

Universal Design for Learning as Applied to Library Instruction: Multiple Means of Engagement

Guideline 1: Multiple Means of Engagement

Everyone learns in different ways, not just individuals who need accommodations. The motivation behind learning and engagement also differs from person to person. This guideline encourages instructors to consider multiple ways to engage students in a classroom by providing multiple options, as there is no one means of engagement that will work for everyone.

Here are some ways to incorporate the checkpoints into your library instruction:

| Guideline | Checkpoint | Definition | Library-Related Example |
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| Options for Recruiting Interest | Optimize individual choice and autonomy. | Provide options for various things, such as level of perceived challenge, tools used for information gathering, and learning objects. | Let the students take charge of their own learning - give them multiple ways to access worksheets, ways to access resources (let them choose to browse databases along with you, or give them the option to just watch), and provide learning objects in multiple formats (written and digital). |
| | Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity. | Find ways to make the content relevant and valuable to the students while still being authentic. | Prior to the session, work with the instructor to fully understand the research assignment and tie the library instruction directly to the classroom output . This can be as simple as demonstrating knowledge of the assignment and explaining that the library has the resources they need to successfully complete it . |
| | Minimize threats and distractions. | Create a safe space for the students that helps them avoid having a negative and/or distracting experience. | There are many ways that we can do this for the library classroom. One simple way could be introducing yourself with your preferred pronouns to indicate that this is an inclusive space. Librarians can also provide an outline of the tasks and objectives for the lesson to ease any fear of the unknown and set clear expectations for the lesson. It could also be as simple as acknowledging that a lot of information will be presented and it's okay to feel lost . |
| Options for Sustaining Effort and Persistence | Heighten salience of goals and objectives. | Build in periodic reminders of the goals and objectives to sustain concentration and focus. | In addition to presenting the goals at the beginning of the session, connect each activity or action back to these goals . Librarians who may teach scaffolded instruction sessions throughout a disciplinary program can choose to connect current activities to previous ones with small reminders of what was learned in previous sessions . |

Adapted from: CAST (2018). Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 2.2. Retrieved from <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>



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| | Vary demands and resources to optimize challenge. | Students need to be challenged, but not always in the same way because they vary in their skills and abilities. | Provide different options for in-class work, such as a worksheet that takes the student through different levels of database searching . Emphasize that you'd like them to make it through at least the first part, but encourage those who finish early to start on the other, more challenging parts . |
| | Foster collaboration and community. | Provide flexible options for students to work in groupings to help them learn how to work effectively with others. | When doing activities, like a classic Think/Pair/Share, give students the opportunity to choose with whom they want to pair and set clear expectations for the group work . Craft the expectations to encourage students to work with their partners to engage in meaningful discussion about the session content . |
| | Increase mastery-oriented feedback. | Use assessment strategically to give students the feedback they need to help them stay motivated to learn. | There are many ways that we assess the effectiveness of our instruction sessions, but consider developing small assessment checkpoints throughout the session . You could use live polling programs (Menimeter or Poll Everywhere, etc.) to allow students to provide anonymous feedback and assess their learning throughout . |
| Options for Self Regulation | Promote expectations and beliefs that optimize motivation. | Let students set personal goals that are attainable in the time allowed. | This one is more difficult given the short time we often get with students. However, you could ask students to write down 1-3 things that they are wanting to learn in today's session and then have them do a one-minute paper at the end to evaluate whether or not they learned those things . You could also ask the instructor to collect these things before the library session and use them to set the goals for the lesson plan. |
| | Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies. | Consider students' need to cope with anxiety-inducing social situations. | Give students the opportunity to ask questions at any point throughout the session, either publicly with the group or individually (and even after the session) . Encourage them to ask even what may seem like the most basic questions to ease any anxiety. Provide contact information many times. |
| | Develop self-assessment and reflection. | Find creative ways for students to recognize their own progress. | Ask students at the beginning of the session to tell you what they think of when they hear the word "Library" and then repeat it at the end so that they can see how they have progressed in their views on the library. |

