

ISET* Technology Tools Menu for Special Educators Tools: (UDL Edition)

UDL at a Glance

Universal design (UD) in education stems from the architectural field. Architects use UD to ensure appropriate accessibility for all who use a particular building. The buildings are designed from the beginning to be accessible rather than retrofitted, thus creating a welcoming atmosphere for all who enter. This same premise is the foundation of UD in education, creating the foundation for Universal Design for Learning or as it is commonly referred, UDL. UDL is a curriculum-design process that begins with planning for every student, making instruction more effective, and providing opportunity for teachers to maintain their individuality and creativity (Novak, 2016). UDL provides a blueprint 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.



Planning instruction in special education and in inclusive classrooms should include the principles of UDL in order to best meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities. UDL provides the framework for meeting the individual needs of students while planning for everyone, essentially providing the opportunity for teachers to be more efficient and effective in their instruction while setting the stage for more effective collaboration (Courey, Tappe, Siker, & LePage, 2012). At its core, UDL emphasizes making curriculum accessible to everyone not by prescribing individual solutions based on disabilities, but by removing barriers in methods and materials. The flexibility of technologies like tablets, smartphones, web apps, and new emerging trends like augmented reality are providing opportunities for educators to remove barriers to reach new learners. Using the UDL framework allows teachers to design learning environments that make the instruction flexible and accessible to everyone. Many of the tools can be used for multiple purposes across the UDL principles of Multiple Means of Engagement, Representation, and Action/Expression.

Provide multiple means of
Engagement



Affective Networks
The "WHY" of Learning

Provide multiple means of
Representation



Recognition Networks
The "WHAT" of Learning

Provide multiple means of
Action & Expression



Strategic Networks
The "HOW" of Learning

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FERPA & Data Security disclaimer:

If teachers use a program or resource from this document in a school setting, it should be approved by the school district to be sure that it does not breach any established policies.

Further information and links for technology tools are available at www.isetcec.org

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