Universal Design for Instruction (UDI)

What is …?

“The process of making our course concepts educationally accessible and skills attainable regardless of learning style, physical or sensory abilities.”

VCC is a community college with a long record of accommodating the learning needs of students with disabilities. However, Universal Design for Instruction moves the discussion from accommodation for those with identified or declared disabilities into the area of meeting the diverse learning needs of all students.

The objectives of UDI support this objective by:

- Building confidence of students in their ability/capacity to succeed.
- Motivating students to participate actively in the learning process.
- Maximizing learning
- Recognizing declared, and undeclared barriers, and limitations to learning in the traditional classroom and learning environment.

In your learning and teaching environment do you recognize any of the following?

- Students with English as a second or third language
- Physical limitations
- Limited sensory abilities
- Psychological or psychiatric concerns
- Different learning styles and preferences
- Different levels of preparation for the college learning experience

Educational Value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universal Design for Instruction offers faculty</th>
<th>Universal Design for Instruction offers students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• An approach to meeting the widest possible learning needs in a class</td>
<td>• A welcoming learning environment where diversity is expected</td>
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<td>• Principles of course design that minimize need for special accommodations</td>
<td>• More accommodating learning environment</td>
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<td>• Encourages communication between students and faculty</td>
<td>• Motivational learning experiences</td>
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<td>• Encourages active learning</td>
<td>• Alternative communication methods/processes</td>
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<td>• A strategy for increasing awareness of range of learning needs and styles possible in a learning situation</td>
<td>• Learning spaces that meet a diverse range of learning needs and styles</td>
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<td>• A reduction in the time and resources allotted to special accommodation requests</td>
<td>• Multiple instructional methods and strategies</td>
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<td>• Guidelines on how to increase accessibility in a course/class</td>
<td>• Flexible and accessible learning materials</td>
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1 ASD Project – Utah State University

http://cid.vcc.ca/
Examples of Classroom Application

- Design course online syllabus so that everyone can access the information regardless of sensory limitations.
- Label all equipment in the learning environment with symbols and text that is intuitive and simple to understand.
- Offer students multiple contact/communication tools such as office hours, email, telephone numbers, and course weblogs.
- Offer untimed assessment opportunities.
- Use close-captioned videos

Getting Started

Contact the Centre for Instructional Development cid@vcc.ca for support to implement UDI principles in your teaching and learning environment.
Videos: San Francisco State University Online Universal Design Tutorial http://ctfd.sfsu.edu/ud-online-training.htm

More Information

Educational:

- San Francisco State University Online Universal Design Tutorial http://ctfd.sfsu.edu/udl-online-training.htm
- University of Guelph, Teaching Support Service Universal Design http://www.tss.uoguelph.ca/uid/
- CAST: Teaching Every Student in the Digital Age Primer on UDI http://www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/ideas/tes/
- University of Washington, Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology http://www.washington.edu/doit/

References: