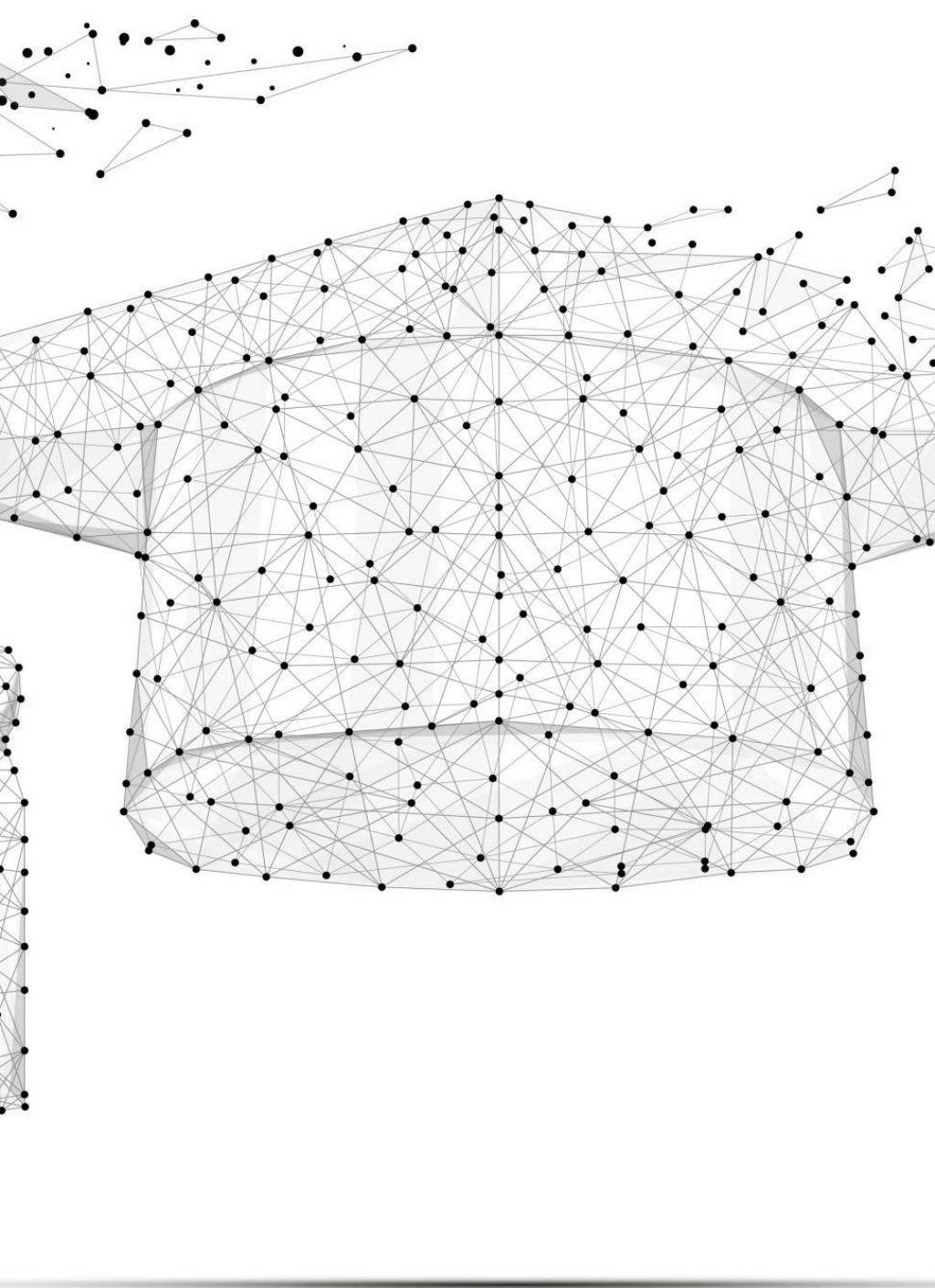




UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL) & ACCESSIBILITY: THEORY & APPLICATION

Curriculum Committee

Fall 2026

NEW SECTION 55001 OF ARTICLE 1, OF SUBCHAPTER 1, OF CHAPTER 6, OF DIVISION 6, OF TITLE 5 OF THE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS IS **ADDED** TO READ:

§ 55001. **Curriculum Committee.**

(a) **Districts** shall **establish curriculum committees** by **mutual agreement** between **administrators** and **academic senates**. Curriculum committees shall be either a committee of the academic senate or a separate committee that includes faculty.

