

Universal Design for Learning

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Overview

According to the CDC, 1 in 68 children in the United States is born with autism (the number is 1 in 42 for boys). Depending on how disability is classified, more than half of the people who live in the U.S. will have a disability at some point in their life. How do these numbers change our perception of the “normal” student? How do we design instruction upfront to reach both typical students and students with special needs, instead of scrambling to produce accommodations at the last minute?

What is Universal Design for Learning?

The Principles of Universal Design for Learning are aimed at addressing these issues. Considering the needs of a variety of students when designing a course can help create a richer experience for all students by including some who might normally be excluded, by introducing more flexibility and creativity into the classroom, and by reducing the need to make special accommodations. Designing content, assignments, assessments and in class activities in a universal fashion might include giving students a few options for completing a final assessment, or adding captions to videos. The key to remember is that there should be diversity in representation, expression and engagement for students. In other words, the What, How and Why of learning should be clear and give students many options for participation.

Additional Resources

- [Accessibility](#)
- [Accessibility in Canvas](#)
- [Accessible Instruction](#)
- [Captioning Panopto Videos](#)
- [Course Accessibility Checklist](#)
- [Creating Panopto Videos](#)
- [Document Accessibility](#)
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