Presenter: Thomas J. Tobin, PhD, MSLS, PMP, MOT
Title: Hold the Phone: Designing Effective eLearning with Universal Design for Learning

Abstract

To help make educational materials and practices inclusive and useful for all learners, this interactive keynote session radically reflects on how faculty members and course designers can adopt Universal Design for Learning in order to create learning interactions that provide students with more time for study and practice in their busy days: broaden our focus away from learners with disabilities and toward a larger ease-of-use/general-inclusion framework.

Description

This keynote will introduce you to Universal Design for Learning, especially as newly revised for higher education (CAST, 2014). You will discover how to implement UDL in the design of your online course environment so that it creates places for best teaching practices to take place in the classroom and beyond. This is best accomplished through an incremental approach, using a "next 20" series of milestones—achievements that can be attained in the next 20 minutes, 20 days, and 20 months (Tobin, 2014).

You'll also find out where to look for help at your institution and as part of Blackboard: recent research from CAST and the Center for Universal Design in Education suggests that institutions whose faculty-support staff members use UDL, too, see better adoption rates and deeper penetration of UDL principles across all courses (CAST, 2014; DO-IT, 2015). By attending this keynote presentation, you will be able to

- Help faculty colleagues to incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) elements into their courses,
- Design/retrofit existing course components using UDL principles,
- Expand your institution's use of UDL elements beyond the legally-required minimum.

This keynote uses active-learning techniques and provides use-them-now resources for participants. Especially by relating UDL to broader access benefits for all learners, this session's activities serve as a model for participants to re-frame accessibility and inclusion conversations there.

This keynote posits diversity in its most inclusive form: instead of relying solely on providing accommodation services to learners with disabilities—which is most often a last-minute, ad-hoc, reactive process—adopting UDL as part of an institution's culture of course design and teaching practices allows all learners to benefit, regardless of their place on the ability spectrum.

References

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