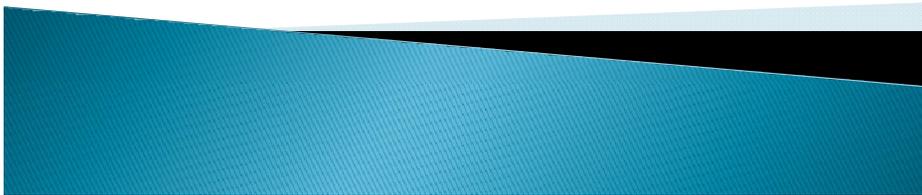


# Design for Universal Access

## Teaching All Students

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## How I define “mental disability”

- ▶ Any impairment that impacts the life of the mind, whether intellectual, creative, emotional, or communicative.
- ▶ Other terms sometimes used: *psychiatric disability, intellectual disability, cognitive disability, mental illness, mental health service user/consumer/survivor, neuroatypical, mad.*



## Disability studies (DS)

DS suggests that disability is a feature of environments rather than persons. Rather than being a tragic flaw or problem that inheres in an individual body, disability is a mode of human difference which is constructed through the built context (which includes language and attitudes as well as physical structures).



## Rosemarie Garland-Thomson on intersectionality

“Disability, like gender and race, is everywhere, once we know how to look for it. Integrating it will enrich and deepen all our teaching and scholarship ... As with gender, race, and sexuality, to understand how disability operates is to understand what it is to be fully human.”



## Accommodation and access

- ▶ An *accommodation* is a particular modification made to a particular environment in order to enhance access. In practice, it is usually made on behalf of one person or a small group, who are marked as “needing” the accommodation.
- ▶ *Access* is a spatial/social concept aimed at remediating environments rather than individual people.

(Michalko)

## Universal design

- ▶ Also called “universal design for learning” or “participatory design.”
- ▶ “Universality” is an aim rather than an accomplished fact.
- ▶ Work toward universal design is ongoing, flexible, and responsive to feedback from all participants in a given environment.

## Silver, Bourke & Strehorn on universal design

“In the typical service delivery program, modifications in an instructor’s approaches or assessment procedures for students with disabilities require that students identify themselves as disabled, request specific accommodations, and wait for these specific adjustments to be implemented ... [By contrast, UD] places accessibility issues as an integral component of all instructional planning.”

## Jay Dolmage on universal design

“Registered as action, [UD] is a way to move. In some ways, it is also a worldview. UD is not a tailoring of the environment to marginal groups; it is a form of hope, a manner of trying.”

## So, what do I do on Monday morning?

## Map the class explicitly

- ▶ Syllabus statement
- ▶ Beginning-of-class remarks
- ▶ Description of your classroom's kairotic spaces
- ▶ Re-considering the importance of (physical) presence

## Provide direct instruction for participation

- ▶ Teach annotation
- ▶ Value quiet, listening, and question-asking
- ▶ Designate communal note-takers (on a rotating basis)
- ▶ Use response cards or clickers

## Experiment with multiple channels of feedback

- ▶ Request feedback frequently, in low-stakes modes (e.g. a two-minute quick-write)
- ▶ Feedback may be written, oral, sketched, or diagrammed
- ▶ Use prompts
- ▶ Provide frequent, low-stakes feedback
- ▶ Provide communal feedback

## Establish a multi-modal environment

- ▶ Consider modes for learning other than linguistic and visual (e.g., sketching, diagramming, moving, color-coding, small-group discussion)
- ▶ Try virtual office hours (using instant messaging)
- ▶ Experiment with exercises that introduce multiple modes

## "Cut and Paste" exercise



Focus on what's feasible.

Universal design does not mean meeting every student's needs perfectly. Rather, it is "a way to move ... a manner of trying" (Dolmage).