As defined by the National Center on Universal Design for Learning, UDL is “a set of principles for curriculum development that gives all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL provides a model for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone — not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs.”[[1]](#footnote-1) The following are three key principles of UDL, with examples and resources for each:

**Present information and content in different ways; provide multiple means of representation.**

* Provide the presentation/assessment/classroom activity on the computer/handheld device so the learner can adjust text (size and style) and brightness.
* Provide differentiated resources to supplement2wwwwww the textbook or whole-class reading.
* Provide opportunities to learn from experts in the field.
* Allow students to choose how they are going to learn the new content.
* Use pictures to support vocabulary.
* Utilize graphic organizers to illustrate connections between prior knowledge and current learning.
* Use graphic organizers, pictures, graphics, and animations with text to illustrate key concepts.
* Resources from: <http://www.udlcenter.org/implementation/examples/examples1_1>
	+ Effective Color Contrast: Provides information on how to use colors effectively in visuals.
	+ National Center on Accessible Instructional Material (AIM): Provides resources and information about accessible instructional materials for teachers, parents, students, district-level personnel, and state policy makers.

**Differentiate the ways that learners can express what they know; provide multiple means of action and expression.**

* Offer assistive technology to learners who are unable to express understanding through conventional methods.
* Provide multiple ways for learners to respond. For example, some learners may write their answers to questions, while others may record them.
* Provide multiple options for the learner to demonstrate his or her understanding. For example:
	+ For a math assignment students might write a journal entry, create a technology-based product, complete worksheets with multiple-choice and open-response items, develop collaborative word problems with visuals, or create original artwork.
	+ After reading a complex text, students might show they comprehend the major events by putting on a play, creating a comic strip, writing a report, or producing an animated video.
	+ After completing a course on UDL, educators might summarize their learning through a digital presentation, audiovisual presentation, research report, or a picture book.
* Resource from: <http://www.udlcenter.org/implementation/examples/examples4_1>
	+ Microsoft Accessibility Options: Provides a tutorial on all of the accessibility features available in Windows XP.
* Resource from: <http://www.udlcenter.org/implementation/examples/examples5_1>
	+ Crayon: Allows users to create a newspaper to communicate their understanding.

**Stimulate interest and motivation for learning; provide multiple means of engagement.**

* Develop a menu of activities aligned to the learning goals. This enables learners to choose activities aligned to his or her learning style.
* Encourage learners to become active participants in their own learning through self-assessment.
* Plan for the differences between introverted learners and extroverted learners. For example, allow the introverted learner more individual time to process information.
* Ensure social relevance. For example, when teaching about circumference, consider your population of students when selecting items to measure. Are the students interested in cars? If so, have them find the circumference of their tires so they can get new rims. Do the students live on farms? If so, have them calculate what size well to dig? Do the students hip-hop? If so, have them figure out the circumference of their moves. Go beyond the circle, pie, and pizza.
* Allow students to determine the pacing of their learning. This will enable some students to move at a faster pace.
* Create flexible collaborative groups with each person having a defined role, such as a recorder, timekeeper, presenter, or organizer.
* Provide regular opportunities for actionable feedback from self, peer, and teacher.
* Resources from: <http://www.udlcenter.org/implementation/examples/examples7_1>
	+ RSS (Really Simple Syndication) Feeds: Provides a guide on how to set up RSS feeds to receive free content to use with students who have a variety of interests and learning levels.
* Resources from: <http://www.udlcenter.org/implementation/examples/examples7_3>
	+ Sensory Processing Disorder: Tips for Teachers: Provides strategies to minimize sensory processing distractions.

Below are additional resources for UDL:

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| --- | --- |
| **Web site** | **Description** |
| Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST):<http://www.cast.org/> | CAST is the organization that first defined UDL in the 1990s. CAST produced a short video illustrating the three principles of UDL, presented here: <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl> |
| National Center on Universal Design for Learning: <http://www.udlcenter.org/> | “Founded in 2009, the National Center on UDL supports the effective and wide scale implementation of UDL by connecting stakeholders in the field and providing resources and information.”[[2]](#footnote-2) This site offers guidelines for, explanations of , and examples of each UDL principle: <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/udlguidelines> |
| The IRIS Center’s UDL Module:<http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/udl/> | “Funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the IRIS Center” [[3]](#footnote-3) seeks “to create and infuse resources about evidence-based practices into preservice preparation and professional development programs.”[[4]](#footnote-4) This site offers a five-part online learning module to help educators understand the principles and application of UDL. |

1. National Center on Universal Design for Learning, <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/whatisudl> (April 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. National Center on Universal Design for Learning, <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudlcenter> (2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The IRIS Center, <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/about/who-we-are>. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)