(b) Curriculum committees shall have a **documented procedure** for ensuring that **course outlines of record** for **all courses** approved pursuant to section 55002 describe **approaches** that would **accommodate** and **engage diverse student bodies**, **advance equitable student outcomes**, and **promote the inclusion of all students**.

(c) Curriculum committees shall have a **documented procedure** to guarantee **accessibility** for every student to ensure individuals with disabilities can equally participate in learning through course outlines of record that reflect **universal design for learning strategies**, which include **multiple means of representation**, **engagement**, and **expression** to **support learner variability** and **diversity**.

Authority cited: Sections 70901 and 70901.5, Education Code. Reference: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code.

This language also appears in Title 5 § 55001.5. **Course Outlines of Record.** (New). It is addressed by our Cultural Competence Requirement

The focus of this presentation

Our COC Curriculum Inclusion of Accessibility

Referenced 3 times in our Operating Procedures:

IV. Faculty Co-Chair Responsibilities

16. Refer to the relevant Board Policies (BP) and Academic Policies (AP) for Curriculum, including **BP/AP 3725: Instructional Materials** to help educate our colleagues about accessible instructional materials.

VII. Audit Trail for Revised Courses &

VIII. Audit Trail for New/Proposed Courses

3. Auditor Responsibilities
 - f. Learning Resources
 - ii. Communicates any changes to the Curriculum Committee Faculty Co-Chair if **accessibility standards** for learning resources have been updated

We added the following to Coursedog in the Textbooks area (for new & revised COR proposals):

Current standards for digital Instructional Materials are that they meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) criteria to be considered accessible. Please verify that the digital resources included in this section and in the next section (Other Instructional Materials) meet this criteria.

If you have questions, please refer to the following sites:

- World Wide Web Consortium's site "[Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG 2.1\)](#)"
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction site "[WCAG 2.1 Level AA](#)"

A Brief History of Universal Design (UD)

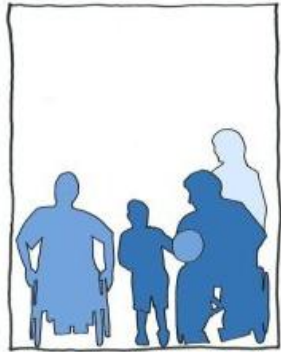
- UDL originated with the concept of UD.
- Often credited to Architect Ronald Mace, “[who in 1987 first coined the term ‘Universal Design’](#)”, UD has its origins in the [large number of WWII veterans who returned home with disabilities](#).
- [Mace went on to work with other scholars](#) at a newly developed [Center for Universal Design](#) at North Carolina State University (in the 1980’s), where central definitions were established:
 - UD: “The design of products and environments to be usable to the greatest extent possible by people of all ages and abilities.”
 - “The universal design philosophy asserts that accessible, equitable environments (such as buildings, products, or services) is not a special requirement that benefits a minority of its users, but is intrinsic to and fundamental to good design.” (Story, Mueller, & Mace, 1998).
 - “Every user benefits from accessible, usable, convenient design.” (Story, Mueller, & Mace, 1998).



