduce weekly activities
- Demonstrate a skill or practice
- Provide feedback
- Link to social media
- Other ideas: Add to the chat
POUR: In your syllabus
Operable
Can everyone navigate with ease?
Style, Headers, Links Etc.

- Apply styles to indicate section headings (should be descriptive and unique)
- Descriptive links

Textbook

*Foundations of Algebra, 3rd Ed. (2010)*
by Ross, Messier, & Kram

If you need an accessible version of this text, please contact the Disability Support Services office.

Course Web Site

All students must log onto the course web site several times each week. Here you will be able to engage in online discussions with classmates, submit assignments, and view your grades and progress.
Reflect

What *resonates* so far?
What *questions* do you have?
What might work in your *context*?

Join the Question Box: Go to the Question box to join the conversation.
POUR: In your syllabus

Understandable

Can everyone understand what is required?
The power of choice

**Options** give learners **choice.**

Choice builds learners **agency.**

Agency breeds **expert learning.**

Think about how each of your students could connect with you virtually? **Put in the chat**
UDL Syllabus

Statement

Get to know your students:

- What do you wish your teachers knew about you?
- Survey
- Interviews

“As your instructor, I feel I have a responsibility to do everything within reason to actively support a wide range of learning styles and abilities.

As such, I have taken training and applied the principles of Universal Design for Learning to this course. Feel free to discuss your progress in this course with me at any time. I want to know how I can help.
Communicate choice in your syllabus

- Offer more than one way to reach you
- Provide a demonstration on how to use a communication technology
- Use accessibility practices in the technologies you choose.

See: Web Conferencing Resource
Reflect

What resonates so far?
What questions do you have?
What might work in your context?

Join the Question Box: Go to the Question box to join the conversation.
POUR: In your syllabus

Robust

Will the technology transfer the content and remain accessible?
Introduce two resources

**AEM Center**

**UDL on Campus**
The purpose of education is not to make information accessible, but rather to teach learners how to transform accessible information into useable knowledge.

Introduction to the UDL Guidelines (CAST, 2012)
Self-regulation and executive functioning will need to be addressed within new structures for teaching and learning.

UDL Guidelines for Syllabus Creation
Make problem solving/thinking visible

Stuck Station - A standalone video recording station that students visit to explore strategies to get “unstuck”.

Can provide **prompts to help students record frustration, iterations, troubleshooting.** Students can reflect on each others strategies.

**A low-tech alternative** - create a thread in your discussion board, on slack or elsewhere to describe problem-solving. Have students or parents email what they’re stuck with.

Playful Assessment Beyond Rubrics Toolkit

Include this information and theory on your syllabus. It’s important to model “Flailing.” Failure + Learning = Flailing
Bringing it back to UDL
UDL and your syllabus

Provide multiple means of engagement: Outline the learning goals and objectives, the relevance of the content, and any opportunities for choice within the course.

Provide multiple means of representation: Be explicit about the ways in which students can access content (e.g., textbook, slides, course website, videos) where to find background information and multiple examples.

Provide multiple means of action and expression: Use the syllabus to communicate regular routines to establish expectations, outline the timing and format of assessments, and offer resources for the management of information.
The UDL Design Process

Plan
Use UDL and POUR to proactively design the syllabus to increase accessibility and remove barriers

Try
Implement a new accessibility strategy and formatively check to see if it is helping

Reflect
Check-in with students to see what’s working and make adjustments
UDL is not a checklist...

Infuse UDL based on your goal
Teach students how to learn, not just what to learn.
UDL varies in every context...

small changes make a big difference!
Reflect

What resonates so far?
What questions do you have?
What might work in your context?

Join the Question Box: Go to the Question box to join the conversation.
Interested in CAST supporting your next steps with UDL?

Be in touch with us anytime to co-design customized professional learning - virtual and/or in-person (when possible) - for your school. We’d love to work with you!

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