

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

PART 1 OF A 3-PART SEMINAR SERIES

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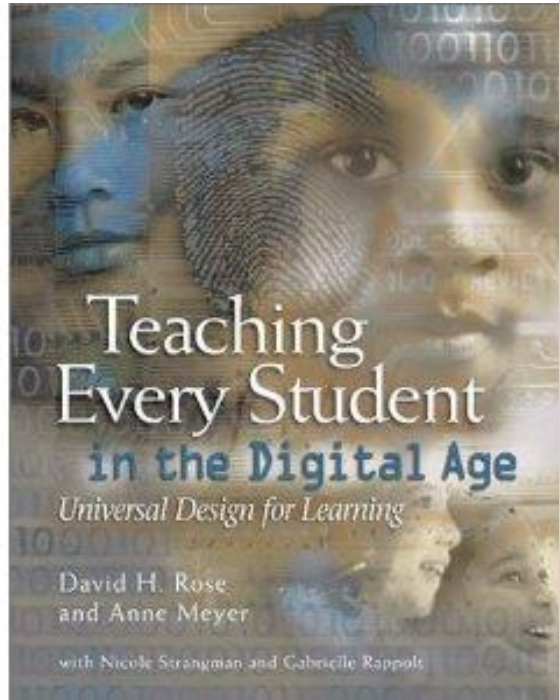
Welcome to our seminar series!

1. Introducing Universal Design for Learning (today!)
2. Engaging Students: Ideas and Techniques (February 27)
3. Grading and Course Design (March 1)

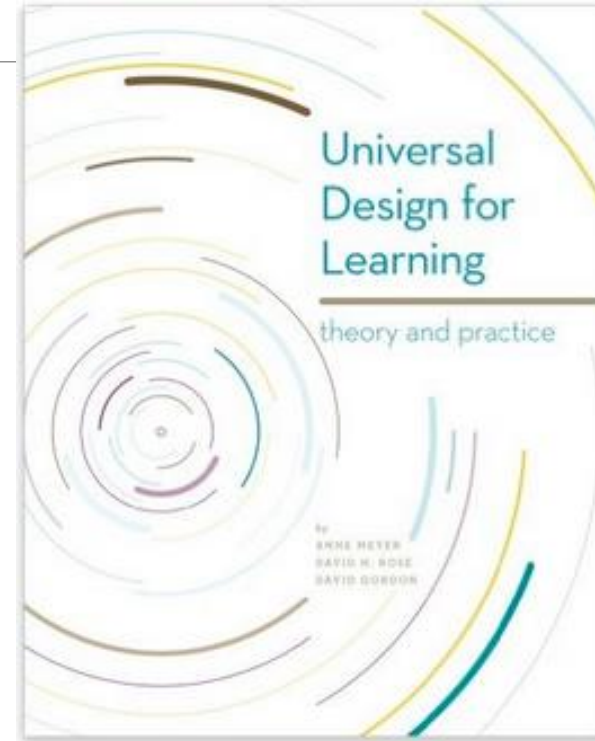
What is “Universal Design for Learning”?

- An approach to intentional course design that “builds in” flexibility so that you can help more students learn
- The goal of UDL is to lower barriers to learning for all students = don’t lower your expectations, but help students meet them
- Provide supports that help students develop skills and become independent, self-regulated learners

References for Universal Design for Learning



David Rose &
Anne Meyer, 2002



David Rose &
Anne Meyer, David
Gordon, 2013

<http://udltheorypractice.cast.org/>

UDL = Neuroscience research + Universal Design in architecture



- Designed from the beginning to meet needs of many
- Thoughtful design lowers barriers to use
- Designing for diversity means fewer “special accommodations”
- Increased accessibility means more people can use what you build

Why do learners vary?

Students come to the classroom with:

- Different interests
- Different experiences
- Different needs
- Different goals

The UDL solution: Offer 'multiple means'

"Multiple means" = many different ways or options:

- To engage with course material
- For how information and course content is presented
- To express understanding

Many options = addressing more varied learners

Why UDL?

