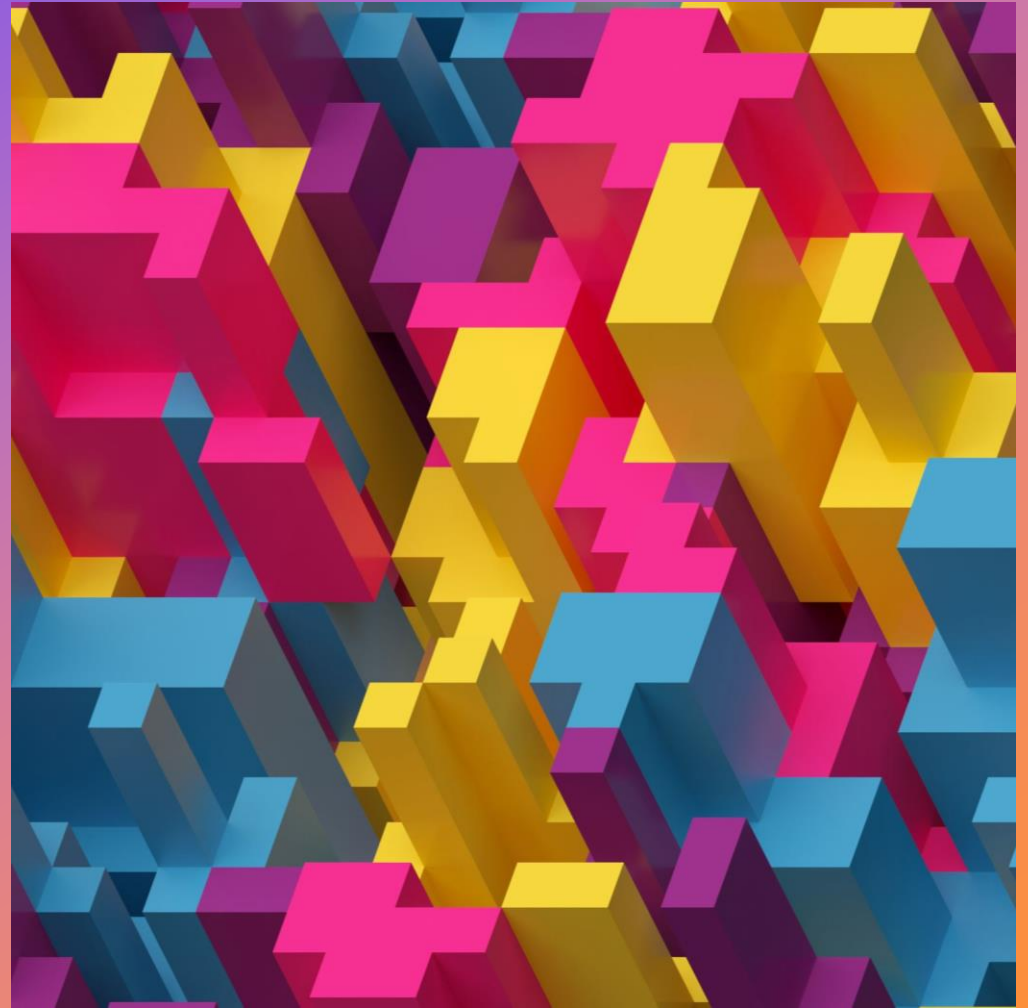# UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING AND WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

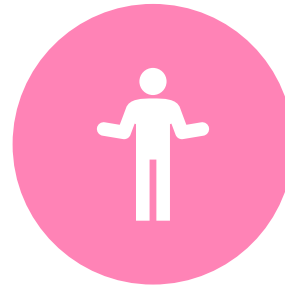MAISA ANDRAWS, ANGELIKI PARASHIS, and THERESA REVANS-MCMENIMON,

Objectives

- What is Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and its principals
- Examples in the environment
- How it is applied in the DSO, on campus, in the classroom
- Working with Students with Disabilities

Something to think about….

"The opposite of anxiety is trust" (from Psych Central)

We often feel that the opposite of anxiety is calm, but it is about trust in the environment and in those around us. If we increase our trust, we reduce our anxiety and fear.

If we can make a campus accessible in its physical space, the classroom, the requests and demands we ask of each other, then we can build a community of trust, and therefore reduce anxiety.

UDL can assist in building this community of trust.

What is UDL

So after my previous statement, it sounds like a "magic bullet" but it is not

Universal Design for Learning is an approach that provides equal opportunities to succeed in the classroom and out.

The easiest examples of UDL can be seen in our physical space

EXAMPLES IN A PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Ramps and automatic doors that make buildings accessible for individuals in wheelchairs also are utilized by individuals pushing baby strollers, delivery personnel, etc.

UDL takes into account all persons with the design. In the picture of the cut curb, this design makes the sidewalk accessible for all of the individuals stated above, but the bumps are included so individuals with visual impairments are aware of the cut curb and provides a safet net.