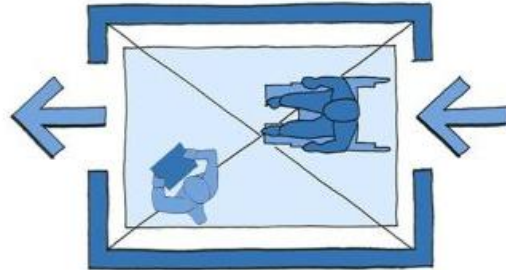
From UD to UDL

The following insights are from Ohio State University's Teaching & Learning Resource Center site [Universal Design for Learning: Planning with All Students in Mind](#)

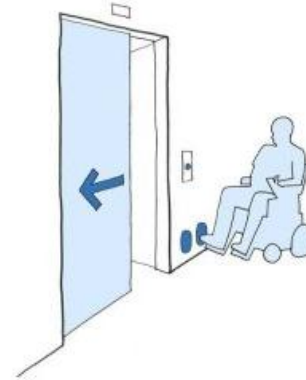
- “Over time, UD's reach expanded to digital spaces like the internet and audiovisual media.”
- “This shift from physical to digital environments inspired educators, who applied UD tenets to the barriers of traditional course design” (Tobin & Behling, 2018).
- “The resulting framework — [Universal Design for Learning](#) (UDL) — as articulated by the foundational work of researchers at the [Center for Applied Special Technology \(CAST\)](#), advocates for curriculum and course design centered on addressing the needs of all learners.”