- Helps faculty meet the needs of more diverse students
- Focuses on what is important: your learning goals!
- Helps faculty AND students understand what is most important to know, understand and be able to do

A short video about UDL:

<http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html#.WoZ68JP1WT8>

UDL Principles

ENGAGEMENT, REPRESENTATION, AND ACTION AND EXPRESSION

Recognition Networks

The "what" of learning



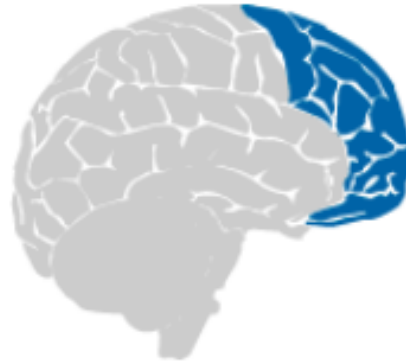
How we gather facts and categorize what we see, hear, and read. Identifying letters, words, or an author's style are recognition tasks.

- Present information and content in different ways

**More ways to provide
Multiple Means of
Representation**

Strategic Networks

The "how" of learning



Planning and performing tasks. How we organize and express our ideas. Writing an essay or solving a math problem are strategic tasks.

- Differentiate the ways that students can express what they know

**More ways to provide
Multiple Means of Action and
Expression**

Affective Networks

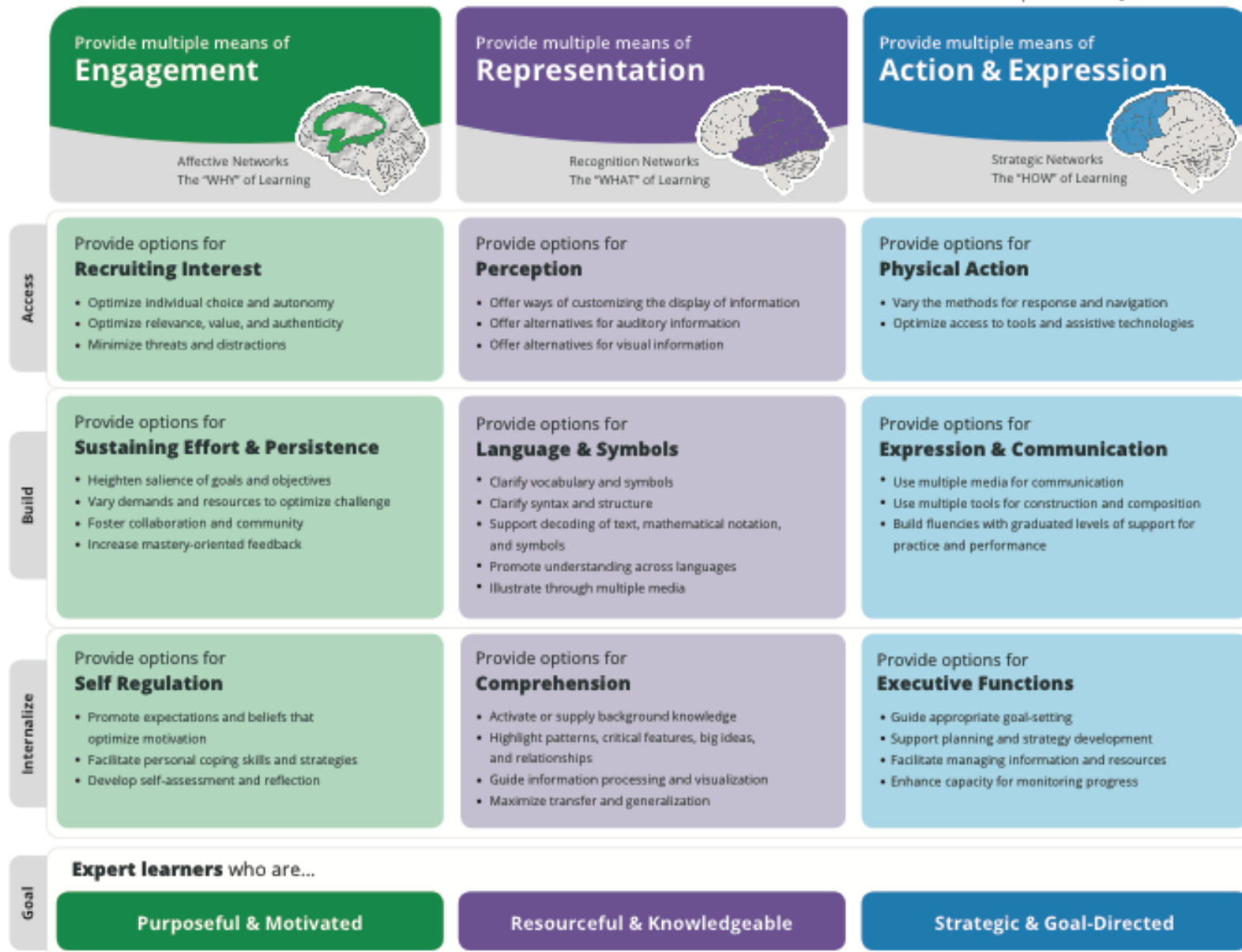
The "why" of learning



How learners get engaged and stay motivated. How they are challenged, excited, or interested. These are affective dimensions.

- Stimulate interest and motivation for learning

**More ways to provide
Multiple Means of
Engagement**



For more explanation of UDL, go to:

<http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/whatisudl>

Using UDL

The biggest difference (and the most vital change teachers need to make to move to UDL-designed curriculum, instruction, materials, and assessment) is moving from the idea that *the student is what creates barriers to learning* to the idea that *the curriculum, instruction, materials, and assessment create the barriers*.

--Deborah Taub, alternative assessment consultant

Using UDL: Two big ideas

1. “Tight goals, loose means”

- Focus on your goals and be less strict on how students reach them

2. Create and offer options for students:

- A. Have different ways students can engage with the material
- B. Vary how you represent ideas, offer options for accessing course materials
- C. Offer different ways for students to practice and to express their knowledge and understanding

Key Questions

THINK ABOUT HOW LEARNERS WILL ENGAGE WITH THE LESSON:

- 1 Does the lesson provide options that can help all learners regulate their own learning?
- 2 Does the lesson provide options that help all learners sustain effort and motivation?