The Principals of Universal Design

* Center for Universal Design at North Carolina University)

- 1. Equitable Use

- Accessible to Everyone of all abilities. Use of foreign language apps, sign language interpreters in the classroom, etc to minimize frustration. We don't want to be this person.
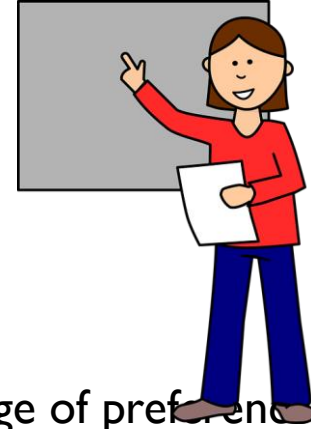
Principals of UDL (cont'd)

2. Flexibility in Use

Accommodating a wide range of preferences and abilities. Examples would include providing choices in group formats or in delivery of information or class presentations. This is very important for students with various communication abilities. This includes on campus, remote, and hybrid/hyflex learning. What are choices we offer students?
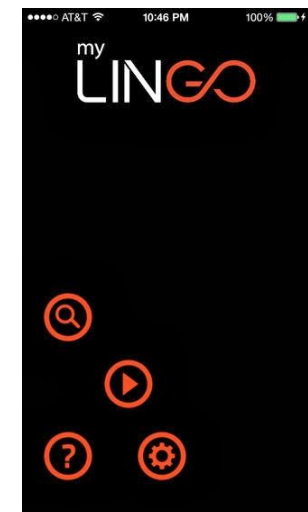
Principals of UDL (cont'd)

- 3. Simple and Intuitive

- Easy to understand regardless of experience, knowledge, and language skills. Some apps that can be used for real time translation is SayHi which has over 100 languages and dialects or Mylingo has partnered with Disney, Paramount, and Sony to translate movies in real time.

Principals of UDL (cont'd)

. 4. Perceptible Information

Communicate information effectively. An example would be video captioning, using pictures or audio clips. This allows for information to be delivered for audio and visual learners.

Principals of UDL (Cont'd)

- 5. Tolerance of Error

- Minimizes adverse consequences of accidental actions. Examples would be in software programs where there is an accidental keystroke and the user is asked are you sure you want to delete the file. What about when a student hits submit to an assignment or test before they are finished?

Principals of UDL (cont'd)

- 6. Low Physical Effort

- Used to minimize fatigue. An example would be the new Accommodate system so there is less need for students and faculty to walk across campus with the various color-coded sheets. O All efforts matter and tax the brain, and should count.

DEAR FRIDAY, I LOVE YOU. SINCERELY, A TIRED TEACHER

Principals of UDL (cont'd)

- 7 Size and Space

- Allowing for a variety of approaches of reach for the user. Examples would be lower counter heights that are accessible to someone in a wheelchair. Creating designated waiting areas or having more chairs available.

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.Put into practice at the University of Southern Maine

- The University of Southern Maine took notice of the increase diversity on their campus and with students with disabilities and wanted to make their courses more accessible.

- The school was able to secure funding and with the East Alliance 2 for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Students with Disabilities (www.usm.maine.edu/east) worked with faculty to develop Universal Design for Learning tools and trainings and make courses accessible for all students.

- This was a four-to-five year study

- Forums were created and education on assistive technology took place

- Faculty took this information and met in workshops.

- Lessons, labs, practices, and syllabi were redesigned.

- Pre and Post surveys of faculty were given and students participated in a feedback survey

.Put into practice at the University of Southern Maine

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In years four and five of the study, faculty the original faculty that participated were to mentor two new faculty members in the use of UDL.

This study impacted 16 faculty, 70 courses, and 600 students

Some of the feedback from professors has been:

- "I think it has had a big impact on all students primarily because it has had a big impact on me and on how I think about my teaching and my teaching goals."

- "I cannot tell yet. It changes with every class. But the students respond to the opportunity to express their knowledge in different ways positively, and (hopefully) this helps them stay engaged and active in the learning."

- "The course now allows all students to learn the material at their own pace and in a more accessible manner. All the new features were designed to be more useful to any student,"

FREQUENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Aside from commonly used accommodations of extended time, use of calculator, or distraction reduced environment, students with ASD may:

Record class lectures—this helps with issues related to attention deficit, anxiety, the need to leave the classroom due to sensory overload

FREQUENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Substitute assignments due to communication issues, class presentations, and possibly group work

Communication aides/devices—some students have difficulty with language expression or may be non-verbal. In these cases, students may have an individual to assist with communication or use a communication device.

FREQUENT ACCOMMODATIONS:

- Audio recording classes.

- Enlarged print on all classwork, handouts, and tests.

- Preferential seating at the front of class.

- Copy of Notes.

- The use of a laptop in class for notes or assistive technology.

- The use of Assistive Technology and Communication devices to ensure access to effective communication.

FREQUENT ACCOMMODATIONS:

- **Example of technological Services:**

- CCTV, Kurzweil, Dragon Naturally speaking, Braille translator and printer, Magnification software and Digital recorders.

