UDL GUIDELINES ANTI-CHECKLIST

Adapting to UDL with “Plus One” Thinking and Reflection

**Overview:**

Learning to apply the principles of **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** can be intimidating, with the sheer amount of information and options enough to cause overwhelm. This document uses the [**“plus one” approach**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDt1r3FcCQU), as well as personal and values reflection to simplify the learning process and help you identify what is most feasible and useful for yourself, as well as your students.

The ‘plus one’ approach refers to providing just one more way for an interaction, between material, instructor, and students themselves, to occur. For instance, captioning a video allows for that material to also be interacted with through reading. The goal of plus one thinking is to, over time, provide multiple ways of interactions between all aspects of a course to take place. To begin identifying places where this plus one thinking can occur, UDL experts [Tobin and Honeycutt (2017)](https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/plus-one-approach/58434) suggest reflecting on **‘pinch points’**, or:

“the places in the course where learners always: 1) have questions, 2) get things wrong on tests and assignments, and 3) request explanations in different terms. Apply ‘plus one’ design to these elements: add one choice, alternative, or means of self-regulation in each place identified.”

In addition to this method of prioritization, ‘plus one’ thinking can also be thought of as a method of continual growth and renewal for your course development. This document gives suggestions of ways to change just one more thing about your course delivery as you revise and adapt your work across the weeks, semesters, and years. The suggestions given align with the principles, guidelines and checkpoints outlined in [CAST’s UDL Guidelines](https://udlguidelines.cast.org/).

This document is called an anti-checklist to emphasize that UDL, accessibility, and disability rights and [justice](https://projectlets.org/disability-justice) can never and should never be contained to a checklist. Rather, working through this document requires commitment to continual growth, learning, and reflection and a recognition that UDL can never be fully universal.

**To use this anti-checklist.**

1. Reflect on what the ‘pinch points’ are in your course for your students OR for you.
2. For each guideline (you do not need to do them all at once!):
   1. Critically engage with the reflection questions. Approach these reflection questions with compassion and curiosity, rather than judgement.
   2. Choose one thing to change or adapt based on your reflection, prioritize pinch points where possible.
3. Come back to this document often and repeat the process.

# PRINCIPLE 1: PROVIDE MULTIPLE MEANS OF REPRESENTATION

**Guideline 1: Provide options for perception**

1.1: Offer ways of customizing the display of information

1.2: Offer alternatives for auditory information

1.3: Offer alternatives for visual information

***Reflect:*** Who are your students? (*Go beyond just demographics, try to consider why your students are in your class, what kinds of information are they looking for?)*

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| Start here: | Then try: | Then consider: |
| * Where possible, provide documents in .docx form rather than .pdf to allow for adjustment of contrast, font size, etc. * Use videos that have pre-existing closed-captions or a transcript available * Make sure that all [images in OnQ](https://www.queensu.ca/accessibility/tutorials/onq-accessibility) and course documents such as the syllabus have image descriptions. | * Ensuring that your Word documents are [formatted accessibly,](https://www.queensu.ca/accessibility/tutorials/accessible-documents/creating-accessible-word-documents-using-word-winmac) using the built-in accessibility checker and [this checklist.](https://www.queensu.ca/accessibility/tutorials/accessible-documents/accessible-word-document-checklist) * Ensuring that *all* video or audio content has transcripts ([through Office](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/transcribe-your-recordings-7fc2efec-245e-45f0-b053-2a97531ecf57)) or captions available. * Making sure that all images/charts/diagrams have [strong colour contrast](https://www.brandeis.edu/web-accessibility/understanding/color.html) AND that the information they are conveying could be understood without colour. | * Providing recordings of lectures/other material so students can re-listen or slow down the talking speed. * Providing visual diagrams, charts, or graphics in addition to text or spoken content. * Providing slides in advance so students can have paper OR digital copies, and pre-read as necessary. |

**Guideline 2: Provide options for language, mathematical expression, and symbols**

2.1: Clarify vocabulary and symbols

2.2: Clarify syntax and structures

2.3: Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols

2.4 Promote understanding across languages

2.5 Illustrate through multiple media

***Reflect:*** What language, symbols, and syntax or formatting do you expect your students to enter the course with? What assumptions are embedded in these expectations? Who is left out?

