

## Principles of Universal Design for Instruction

This page outlines the Principles of Universal Design for Instruction (UDI), which support inclusive teaching practices by making instruction accessible, flexible, and effective for all learners. These principles encourage multiple ways of delivering content, engaging students, and supporting learning in diverse classroom environments.

Adapted from Scott, S., McGuire, J., & Shaw, S. (2001). *Principles of Universal Design for Instruction*. Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability, University of Connecticut.

### Equitable Use

**Definition:** Instruction is designed to be useful and accessible to people with diverse abilities. Provide the same means of use for all students when possible, and equivalent access when not.

**Example:** Provide links to online support and resources so all students can access materials as needed, regardless of academic preparation, need for content review, or distance from campus.

### Flexibility in Use

**Definition:** Instruction is designed to accommodate a wide range of individual abilities. Provide choices in methods of learning and engagement.

**Example:** Use varied instructional methods such as lecture with visual outlines, group activities, storytelling, or online discussion boards or chat discussions to provide multiple ways of learning.

### Simple and Intuitive

**Definition:** Instruction is designed in a clear, straightforward, and predictable manner, regardless of the student's experience, knowledge, language ability, or concentration level. Unnecessary complexity is reduced.

**Example:** Provide grading rubrics for papers or projects to clearly outline expectations for performance.

### A Community of Learners

**Definition:** The instructional environment encourages interaction and communication among students and between students and faculty.

**Example:** Foster communication through structured study groups, discussion groups, email lists, or chat-based learning environments.

## Tolerance for Error

**Definition:** Instruction anticipates variation in student learning pace and prerequisite skills and allows flexibility in completion and revision.

**Example:** Allow students to use word processors for writing and editing papers or essay exams.

## Low Physical Effort

**Definition:** Instruction is designed to minimize unnecessary physical effort so students can focus on learning. This does not apply when physical effort is an essential course requirement.

**Example:** Allow students to use word processors for writing and editing assignments and exams.

## Size and Space for Approach and Use

**Definition:** Instruction is designed with appropriate physical and virtual space for access, use, and participation, regardless of body size, mobility, or communication needs.

**Example:** Use circular seating arrangements in small classes to support visibility and participation for all students, including those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

## Perceptible Information

**Definition:** Instruction is designed so that essential information is communicated effectively regardless of sensory ability or environmental conditions.

**Example:** Provide instructional materials in digital formats when possible so students can use assistive technology such as screen readers, text enlargement tools, or translation support.

## Instructional Climate

**Definition:** Instruction is designed to be welcoming and inclusive, with high expectations for all students.

**Example:** Include a syllabus statement affirming respect for diversity and encouraging students to discuss learning needs with the instructor.