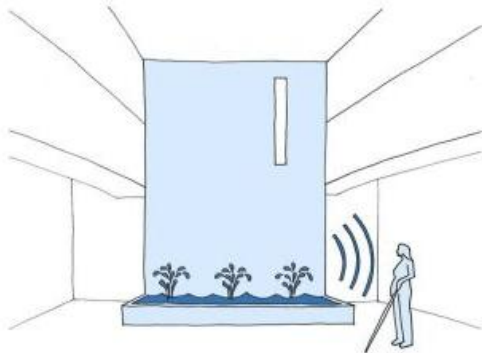
7ft. wide corridors



Large Double Sided Elevator



Specialized Elevator Controls



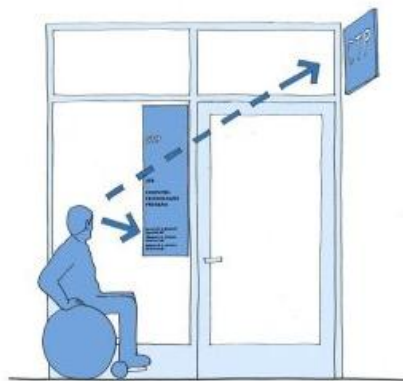
Acoustic Landmarks



Automatic Doors



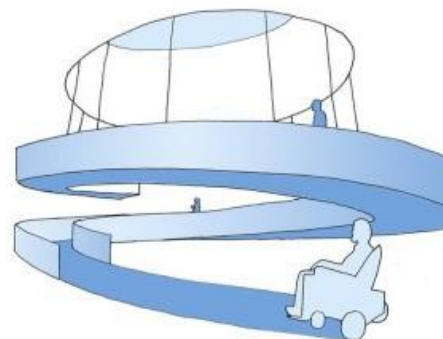
Textured Pavement Way Finding



Visible Signage

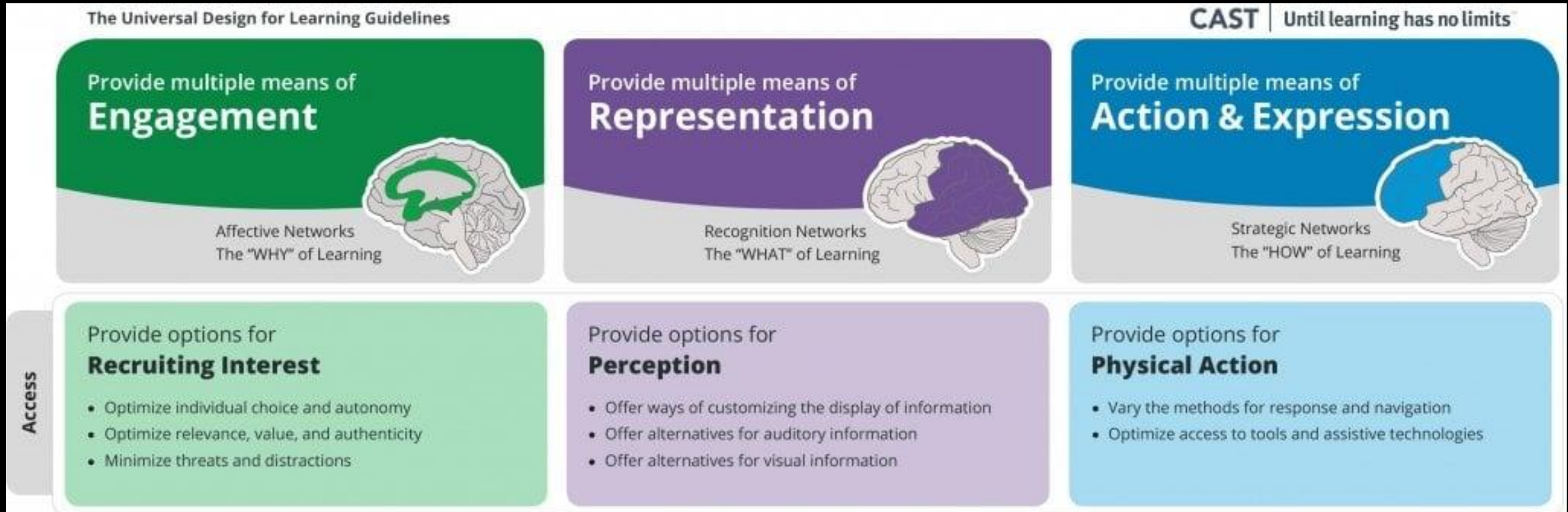


Visual Contrast



Vertical Circulation

3 Main Principles of UDL



Access to Participation:

Engagement focuses on how faculty can structure assignments to provide more choice for students as to what they read about and work on so they are more likely to find a topic/approach which resonates with them.

Access to Information:

Representation focuses on how faculty communicate concepts and instructions to students, including using visuals, helpful formatting, and modeling the activity as appropriate.

Access to Demonstrating Proficiency:

Action & Expression focus on giving students the flexibility to produce work in a variety of modalities/formats so that they can select one which is most appropriate/most rewarding for them; alternatively, more scaffolding of large projects allows for more feedback and customized learning.

A Sampling of Insights about UDL

- From [CAST](#):
 - “CAST created the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework so that **all learning experiences** in school, the workplace, and life are thoughtfully designed to **elevate strengths** and **eliminate barriers**. Because everyone deserves the opportunity to grow and thrive.”
 - “UDL is a framework to **improve** and **optimize teaching and learning** based on **what we know** about the **human brain**. Each brain is made of billions of interconnected neurons that form unique pathways. **Like fingerprints, no two brains are alike.**”
- From [University of Illinois-Chicago](#): “Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an **educational framework** for **creating learning environments** that **address** the **diverse needs of learners**. At its core, UDL **provides students flexibility** in the ways they access and engage with course materials and demonstrate mastery of learning objectives.”
- From [Ohio State University](#): “UDL goes beyond providing access to students with disabilities to **enhancing the learning experience for everyone**. Mindful tactics such as sharing study resources and providing assignment options offer all students meaningful support and [ownership of learning](#).”
- From [University of Oregon](#): “When we plan for learner variability through course design and teaching strategies like those UDL offers, we **support success for all students**, including those who have **disabilities** and/or are **neurodivergent**, students who are **English language learners**, and students in a **variety of other contexts**.”
- From [University of Washington](#): “Key to the concept of universal design is the **idea of ‘multiples.’** The common **red, octagonal stop sign** is a great example of how **designers use multiples to increase access** – in this case, the designers used **text, color, and shape** to **convey information**. Those who can’t read the text can take cues from the color and shape. Those who are colorblind can take cues from the text and shape. By providing multiple ways to access and engage information, **UDL increases the likelihood that a more diverse range of learners can succeed.**”

“When a flower doesn’t bloom, you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower.”

