

First Steps for Implementing Universal Design in the Classroom

Universal design for learning (UDL) is based on the idea of creating a course that meets the needs of all students and thereby removes any barriers to any student with a disability. This eliminates the need for disabled students to feel different, to reveal their disability to anyone, or for the faculty member to have to create separate accommodations. Courses that take advantage of principles of universal design have been shown to improve outcomes for all students, not just those with disabilities. [You can read more about UDL here.](#)

Topic	Reading	Notes
Syllabus	https://dpl.online/a-syllabus-of-care-learning-from-the-disability-justice-movement/	
Include statement on disability and access	http://udloncampus.cast.org/page/planning_syllabus	Include where to find resources on campus. Lori Clapis sends out suggested text each semester.
Use readable fonts	http://universaldesign.ie/Products-Services/Custom-Communications-Toolkit-for-the-Public-Service-A-Universal-Design-Approach/Written-Communication/Document-Design/#:~:text=It%20is%20best%20to%20use,for%20members%20of%20the%20public.	Verdana or Helvetica are examples
Consider text layout	https://webaim.org/techniques/textlayout/	
Consider including examples of writing or research from people with disabilities	Disability as Diversity: https://global.oup.com/academic/product/disability-as-diversity-9780190652319?cc=us&lang=en&	
Course Materials	http://udloncampus.cast.org/page/media_landing	
Use SensusAccess for documents	https://edtech.domains.trincoll.edu/sensusaccess/	A self-service conversion of documents into a range of alternative formats including digital Braille, MP3, DAISY and e-books.
Making word documents accessible	https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/topic/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d?ui=en-us&rs=en-us&ad=us#bkmk_winaltimages	Ensure color is not the only way to convey meaning. Be sure there is sufficient contrast between text and background.
Caption movies	https://edtech.domains.trincoll.edu/expanded-language-support-and-easier-caption-editing-with-kaltura/ A Rising Tide How Closed Captions Can Benefit All Students:	Kaltura, Zoom, Youtube will all do this for you Note: subtitles are not the same thing as captions

	https://er.educause.edu/articles/2017/8/a-rising-tide-how-closed-captions-can-benefit-all-students	
Caption photos	https://www.poynter.org/educators-students/2017/6-tips-for-writing-photo-captions/	You can use Alt-Text features
Be sure any hyperlink text is meaningful		Don't just use the word "here"
Consider taping lectures or pre-recording lectures	https://www.trincoll.edu/sarc/students/accessibility-information/audio-recording/	Be sure to have students sign the pledge
Consider providing copies of any powerpoint slides or other materials	Allan M Jones (2003) The use and abuse of PowerPoint in Teaching and Learning in the Life Sciences: A Personal Overview, <i>Bioscience Education</i> , 2:1, 1-13, DOI: 10.3108/beej.2003.02000004	Also be sure color is not the only way to convey meaning. Be sure there is sufficient contrast between text and background.
Consider interactive technology like Nearpod, PollEverywhere, etc	Barbetta, P. M., Bennett, K. D., & Monem, R. (2021). Academic Technologies for College Students With Intellectual Disability. <i>Behavior Modification</i> , 45(2), 370–393. https://doi.org/10.1177/0145445520982980	
Emails		Text readers can't read pictures, if you include pictures add text as well
Consider digital textbooks if possible	Advantages Of Digital Textbooks: https://www.universities-colleges-schools.com/the-advantages-of-e-textbooks	
Be sure your Moodle site is accessible	https://ethinkeducation.com/blog/accessibility-in-moodle/ https://moodle.com/news/tips-to-make-your-lms-content-accessible/	Use large font, high contrast, use alt text for images, avoid tables when possible, avoid photos of equations, be sure everything is accessible with keyboard and does not require mouse
Course Requirements		
Try to avoid policies that require disabled students to reveal themselves to the class		If you have a no-laptop rule, students with disability accommodations will be revealed. Consider something like a policy where any student who wants to use a laptop comes to you to give a reason, then students won't

		know who has them for what reason.
Consider the purpose of attendance policies and the impact on students with chronic illness	For more on the problems with this, see this hashtag on twitter: #WhyDisabledPeopleDropout	If you do remove attendance as a contributor to grade, you could continue to take attendance, so you know if someone has run into problems
Consider the purpose of timed exams and their impact on students with disabilities		
Student Concerns		
Student concern referral form	https://www.trincoll.edu/dean-of-students/community-standards/make-a-referral-or-report-a-concern/	Submissions will be reviewed by the Office of Student and Community during normal business hours.
Student Accommodations Testing Center	https://www.trincoll.edu/sarc/wp-content/uploads/sites/55/2019/08/AccommodationsTestingCenterInformation.pdf	For students that require extra time or other testing accommodations
Students who have concussions	https://www.trincoll.edu/sarc/wp-content/uploads/sites/55/2019/08/Faculty-Concussions-Info.pdf	Return to learn (classroom) guidelines
Recognizing and Helping Students in Distress	https://www.trincoll.edu/counseling-wellness-center/wp-content/uploads/sites/121/2020/10/TCCC_Faculty_Guide_v11-2019.pdf	Created by the Counseling Center