- 3 Does the lesson provide options that engage and interest all learners?

THINK ABOUT HOW INFORMATION IS PRESENTED TO LEARNERS:

- 4 Does the information provide options that help all learners reach higher levels of comprehension and understanding?
- 5 Does the information provide options that help all learners understand the symbols and expressions?
- 6 Does the information provide options that help all learners perceive what needs to be learned?

THINK ABOUT HOW LEARNERS ARE EXPECTED TO ACT STRATEGICALLY & EXPRESS THEMSELVES:

- 7 Does the activity provide options that help all students act strategically?
- 8 Does the activity provide options that help all learners express themselves fluently?
- 9 Does the activity provide options that help all learners physically respond?

What are “barriers” to learning?

A barrier to learning is anything that stands in the way of students reaching your learning goals for them.

Examples:

- Students don't have needed background knowledge
- Students don't have needed skills
- Students don't have access to materials
- Students have not prepared properly for class time
- Students are not motivated to do the work

Lowering barriers

- Understand student knowledge and where gaps need to be filled
- Scaffold (gradually build up) complicated skills sets
- Create opportunities for practice of key skills prior to testing/completing work
- Be clear: what are your goals for students? How can you tell when they have reached these goals? How can students tell how well they are progressing towards your goals?

Homework

Problem/Issue you want to focus on	Identify some obstacles/barriers that are contributing to the problem and that you could work to remove	State what your class (or students' work) would look like/be like if you are able to resolve this problem
Example: Students don't do reading	Students don't value the reading; students struggle with the level of the reading; students don't know what to focus on in the reading.	Students come to class having read the article and understood most/all of it; students are able to relate the theory or examples in this reading to what we have already done in class and can pose questions to each other that move discussion forward, so they are helping each other understand the significance of the reading better through discussion.

More information about UDL

- <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/whatisudl>
- <http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html#.Woai7ZP1WT8>