— Alexander den Heijer

How to Start Including UDL in Courses

The following insights are from Lauren Bastian as found at the University of Oregon's Office of the Provost: Teaching Support and Innovation site [Universal Design for Learning](#):

“Step 1: Revisit your learning objectives

One of the most impactful (and time-saving) things we can do in terms of Universal Design and accessibility is to revisit our learning objectives for a course and for assignments and activities, and to revise them where needed.

When we have learning objectives that are specific, meaningful, clearly articulated, and not tied to a specific medium unless the medium is core to the skill, then we can more easily imagine multiple paths towards that goal ...”

I think this is why this topic has been connected with COR's (Course Outlines of Record) in Title 5

“Step 2: Consider UDL as a ‘plus one’

Many of us need to make change incrementally. Educators Thomas Tobin and Kristin Behling (in their book [Reach Everyone, Teach Everyone](#)) encourage us to think of UDL as "plus one"-- adding just one more way for students to perceive course content, interact, or show their learning.

Your "plus one" might focus that change in an area of your course where students are struggling (to understand a concept, or to complete an assignment, for example) or not yet reaching the learning objectives you've set.”

Including an assignment example in COR's offers a starting point for this Plus One approach locally

Our COC Curriculum Inclusion of UDL

Referenced 2 times in our Operating Procedures:

VII. Audit Trail for Revised Courses

3. Auditor Responsibilities

- h. Curriculum Committee Representative review process
 - ii. Check that the outline meets current curriculum standards, following guides such as the current version of the Curriculum Outline of Record (COR) Review Checklist and **Universal Design for Learning standards**, as defined locally

XIV. General Provisions

- 4. The Curriculum Committee may create ad hoc subcommittees to review and report back on specific curricular items. Examples:
 - d. Reviewing Teams to specialize in feedback on Final Reads for new course/program proposals, **including Universal Design for Learning standards**, as defined locally
-

We added the following to Coursedog in the Assignments area (for new & revised COR proposals):

The following are the 3 main categories of UDL. In the Assignments area, please include at least one assignment in an “Other/UDL Assignment” category which highlights at least one of the following principles:

- **Engagement = Access to Participation:**

An assignment of this type focuses on how faculty can structure assignments to provide more choices for students as to what they read about and work on so they are more likely to find a topic/approach which resonates with them.

- **Representation = Access to Information:**

An assignment of this type focuses on how faculty can communicate concepts and instructions to students, including using visuals/videos, helpful formatting, and modeling the activity as appropriate.

- **Action & Expression = Access to Demonstrating Proficiency:**

An assignment of this type focuses on giving students the flexibility to produce work in a variety of modalities/ formats so that they can select one which is most appropriate/most rewarding for them; alternatively, more scaffolding of large projects allows for more feedback and refinement, so that also falls under this category.

SAMPLE OTHER/UDL ASSIGNMENTS FOR EACH CATEGORY

Engagement =

Access to Participation:

MUSIC 131: Keyboard Instruction I

Cultural Competency assignment: **Select a musical tradition from a region outside of Western Europe and North America** (e.g., music from India, West Africa, the Caribbean, East Asia, or Indigenous cultures). Research the fundamental elements of this music and write a one to two page paper, focusing on one of these 4 topics ...

Representation =

Access to Information

SURV 110: Computer Aided Drafting for Surveyors (Proposed)

Typical Lab Assignment:

An important aspect of working with CAD (Computer Aided Drafting) in Surveying is inserting the surveying data into a drawing and then refining the output. **In lab we explored how to do this with step-by-step instructions, a short video, & a hands-on demonstration by your instructor.** Now it's your turn to demonstrate the following skills: Insert Survey points into a CAD drawing. Review, locate, and reposition point labels. Edit points.