- Scribe for students who have a diagnosis that interferes with writing ability or using adaptive computer technology. **Scribes provide assistance to students with the physical aspects of written expressions.**

- ADA accessible desks/chairs in classrooms.

A WORD ABOUT PCA'S

A PCA is a personal care assistant—Personal Care Assistant: A personal care assistant (PCA) is defined as a person who provides personal care/assistance (chronic or temporary) to a students with a disability, or other health care issues with activities of daily living, including nursing services not administered by the WCC Health Services Office or assistance with normal life functions.

The PCA will attend class with the student and may assist with notetaking, functional limitations, or navigating the campus.

PCA'S CONT'D

PCA's must be approved by the DSO office AND be photographed by the Security Office on campus.

The PCA is provided with an ID that must be worn at all times on campus.

Professors are notified via Accommodate that a PCA will attend class with the student.

Students are responsible for the behavior of the PCA while on campus.

SERVICE ANIMALS

- "Under the ADA, a service animal is defined as a dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability. The task(s) performed by the dog must be directly related to the person's disability."

- https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/service_animal_qa.pdf

- In situations where it is not obvious that the dog is a service animal, staff may ask only two specific questions:
  - (1) is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
  - (2) what work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

- Staff are not allowed to request any documentation for the dog, require that the dog demonstrate its task, or inquire about the nature of the person's disability.

NON VERBAL STUDENTS

- When assistive technology devices are not able to provide effective access to education to a non-verbal student, WCC's DSO provides an individual to serve as a communication assistant.

- The individual would serve as the voice of the student.

- DSO will notify professor via Accommodate if a communication assistant will be present in class with student.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

- We encourage professors to work with students to meet their specialized needs.

- If you have any questions regarding student's accommodations, please speak to the student directly in a private meeting or email the DSO at Disability.services@sunywcc.edu

Deaf, deaf or hard of hearing... What's the difference?

- Deaf-Cultural identity
  - Typically severe to profound hearing loss
  - ASL is primary language
  - Use of ASL interpreters needed for communication.
- deaf or Hard of hearing (hoh)
  - Physiological-decibel (db) loss
    - May or may not sign or use ASL Interpreters.

  <u>All of the above;</u>
    - May or may not use hearing aids
    - May or may not speak or have intelligible speech
    - May or may not be able to read lips

Accommodations for in-person and on-line instruction

<u>In-Person:</u>

- Preferential seating—front and center
- Windows and doors closed
- Allow interpreters to sit at front of room next to you and in front of student.

<u>In-Person and On-Line:</u>

- Repeat important information not written on board –face class.
  - Lip-reading cues and body language
- Notice sent to you from DSO and/or Counselor for the Deaf
- Extended time for all quizzes and exams; you and student decide best time to test.
- CC (closed captioning)--all videos and audio recordings. Zoom captions.
- Copies of notes from professor to student or video recording of class with captions.

Accomodations Continued: Working with Interpreters

- <u>If Sign Language interpreters used:</u>

- Professor notified.
  - Student needs to pin Interpreter—will not be able to see board or professor
  - Add Interpreter to BB as guest and give access to all assignments/IT help

- Interpreter facilitates communication, not active participant in the class.

- Depending on length of class, may have more than one Interpreter present

- Speak directly to the student not the Interpreter

- E-mail Zoom link to Interpreter(s).

- Allow Interpreters to interpret exams.

➤ Accommodations continued:

- Time extension needed on BB for tests and quizzes—ASL interpreting = time.

     ASL ≠ English

- Do not assume Zoom captioning "gets it"—check for accuracy

- CART/C-Print (remote voice to text captioning) an option for in-class instruction.

- Videos and movies must be captioned.

- Contact Angeliki Parashis at: 845-654-5038 (mobile/text) with immediate concerns/questions.

Common Misconceptions & Noteworthy facts

Misconception:"An interpreter will give the student answers to test questions"---

Fact: Interpreters bound by a National Code of Ethics

Misconception: "If they answer me, they must have heard/understood what I said, they wear hearing aids"---

Fact: Hearing aids do not clarify sounds

Fact: Lip reading is a learned skill

Misconception: " I know they read lips, I see them looking at. my mouth".

Fact: Only 30-40% of a spoken language can be read on the lips—60-70% is a guess

Misconception: "ASL Interpreters are just like all other Language interpreters:

Fact: Other language interpreters translate spoken languages—Mode is the same and not simultaneously. They do not have to translate the individuals emotion, expression, tone or concepts into words.

--Simulatenous vs. "the gist"

RESOURCES

- CONTACT INFO
- Disability Services Office: disability.services@sunywcc.edu
- Maisa Andraws: maisa.andraws@sunywcc.edu
- Angeliki Parashis: ap16@sunywcc.edu
- Theresa Revans-McMenimon: tr14@sunywcc.edu

- Universal Design in Higher Ed: Promising Practices, edited by Sheryl E. Burgstahler
- https://www.washington.edu/doit/programs/center-universal-design-education

Q & A