

THE UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING PRACTICUM

The Universal Design for Learning Practicum was a three-week cohort-based program designed for all instructors to explore in-depth each of the three principles of UDL—**multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement**. The practicum offered **practical ideas, support, and consultations** on implementing UDL principles in course design to create more flexible and supportive learning environments for students and instructors.

This practicum equipped participants to better understand the evolving student and instructor needs, particularly around creating more inclusive and supportive environments for all students.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE



3-Week Program designed with opportunities for **three individual consultations** with a learning designer to help instructors implement UDL ideas.



4 Core Sessions co-facilitated by at least **two subject matter experts** using a range of interactive strategies and discussion tools.



3 Cohort Meetings facilitated by cohort leads and focused on reflection and application of concepts.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1

Reflect on the impact of the pandemic and current events on student and instructor mental health and well-being, as related to the teaching and learning experience

2

Understand how utilizing UDL principles can reduce instructors' need to implement individual solutions for students experiencing barriers

3

Recognize how aspects of current course design may unintentionally exacerbate challenges faced by students

2.1

Explore ways to offer multiple means of engagement throughout a course to enhance all students' motivation to learn.

2.2

Explore ways to redesign assessments offering multiple means of expression to optimize opportunities for all students to accurately demonstrate their learning.

2.3

Explore ways to incorporate multiple means of representation of course material into course design to ensure all are able to access and understand key topics.

2.4

Apply specific UDL practices to syllabi, Canvas sites, course materials, assessments, and learning experiences.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE



3 Iterations
(summer, fall, winter)



250 Participants
(faculty & staff)



Wide Representation
from University Schools & Units

OUTCOMES*

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

88%

Reported moderate to great gains in understanding how UDL can lead to a **more inclusive, accessible, and supportive learning environments**



STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

86%

Reported moderate to great gains in learning how providing **more than one way** for students to **access information** can benefit all students and positively **impact student mental health**



UDL FRAMEWORK

84%

Reported moderate to great gains in knowing how to explain the principle of **multiple means of engagement** within the UDL framework



IMPACT BEYOND THE CLASSROOM & NORTHWESTERN

UDL-IRN Panel Discussion

In October 2022, Northwestern University and **representatives from Dartmouth, Pennsylvania State University, and Johns Hopkins** participated in a **virtual panel discussion** to promote UDL initiatives, attracting around **30 attendees**.

Access and Technology Conferences

Over the past year, presentations at the **Assistive Technology Conference** at California State University Northridge (CSUN) and the **Accessing Higher Ground Conference** in Colorado showcased the UDL practicum and garnered participation from **over 100 attendees**.

Think UDL podcast

On Episode 109 of the Think UDL Podcast, the UDL Practicum and its Open Educational Resources (OER) were featured.



Open Educational Resource

In May 2023, the UDLP faculty and staff launched an Open Educational Resource (OER) presenting UDL concepts with practical applications, tools, and discussions through readings, videos, and recorded sessions. By July 2023, the Northwestern version with references to specific courses had attracted **169 visitors** and the public version had received **418 visitors**.

TESTIMONIALS

"I thought the UDLP was phenomenal. I had decently high expectations, since I found the Inclusive Teaching Practicum last year to be pretty useful, but I feel like the UDLP exceeded all those expectations."

"Please keep the workshops coming - I really like to have an opportunity to reflect on how to keep UDL as a constant in my classroom."

"The practicum is a great resource and I plan to recommend it to my colleagues."

Visit the Searle Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching [website](#) or email us at teach@northwestern.edu for more information



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