Action & Expression =

Access to Demonstrating Proficiency

REAL 105: Real Estate Financing (Proposed)

For this assignment, you will create a visual graphic to help potential buyers and fellow professionals in real estate understand the real estate cycle. You will work in groups of 2-3 peers, and **it is up to each group whether they want to use a software program** (like PowerPoint or Prezi) or **something physical** (like a posterboard) to **create this graphic**. However, the goal for each group is to create a graphic which shows each pivotal stage of the real estate cycle, including a label on the graphic for each, as well as the possible ways the process flows from one stage to the next stage.

FURTHER UDL RESOURCES

CAST Resources:

- [Design Multiple Means of Engagement](#)
- [Design Multiple Means of Representation](#)
- [Design Multiple Means of Action & Expression](#)

University of Illinois Chicago Resources:

This site includes sections on Online Asynchronous, Online Synchronous, and Hybrid courses:

- [Teaching Strategies for Implementing UDL](#)

University of Washington Resources:

This site includes simple examples of for each principle:

- [Adopting UDL with the Plus one \(+1\) approach](#)

University of Oregon Resources:

[Teaching Support and Innovation: Universal Design for Learning:](#)

This site contains embedded videos for each of the 3 areas (~ 30 minutes each) and has openly licensed slides you can review as well:

Access our recorded workshop:

Excerpt - Multiple Means of Engagement
3 UDL principles: multiple means of

Engagement Representation Action & Expression

0:00 / 34:59

Table of Contents

- Overview of engagement 0:43
- Engagement session 2:04

Reference and use our openly licensed slides:

[Universal Design, UDL, & Multiple Means of Engagement \(PowerPoint\)](#)

Access our recorded workshop:

Excerpt - Multiple Means of Representation
3 UDL guidelines: multiple means of

So I'm going to show just an overview so you can get situated if these are newer and if they're not, we'll zoom right in.

0:00 / 28:06

Table of Contents

- Representation overview 0:47
- Representation: "Representation" 5:06

Reference and use our openly licensed slides:

[Universal Design, UDL, & Multiple Means of Representation \(PowerPoint\)](#)

Access our recorded workshop:

Excerpt- UDL Action Expression
Action & expression refers to how:

"Learners differ in the ways that they can navigate a learning environment: express what they know. For example, individuals with significant motor impairments (e.g., cerebral palsy), those who struggle with strategic and organizational abilities (executive function disorders), those who have dyslexia, and so forth approach learning tasks very differently. Some may express themselves well in written text but not speech, and vice versa."

0:00 / 32:07

Table of Contents

- Components of action & expression 2:32
- Action Expression session 7:20

Reference and use our openly licensed slides:

[Universal Design, UDL, & Multiple Means of Action & Expression \(PowerPoint\)](#)

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Sources Cited:

Abdullayeva, Yasmin (2024). “Unlocking Inclusivity: The power of universal design.” Parametric Architecture. Retrieved April 13, 2026 from <https://parametric-architecture.com/unlocking-inclusivity-the-power-of-universal-design>

Bastian, Laurel. “Universal Design for Learning.” Office of the Provost: Teaching Support and Innovation at the University of Oregon. Retrieved April 13, 2026 from <https://teaching.uoregon.edu/resources/universal-design-learning>

“The Center for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD)” (2026). Retrieved April 13, 2026 from <https://universaldesign.ie/>

“Center for Universal Design” (1997). North Carolina State University (NCSU). Retrieved April 13, 2026 from <https://design.ncsu.edu/research/center-for-universal-design/>

- The above website is from 1997 with a note at the top which said they closed due to a lack of funding.
- However, the following NCSU blog from 2025 indicates that this center may be reviving: [A New Chapter for Inclusive Design](#)

Stapleton-Corcoran, Erin (2022). “Universal Design for Learning (UDL).” Center for the Advancement of Teaching Excellence at the University of Illinois Chicago. Retrieved April 13, 2026 from <https://teaching.uic.edu/resources/teaching-guides/inclusive-equity-minded-teaching-practices/universal-design-for-learning-udl/>

“Universal Design for Learning.” Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST). Retrieved April 13, 2026 from <https://www.cast.org/what-we-do/universal-design-for-learning/>

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