Universal Design for Learning: Implementation in Educational Settings

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Transitions Project: Opportunities for Postsecondary Success

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- Goals:
  - Preparing students for and entry into postsecondary courses, work experiences and/or internships.
  - UDL training and technical assistance for secondary and postsecondary teachers, staff and administrators.
  - Academic preparation and skill development, self-advocacy training, life mentoring, socialization guidance, recreation, career exploration, job development and supported employment.

Today’s Objectives

- Think differently
  - systemic change vs. direct service with students with disabilities
  - changes in public policy
  - partner and collaborate with teachers and other school personnel

- Understand the benefits of UDL
  - UDL increases access to education for all students
  - Consider UDL in your intervention

- Consider that OT can be more impactful in school practice
Public Policy

• Changing Roles under new federal requirements*
  • Increased emphasis on collaboration in the classroom
  • Also fits with OT “Framework” and its approaches to intervention

• Almost half of the more than 6 million students served under IDEA spend at least 80% of the school day in general education classes*

• IDEA encourages:
  • Pre-referral intervention
  • RtI approach

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RtI’s three-tiered model*

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<tr>
<th>Tier 1: Core Instruction; Universal Supports; Universal Screening and Instruction</th>
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<td>Tier 2: Targeted Intervention and progress monitoring</td>
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Current Legislation Speaks to UDL

• The National Technology Plan for Education 2010
  • Calls for schools to integrate current and future technology skills and knowledge into both the curriculum and instructional methods used
  • Repeatedly cites UDL as an evidence based strategy for teaching*

• Higher Education Opportunity Act
  • 2008 reauthorization established the first statutory definition of Universal Design for Learning

• No child Left Behind Act – reauthorization
  • all students, including students with disabilities perform at grade level in core content areas
Universal Design (UD)

- Build in accessibility from the start
  - Curb cuts in city streets
  - Ramps and automatic door openers
  - TV closed captions
  - Ergonomic kitchen utensils
- Everyone benefits from a more flexible, user-friendly environment
- Fix the environment, not the individual

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

- “UDL is a framework that is inspired and informed by students in the margins of traditional education, those diverse learners whose needs, talents, and interests don’t fit a cookie-cutter mold.”
- “UDL puts the tag ‘disabled’ where it belongs—on the curriculum—not the learner. The curriculum is disabled when it does not meet the needs of diverse learners.”

—David Rose, Co-founder & CEO of CAST

Defining UDL

“Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles and techniques for teaching, creating inclusive classroom instruction, technology, and accessible course materials.”
Disabilities:
• Mobility Impairments
• Blindness/Visual Impairments
• Deafness/Hearing Impairments

Non-apparent:
>2/3 of total and growing
• Learning Disabilities
• Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD)
• Autism Spectrum Disorder
• Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
• Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
• Mental Illness

UDL Principle 1
Represent information and concepts in multiple ways (and in a variety of formats)

Help teachers to:
• Modify curriculum to benefit all learners (e.g., hand-writing curricula)
• Conduct group learning activities
• Incorporate hands-on learning activities
• Distribute class notes or projects ahead of time
• Use multi-media and digital formats
  • electronic study tools, concept mapping, text to speech; multi-modal output
  • Text + Graphics, Audio, Video
  • Usable electronic formats (e.g., Word, PDF, HTML)
  • Digital books

UDL Principle 2
Students are given multiple ways to express their comprehension and mastery of a topic.

Collaborate with teachers to implement:
• The “Three P’s”: Projects, Performances, Presentations
• Mini-writing assignment
• Portfolios/Journals/Essays
• Making a wide variety of writing utensils available
• Allowing students to use computers for written assignments
• Using multi-media tools to express what they know (text/graphics/audio/video)
UDL Principle 3

Students engage with new ideas and information in multiple ways

Influence school personnel to:

• Challenge students with meaningful, real-world assignments (e.g., service learning, project-based learning)

• Give prompt and instructive feedback

• Utilize technology
  • Literacy software tools
  • Use of courseware
  • Use classroom response systems (e.g., i>clickers)

What does technology provide the Teacher?

• OT’s can encourage use of technology in the general classroom:
  • Interactive ways to provide content
  • Multi-modal delivery of content
  • Scaffolding
  • Differentiated instruction
  • Ability to capitalize on individual learning styles

• Meets the intent of the legislation

Technology that can support representation, expression & engagement

• iPads, Tablets & Smartphones in classrooms –
  • Instant access to supplemental resources such as Google, Google Earth
  • Useful apps for supplemental support e.g. handwriting, organization, memory
  • Example: http://www.youtube.com/user/nlgilardino#p/u/72/KQFY244h-ks

• Site licenses for assistive technology
  • Spell and grammar checkers
  • Concept mapping software – Kidspiration & Inspiration
  • Word prediction & word completion
  • Translation software
  • Literacy software – Kurzweil 3000, Wynn, Read & Write Gold, Co:writer/Write:Outloud, & Read Outloud

• Use of digital formats - books and other course materials
  • NIMAS – National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards
Examples of technology and UDL from CAST

- "Goal is to create offer alternative ways to access, use and engage with learning content"*
- "Print-based environment makes this difficult; digital media & computer technologies make for a malleable curriculum."**
- Cast Learning Tools
  http://www.cast.org/learningtools/index.html
  - UDL Book Builder
  - Science Writer
  - UDL Editions
  - Lesson Builder
  - UDL Guidelines Summary


UDL within the RtI model

| Tier 1: Core Instruction; Universal Supports; Universal Screening and Instruction |
| Tier 2: Targeted Intervention and progress monitoring |
| Tier 3: Intensive Intervention |

1 – 5%
10–15%
80–90%
UDL

*Occupational Therapy Services for Children and Youth Under IDEA (2007). Leslie Jackson Ed. AOTA. p. 114

UDL is a natural fit with Tier I of RtI OTs can...

- promote curricula that support all learning styles
- Suggest materials for classroom use
  - (e.g., raised line paper, tabletop easels, pre-writing activities)
- Recommend furniture and lighting that enhance performance and prevent injury
- Implement school-wide efforts to enhance students’ social and emotional responses to activities at lunch, recess and transitions
- Suggest access to tech tools for the entire classroom
  - Site licenses for Read & Write Gold, Kurzweil 3000, Write:Outloud, Co:Writer, Read:Outloud
  - Students use the tools they desire (e.g., text to speech)
  - Digital book players (e.g., ClassMate Reader)
  - Other tools: Intel Reader, Scanning and Reading pens
Closing

• UDL is an opportunity for OTs to help schools meet the diverse needs of ALL students
• You have the legislative mandates and rationale to move services to the teacher/classroom level
• Questions:
  • What challenges do we face?
  • How can we overcome them?
  • What can we do right now?

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Thank you!