# UDL Glossary and Aid

Breanne Kirsch, Briar Cliff University

"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." -[UDL on Campus](http://udloncampus.cast.org/page/udl_about) (CAST, n.d., Why).

\*These are operational or working definitions based on the instructor’s experiences with UDL that are designed to help familiarize faculty members who are new to UDL with overall UDL concepts and modes of thinking.

## Terms

* **Accessibility**: when something is usable, reachable, obtainable, and understandable for as many people as possible, including people with disabilities
* **Accommodations**: providing something to satisfy a need or convenience including an adaptation or adjustment to meet the needs of others
* **Adaptive/assistive technology**: existing tools are adapted for individuals with disabilities so they can use them such as screen readers, magnifying lenses, adjustable tables, keyboard modifications, touch screens, braille, large print books, etc.
* **Alt-tags**: providing alternative text descriptions for an image, graphic, or diagram to assist people with vision impairments and provides a description for screen readers to read.
* **Auditory information**: providing content with sounds in the learning environment, such as speech, podcasts, or music.
* **Authenticity**: providing education that is real, genuine, and based on facts; true to one’s beliefs, personality, or character
* **Autonomy**: independence over one’s actions
* **Background knowledge**: information essential to understanding a current problem or situation.
* **Blended/hybrid courses**: combine the flexibility of an online class and completing coursework online with meeting in a traditional classroom.
* **Case studies**: study of a person or group to serve as an example and compare to a larger group/population; can include roleplaying or scenario-based activities.
* **Chunking**: breaking content into smaller parts to make sure students are on the right track and understanding the content; can break up a lecture with active learning activities like reflection, group work, class discussion, etc.
* **Closed captions**: written description of audio elements (usually verbal) as text overlay that can be enabled or disabled.
* **Coping skills**: thoughts and behaviors that help manage stressful situations, such as meditation, journaling, venting to a friend, exercise, taking a bath, time management, or to-do lists.
* **Generalization**: perceiving the relationship between different things (words, concepts, feelings, etc.) and the formation of a general notion that can be used in new circumstances (or words, concepts, etc.)
* **Graduated levels of support**: provided as much support as students need throughout the learning process; providing lots of support for beginners (demonstrating how to solve several problems), less support for students as they become more familiar with the content (give partially solved problems or very similar problems to the example given earlier), and even less support for advanced students (give new problems with new contexts with little support)
* **Headings**: words used to categorize content into sections or parts of a document, such as a Google Doc or Word document. In Word, this is a feature in the top middle of the Home tab that says Normal, No Spacing, Heading 1, etc.; should be used in Word documents to break up the content for screen readers to be able to jump to different parts of the document quickly.
* **Inclusive design**: designing educational environments, materials, and practices that are inclusive for all students, regardless of their diverse backgrounds and abilities. Ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to learn and participate in educational activities, regardless of any potential barriers they may face. Inclusive design in education also acknowledges and values the diversity of students' cultural backgrounds, learning preferences, and experiences, and promotes a learning environment that is welcoming and inclusive for all.
* **Information processing**: the acquisition, processing, organization, and retrieval of information (facts, concepts, etc.); originating in schema theory from Bartlett and Piaget
* **Learner variability**: students are all unique and have different needs, such as students with learning disabilities needing silence to learn or with hearing impairments needing captions when viewing videos; students have different learning barriers which requires different supports to overcome these barriers.
* **Mastery-oriented feedback**: providing feedback to students geared towards improving their skills rather than focusing on what is correct, incorrect, or comparing to other students.
* **Monitoring progress**: used to measure student growth and achievement over time; formative assessment and knowledge check questions or low stakes assignments should be used throughout the semester to make sure students are on the right track.
* **Motivation**: the desire to work towards a goal; related to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs triangle and the need to fulfill lower needs like sleep, hunger, thirst, or shelter before students can be motivated to learn and pay attention in class; related to Keller’s ARCS Model (attention, relevance, confidence, satisfaction); related to Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of flow and being so involved in an activity that one loses track of time
* **Multiple media**: providing content in more than one format for students to learn from (verbal explanation, diagram or infographic, and a video)
* **Relevance**: pertinent or practical and socially applicable for student’s lives
* **Salience**: a striking point or feature; notable or prominent detail
* **Scaffolding**: similar to chunking, breaking up content or assignments into parts beginning with easier to understand/basic examples and advancing to more complicated or complex examples
* **Syntax and structure**: how words are put together to create phrases; an orderly arrangement of parts or elements, such as with equations or discipline specific phrases
* **Transfer**: carrying over learning from one situation or context to another; taking a generalized idea and using it in a new context
* **UDL**: universal design for learning
  + **UDL** **Principles** and *Guidelines* (see framework for the checkpoints; CAST, 2018):
  + Providing multiple means of:
    - **Engagement**: Providing options for *recruiting interest, sustaining effort and persistence, and self-regulation*.
    - **Representation**: Providing options for *perception, language and symbols, and comprehension.*
    - **Action & Expression**: Providing options for *physical action, expression and communication, and executive functions.*
* **Visual information**: providing content via a visual modality including videos, images, graphics, diagrams, word clouds, memes, etc.

## References

Center for Applied Special Technology. (n.d.). *UDL on campus.* Retrieved May 13, 2023, from <http://udloncampus.cast.org/home>

Center for Applied Special Technology. (2018). *Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.2 [Graphic organizer]*. <https://udlguidelines.cast.org/>