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Tools for the Universal Design of Instruction

Implementing Universal Design in the Instructional Environment

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Original presentation developed by Scott, McGuire, & Shaw, University of Connecticut

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Overview

I. A brief look at UD

II. The Principles of UDI

III. Applications of UDI

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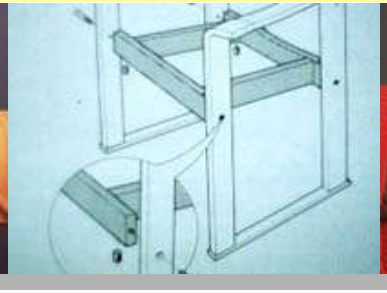
Universal Design





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Definition of Universal Design

The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

Center for Universal Design, North Carolina State University

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Example of Universal Design

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Basic Concepts of UD

- Anticipates the needs of diverse users
- Builds in inclusive features from the beginning
- Benefits a broad range of individuals
- Often promotes cost and/or time saving in the long run
- Results in a more inclusive climate

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Applying Universal Design to Instruction

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Developing the UDI Construct at UConn

- Extensive review of the literature
  effective teaching in K-12, learning disabilities
  effective teaching in postsecondary education
  Universal Design
- Articulating the UDI principles
- On-going validation

Scott, McGuire, & Foley, 2000

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Defining UDI

"UDI is the proactive design and use of inclusive instructional strategies that benefit a broad range of learners including students with disabilities."

Scott, McGuire, & Embry (2002).

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Principles of UDI

- Equitable Use
- Flexibility in Use
- Simple and Intuitive
- Perceptible Information
- Tolerance for Error
- Low Physical Effort
- Size and Space for Approach and Use
- A Community of Learners
- Instructional Climate

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Principle One: Equitable Use

Definition:

Instruction is designed to be useful to and accessible by people with diverse abilities. Provide the same means of use for all users.

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Principle Two: Flexibility in Use

Definition:

Instruction is designed to accommodate a wide range of individual abilities.

Provide choice in methods of use.

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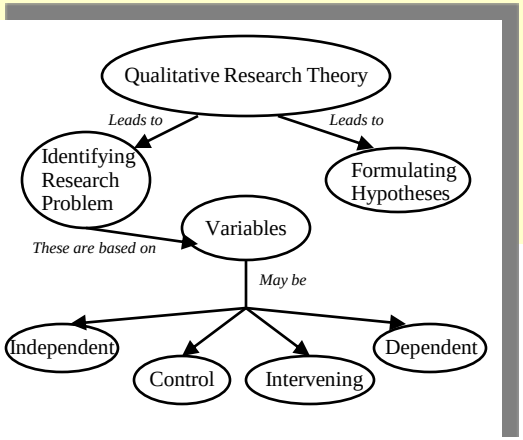
Principle Three: Simple and Intuitive

Definition:

Instruction is designed in a straight-forward and predictable manner, regardless of the student's experience, knowledge, language, or current concentration level.



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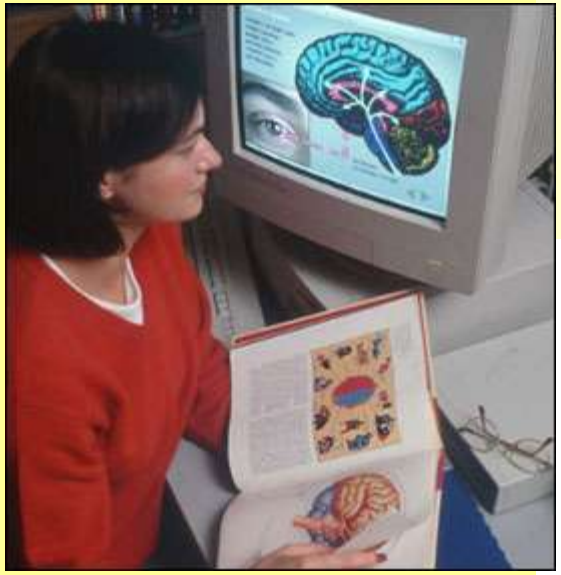
Principle Four: Perceptible Information

Definition:

Instruction is designed so that necessary information is communicated effectively to the student, regardless of ambient conditions or the student's sensory abilities.



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Principle Five: Tolerance for Error

Definition:

Instruction anticipates variation in individual student learning pace and prerequisite skills.

Error is seen as a window for promoting individual learning.

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Principle Six: Low Physical Effort

Definition:

Instruction is designed to minimize nonessential physical effort in order to allow maximum attention to learning.

(This principle does not apply when physical effort is integral to essential requirements of a course.)

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Principle Seven: Size and Space for Approach and Use

Definition:

Instruction is designed with consideration for appropriate size and space for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless student's body size, posture, mobility, and communication needs.

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Principle Seven: Size and Space for Approach and Use

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Principle Eight: A Community of Learners

Definition:

The instructional environment promotes interaction and communication between students and among students and faculty.

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Principle Nine: Instructional Climate

Definition:

Instruction is designed to be welcoming and inclusive.
High expectations are espoused for all students.

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Realistic expectations

"In some ways the term Universal is unfortunate because no product or environment can be made entirely usable by everyone…. But every environment can be made more usable."

Ronald Mace

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Identifying strategies from our teaching that reflect UDI Principles

- LEVEL
  - "Low threshold" quick enhancements
  - Broader approach to change
- TECHNOLOGY
  - May be no-low-high tech
- INNOVATION
  - May be low-moderate-high innovation

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Critically examining the Principles of UDI©

In foreign language learning:

-Are some principles more relevant than others?

-Are some principles more common?

-Are some principles overlooked?

-Should some principles be overlooked?