

UDL is a framework upon which instructors can design curricula optimized for students of all backgrounds. Accessible course materials are essential to helping not only disadvantaged students, but also those who prefer learning through media that is not traditionally offered in courses.

Through student opinions gathered through a survey in addition to 2 student interviews, student perspectives, desires, and grievances highlight flaws in the ways that students are currently being taught and how incorporating UDL principles in courses can improve the student experience and student satisfaction with their courses.

Multiple Learning Formats Improve Understanding

Students interviewed in this study explained that having different ways to access information, such as videos, text, and slides, helps them better understand course material. One student described how combining visual and auditory materials made concepts easier to grasp. Research supports this idea, showing that instructional designs that provide multiple formats can help instructors identify learning barriers and improve engagement for diverse learners (Roski et al.).

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Works Cited

CAST. Universal Design for Learning Guidelines Version 2.2. CAST, 2018, <https://udlguidelines.cast.org>.

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Roski, Marvin, et al. "Learning Analytics and the Universal Design for Learning (UDL): A Clustering Approach." Computers & Education, vol. 214, 2024, article 105028.

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#6

Supporting Every Student:

A Look at UDL
and Accessibility at
UCF



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#1

UDL & Inclusive Education

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework designed to make education accessible to a wider range of learners by encouraging flexibility in teaching methods and materials. Instead of assuming that all students learn in the same way, UDL recognizes the natural variability among learners and promotes multiple approaches to instruction. Researchers explain that "learner variability is the norm, not the exception," emphasizing the importance of designing instruction that can support different needs and abilities (CAST). By providing multiple pathways for students to access and demonstrate knowledge, instructors can create classrooms that are more inclusive and equitable.

Three Principles

There are three main principles of Universal Design for Learning.

Engagement

Motivate students by offering meaningful options and relevant content.

Representation

Presenting information in multiple formats such as text, video, and audio.

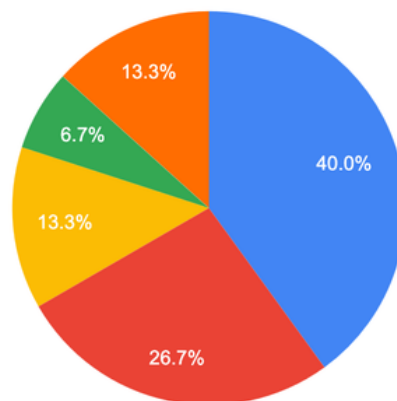
Action and Expression

Provide students with different ways to demonstrate their understanding.

#2

How important is it to you that teachers provide several ways to learn?

● 10
● 8
● 9
● 4
● 7



Students results expressed in the pie chart indicate that students strongly prefer when instructors provide multiple ways to learn course material. In the survey, students rated the importance of this approach on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 representing the least important and 10 representing the most important. The chart shows that 40.0% of participants selected the highest rating of 10, while 93.3% rated it as important overall.

Expanding Accessibility Through UDL at UCF

The implementation of UDL principles in the classroom is an effective way to provide students with greater accessibility and options. In the research, we conducted surveys with 15 UCF students and interviewed 3 of them about how they think the use of UDL principles in their professors' classes has helped them. The message to professors is to provide multiple learning resources for in-class materials to give students more opportunities to succeed. All three interviewers also note closed captions and videos are very important for their success.

#3

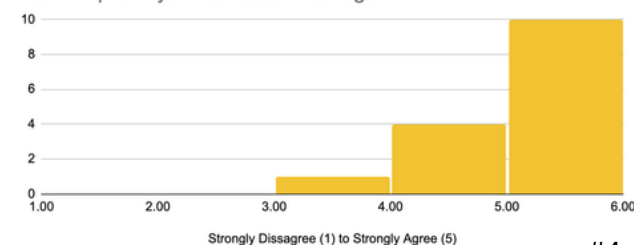
Easy-to-Access Materials Reach More Students

Ensuring that course materials are easily attainable, which includes free or inexpensive materials, is important for students who are disadvantaged through disabilities or due to poor financial circumstances. Our study found that several students who stated that their course materials do not meet these criteria also reported less access to course materials as a whole. Course materials that aren't financially burdensome to students are important, as access to multiple different resources help students learn compared to having few alternative resources to learn from.

Student Success

A similar survey question asked students how important having more options for course materials would be for improving their success in college. Students responded on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 representing the highest importance. With over half of the respondents selecting 5, it is clear that that students believe that more diverse formats for learning materials would significantly benefit their ability to progress through their classes..

Having more options in how you can complete assignments would improve your success in college.



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