

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles and techniques for creating inclusive classroom instruction and accessible course materials. At its core is the assertion that when instructors increase the number of learning options available to students, everyone benefits.

As conceptualized and implemented at Colorado State University, UDL consists of three broad principles:

1. Presenting information and concepts in multiple ways and in a variety of formats.
2. Allowing students multiple ways to express their comprehension and mastery of a topic.
3. Encouraging students to engage with new ideas and information in multiple ways.

Universal Design for Learning is an extension of an architectural movement called Universal Design, the goal of which is to design and build structures that accommodate the widest spectrum of users, including individuals with disabilities, without the need for subsequent adaptation or specialized design. By applying the notion of built-in flexibility to the educational curriculum, UDL promotes equal access to information and learning.

UDL acknowledges the diversity of students in today's classrooms—students with different life experiences, language backgrounds, learning styles, abilities and disabilities. It also recognizes the ever-widening range of instructional technologies employed by faculty and students. The goal of UDL is to make learning, and the materials of instruction, accessible to *all* students.

Although UDL has strong ties to the fields of disability and accommodation, its primary goal is to design instruction and instructional materials that can be used effectively by all students without the need for costly, individual accommodations. UDL does not advocate any single best practice. Rather, it challenges instructors to reach and engage a diverse audience through a combination of instructional formats, technologies, and learning modalities.

Universal Design for Learning is, in a nutshell, just good teaching!

The ACCESS Project website is located at <http://accessproject.colostate.edu>