Universal Design
The universal design of instruction—where universal design (UD) principles are applied in selecting and developing curriculum, choosing and implementing teaching methods, and developing assessments—is gaining increased attention by educational researchers and practitioners at K-12 and postsecondary levels. UD means that, rather than designing your instruction for the average student, you design for potential students with a broad range in ability, disability, age, reading level, learning style, native language, race, ethnicity, and other characteristics.

More specifically, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) provides "a framework for designing curricula that enable all individuals to gain knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for learning. UDL provides rich supports for learning and reduces barriers to the curriculum while maintaining high achievement standards for all." UDL calls for multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement. Universal design of instruction (UDI) can be discussed as a process, as a set of strategies applied to specific aspects of instruction, or as a goal.

Delivery Methods
Use multiple, accessible instructional methods that are accessible to all learners.
- **Select flexible curriculum.** Choose textbooks and other curriculum materials that address the needs of students with diverse abilities, interests, learning styles, preferences, and other characteristics. When possible, use curriculum materials that are well organized, emphasize important points, provide references for gaining background knowledge, include comprehensive indices and glossaries, and have chapter outlines, study questions, and practice exercises. Consider technology-based materials that provide prompting and feedback opportunities for multiple levels of practice, background information, vocabulary, and other supports based on student responses.  

**An excerpt from: A Checklist for Inclusive Teaching by Sheryl Burgstahler, Ph.D.**

"If I regarded my life from the point of view of the pessimist, I should be undone. I should seek in vain for the light that does not visit my eyes and the music that does not ring in my ears. I should beg night and day and never be satisfied. I should sit apart in awful solitude, a prey to fear and despair. But since I consider it a duty to myself and to others to be happy, I escape a misery worse than any physical deprivation." - Helen Keller
Rant and Rave

“The conscious decision to throw out the notion that knowing a person’s disability diagnosis could tell us much of anything about the person, is very important. Not having preconceived ideas based on a label is an unbelievably freeing experience. It truly allows us to see the person—not the disability—first.”

The Spotlight is on….. Testing Accommodations

When a student applies and qualifies for services through our office some of the accommodations they may be eligible for include: an interpreter, FM system, ergonomic equipment, adaptive equipment, notetaker, tape recorder, large print, testing time, more time on assignments, priority registration, assistive technology, alt format, and CCTV. Some of these will be explained in this newsletter, others will be addressed in later issues.

Testing time: this is one of the accommodations that brings questions to our office. The determination for extra time on tests is dependent on the criteria gained from documentation received from the student. Types of documentation include information about vision impairments; chronic medical conditions; cognitive impairments; auditory issues; physical/mobility impairments; and psychological/psychiatric conditions. This documentation needs to be from a professional who is licensed/certified for the information provided.

Readers/Scribes: often needed for a mobility, vision, or learning disability; a Center for Disability Services (CDS) staff member will assist.

Alternate test design: this is on a case by case basis, it may consist of the test being presented in “chunks”, orally, or in another mode that keeps the particular learning objective intact.

Alternative Testing Locations/Isolated Testing: As with extended test time, there are a variety of reasons that a student with a disability will need an alternative testing location. Attention, distractibility, and anxiety issues or the use of a computer, reader and/or scribe are the most common. If the test is to be taken outside of the classroom, it will be either in the Phoenix Center or at the Center for Disability Services. Please foreword the test to Mike Hoel and Paula Rhoads, (preferably by e-mail) from there the test may need to be converted to a suitable format such as audio, large print or Kurzweil. Testing is monitored, and students are not allowed to use any class materials without the instructor’s consent.

Please contact our office if you have any questions about testing: ext 320.
Universal Design.....Continued from Page 1

- **Make content relevant**. Put learning in context. Incorporate multiple examples and perspectives with respect to specific concepts to make them relevant to individuals with diverse characteristics such as age, ability, gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, and interests.

- **Provide cognitive supports**. Summarize major points, give background and contextual information, deliver effective prompting, provide scaffolding tools (e.g., outlines, class notes, summaries, study guides, copies of projected materials with room for note-taking) and other cognitive supports. Deliver these materials in printed form and in a text-based electronic format. Provide opportunities for gaining further background information, vocabulary, and different levels of practice with variable levels of support. Encourage and support students to develop their own scaffolding materials.

- **Provide multiple ways to gain knowledge**. Keep in mind that learning styles and levels of familiarity with background vary among students. Use multiple modes to deliver content; when possible allow students to choose from multiple options for learning; and motivate and engage students—consider lectures, collaborative learning options, small group discussions, hands-on activities, Internet-based communications, online review materials, educational software, fieldwork, and so forth.

- **Deliver instructions clearly and in multiple ways**. Provide instructions both orally and in printed form. Ask for questions and have students repeat directions and give feedback.

- **Make each teaching method accessible to all students**. Consider a wide range of abilities, disabilities, interests, learning styles, and previous experiences when selecting instructional methods. Provide the same means of participation to all students—identical when possible, equivalent when not. Vary teaching methods.

- **Use large visual and tactile aids**. Use manipulatives to demonstrate content. Make visual aids as large as reasonable (e.g., use large, bold fonts on uncluttered overhead displays and use a computer to enlarge microscope images).

---

Test your knowledge—Word Search!

Look for these words:

Accessible
Clear
Flexible
Large font
Relevant
Supportive
Uncluttered
Vary methods

Copied with permission © 2001-2004 DO-IT.
FACULTY CORNER  by Elisa Sunflower

Those of us with disabilities also have abilities…..

I have many years experience teaching and tutoring students in mathematics. During that time I have worked with many students, some of whom are aware of their disabilities, and many who didn’t know they had a disability but did know they struggled with mathematics. Often when a student is struggling with a subject like mathematics, he/she chooses to avoid it. But when avoidance doesn’t work anymore, it is intelligent for you to assess your strengths.

Each of us has a favorite way to learn. A tactile learner prefers “hands-on” learning. A verbal auditory learner prefers to hear instructions. A visual learner thrives with written notes and diagram. In reality we use all three methods but usually one is dominant or preferred.

**Tactile or kinesthetic learners:**

Use objects like blocks, beans or some other items to help you understand positive and negative numbers and balancing equations.

Use a model or some other three-dimensional objects to explore geometric concepts such as surface area or volume.

**Verbal/auditory learners:**

Sit near the front of the classroom. Take part in classroom discussion. Use the cd when provided with the book. Use a tape-recorder with the teacher’s permission so you can replay the lecture. Ask questions after class. Read class notes out loud. Find other auditory learners to study with. Use flash cards and repeat the information to yourself.

**Visual Learners:**

Write down notes with step-by-step solutions even if you don’t totally understand the problems. Rewrite your notes for emphasis and understanding. Make little diagrams or pictures when solving word problems. Mark your text when possible.

**For all learners:** reading the material the night before a lecture will help any student make greater sense of the lecture. Try to be at all class meetings. Visit the teacher during their office hours. This gives you a chance to ask questions about your understanding. Seek a tutor in the math lab in Kemp 103. Check in the library for videos for your math class. There is a lot of help available all over campus. Don’t wait until you are completely behind.

**Disability terminology:**

Alternate Format

Alternate format is medium and/or methodology that allows people with disabilities to access information in a manner other than how the format was originally delivered. Alternate formats usable by people with disabilities may include, but are not limited to, Braille, ASCII text, large print, recorded audio, and electronic formats (Kurzweil for example).

The mission of Centralia College is to improve people's lives through lifelong learning.