Make Learning Flexible with UDL

Universal Design for Learning (or UDL) is a way to "improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn" (CAST, 2015). This approach considers the why, what, and how of students' learning while reducing the barriers students may face in achieving course outcomes. UDL doesn't water down instructional expectations or standards; instead, it provides students access to opportunities to succeed.

There are three components to UDL -- they focus on providing learners with multiple means of engagement, representation of information, and options of action / expression.

UDL offers students many ways to **ENGAGE** in the course material	By providing multiple means of engagement, you can help motivate your students and give their learning a purpose. In practical terms, this principle means identifying ways you can can give classroom tasks authenticity or connect them to real-world situations. For example: • Directly highlight where course concepts are used in careers or work environments • Ask a guest speaker to visit your class (in person or via video) to connect his/her experiences to course content
UDL offers faculty many ways to **REPRESENT** the course material	By providing multiple means of representation of information, you can help your students to demonstrate their knowledge and resourcefulness. In practical terms, this principle means providing students access to the same conceptual information in multiple formats (e.g. video, text, lecture). For example: • Provide all course documents in print and on Moodle • Record class lectures or parts of class sessions for students to review
UDL offers students many ways to **EXPRESS** what they have learned	By providing multiple means of action or expression of students' learning, you can help your students be goal-oriented and strategic while allowing them multiple opportunities to illustrate their learning. In practical terms, this principle means incorporating a variety of classroom activities -- group tasks, individual projects, written exercises, multimedia presentations -- that give students opportunities to demonstrate how they're attaining your learning outcomes. For example: • Offer both face-to-face and online discussion opportunities for students • Ask students to present, if appropriate, and give them options for their presentation method (pre-recorded or in-person)

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Continued

Not all UDL strategies will work for every classroom, but there are some options you can consider -- you may already be using some or all of these ideas!

For more strategies, explanation of principles, background on UDL, and information on traditionally disadvantaged learner groups who have much to gain through UDL, visit

oakland.edu/cetl/ou-teaching-initiatives

Resources
Center for Applied Special Technology. (2015). *About UDL*. Retrieved from
http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html#.V74FsJMrJ3M

Principles from:

National Center on Universal Design for Learning. (2014, November 12). *Universal design for learning guidelines*. Retrieved from
http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/udlguidelines_theorypractice

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