ACTION & EXPRESSION: Universal Design for Learning Principle

*Universal Design for Learning (or UDL) is a way to "improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn" (CAST, 2015).
UDL considers the why, what and how of students' learning.*

One way to integrate universal design principles into your classroom is to provide learners with multiple means of **ACTION & EXPRESSION**. This particular approach focuses on offering learners diverse ways to express their understanding and skill development as a result of course experiences. By providing a number of ways for learners to demonstrate their new knowledge, you can help them to more fully attain course outcomes.

TEACHING STRATEGIES	*Multiple means of action and expression can help different groups of learners in different ways without watering down learning outcomes. Not every strategy will work in every classroom, or for every subject area—find the ones that you are comfortable with and that work for your discipline and learners.*
1. Create materials that allow learners to interact with the content at their own paces (e.g. rewind, fast forward, pause).	• Use video content through SDSU Library, other educational repositories, or freely available online that students can control playback speed. • Supplement any video content with text content (e.g. transcript, captions). • Include section breaks during long breaks, or indicate stopping points if students need a break.
2. Build opportunities for learners to communicate their knowledge in a variety of formats where appropriate and relevant.	• Create tasks that can be done in writing or through presentation (e.g. in-class/online presentations). • Supplement writing assignments with presentation-based tasks where students can demonstrate learning through speaking. • Allow students to pre-record presentations so they can refine their work.
3. Provide learners with many examples of ways to solve problems or address issues with real-life and academic examples.	• Begin or end class sessions with instances of disciplinary knowledge being used to solve real issues. • Pose problems to student and ask them to identify innovative ways others have solved them. • Share how you apply your disciplinary knowledge in authentic situations, or ask students to write or speak about their experiences with course content *outside* of the classroom.
4. Give feedback in different formats.	• Use free tools like Canvas for video and audio-recorded feedback and comments. • Use free tools like Canvas Rubrics to give detailed feedback directly on a submitted paper. • Offer synchronous sessions through Zoom to meet with students to discuss progress.
5. Provide graphic organizers or templates that learners can use to organize course content and information.	• Use templates provided through free websites (studenthandouts.com/graphic-organizers/) to build graphic organizers for students to use as they work toward course outcomes. • Share anonymized student work (with permission) to illustrate task / course outcomes. • Scaffold student tasks at course outset and gradually remove this support as the course progresses.

6. Pose questions to learners that ask them to reflect and self-monitor progress.

- Ask students to reflect on their learning periodically (e.g. exit slip, feedback form).
- At key points, prompt students to consider how they've met the course outcomes.
- Create a task that asks students to regularly reflect on their learning, such as a reflection journal.

7. Share checklists and guides for note-taking with learners.

- Provide lecture outlines in advance of or after class sessions, so students can review content.
- Build note-taking abilities by providing students with progressively less-structured note guides.
- Share note-taking methods, such as Cornell Notes for effective note-taking (coe.jmu.edu/learningtoolbox/cornellnotes.html).

8. Assess student work using checklists and scoring rubrics, and share examples of annotated student work with learners.

- Create scoring rubrics that students can use to work toward course outcomes.
- Align course outcomes with all categories on task rubrics or checklists.
- Offer anonymous examples of past students' work (with permission), and highlight successful work toward course outcomes.

Other UDL practices that are especially helpful to learner groups often challenged by traditional classroom styles.

From the National Center on UDL, 2014

	auditory impaired	students with anxiety	cognitively impaired	English language learners	extroverts	introverts	international students	non-proficient readers	non-traditional students	under-achieving students	visually impaired
1. Use online discussion tools.	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Have students create mind maps to structure understanding.		✓		✓			✓	✓		✓	
3. Give time/effort/difficulty estimates.		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4. Reiterate objectives and outcomes and connect activities to these learning goals.		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	
5. Prompt students to "stop and think" or "show and explain."		✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	
6. Use technology that is compatible with screen readers.	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓
7. Share alternative keyboard options.	✓		✓	✓			✓				
8. Allow students to use technology tools (text-to-speech software, translation tools).	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