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| **Start here:** | **Then try:** | **Then consider:** |
| * Provide a link to a discipline specific glossary or [encyclopedia](https://library.queensu.ca/search/databases?keywords=Encyclopedia) in your syllabus or OnQ modules. * Provide definitions of key terms in plain language at the beginnings of lectures/units/modules. * Where possible, present key concepts in multiple forms (e.g., an academic text and a video; a math equation and physical manipulative). | * Embedding support for discipline specific vocabular and symbols within any texts you create for the class (e.g., hyperlinks, footnotes, reference to other course material). * Recapping definitions of key terms in both plain language AND discipline specific language at the end of lectures/units/modules so students can make connections across language. * Making explicit links between information provided in different mediums. | * Explicitly defining discipline specific expectations for syntax, structure, formatting, and citations, as well as outlining why these things are done/important. * Ensuring that text-to-speech is available for course content, and/or automatic voicing with digital mathematical notation. * Providing alt-text for graphic symbols, and where possible including graphics to represent key terms/concepts. |

**Guideline 3: Provide options for comprehension**

3.1: Activate or supply background knowledge

3.2: Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships

3.3: Guide information processing, visualization, and manipulation

3.4: Maximize transfer and generalization

***Reflect:*** What does grading *do* in your classroom (*Try to think beyond the bureaucratic necessities of grading)*? What do you want your assessments to do? To feel like? Do your feedback methods reflect that?

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| **Start here:** | **Then try:** | **Then consider:** |
| * State your agenda and the key points that will be covered at both the start and end of a lecture/lab/tutorial. * “[Chunk”](https://tlconestoga.ca/content-chunking/) information into smaller elements for better retention. * Clearly outline learning outcomes to students and articulate the connections between [outcomes and assignments.](https://www.queensu.ca/ctl/sites/ctlwww/files/uploaded_files/Resources/Teaching%20Toolkit/Assessment%20Strategies%20Guide/Assessment%20-%20Aligning%20Assessments%20with%20Learning%20Outcomes%20resource.pdf) | * Providing concept maps of key course content to illustrate the connections across texts/concepts OR half-full concept maps that students can fill in over time. * Building “[scaffolding](https://www.edutopia.org/blog/scaffolding-lessons-six-strategies-rebecca-alber)” opportunities for chunked up information, especially those that provide opportunities for links to previous content. * Providing clear outlines for how learning outcomes and grades can be met that are reflected in the associated [rubric](https://www.queensu.ca/ctl/sites/ctlwww/files/uploaded_files/Resources/TA%20and%20Grad%20Student%20Resources/TA%20Toolkit/CTL%201-Pager%20for%20Using%20Rubrics%202019.pdf). | * Providing an overarching concept map at the start of the course or in the syllabus [Syllabus link here eventually] to anchor connections through the course. * Building scaffolding opportunities for feedback into [assessment methods](https://www.queensu.ca/ctl/resources/teaching-toolkit/assessment-strategies) through multi-part assignments. * Trying [contract grading](https://blogs.ubc.ca/chendricks/2012/11/19/contract-grading-part-1/#:~:text=The%20central%20feature%20of%20contract,to%20earn%20each%20possible%20grade.), [ungrading](https://www.jessestommel.com/ungrading-an-introduction/), ungraded development opportunities, or building in multiple assessment choices for students. |

# PRINCIPLE 2: PROVIDE MULTIPLE MEANS OF ACTION & EXPRESSION

**Guideline 4: Provide options for physical action**

4.1: Vary the methods for response and navigation

4.2: Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies

***Reflect:*** What kind of bodies and abilities do your teaching and assessment methods assume students have? Are any of your assessment methods inadvertently evaluating how well students are meeting that norm, rather than their knowledge of the material?

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| **Start here:** | **Then try:** | **Then consider:** |
| * Allow students to take notes and complete in-class activities with pen and paper, OR digitally. * Ensure that your [lab space is accessible](https://www.accessiblecampus.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Checklist-for-Making-Science-Labs-Accessible-for-Students-with-Disabilities.pdf) (free of obstructions, navigable by someone with a mobility aid or service dog, is scent free, safety signs at multiple heights). | * Ensuring that assessments allow for a variety of physical interaction with material (verbal, written, by hand, etc.) * Ensuring that essential tasks for course requirements can be met by those of varying physical capacities. All interactive lab requirements or demonstrations have been [planned to accommodate all students](https://www.accessiblecampus.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Planning-Accessible-Science-Lab-Sessions.pdf). | * Re-structuring rubrics and assessments to ensure that they do not penalize students for speed of completion, physical capacity, or failure to meet assumed physical norms (e.g., making eye-contact during presentations, not stuttering). * Selecting [accessible science equipment](https://www.accessiblecampus.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Selecting-Accessible-Science-Equipment.pdf) or adapting equipment to be more accessible and accommodating where possible. |

**Guideline 5: Provide options for expression and communication**

5.1: Use multiple media for communication

5.2: Use multiple tools for construction and composition

5.3: Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance

***Reflect:*** In what ways do you already offer flexibility to students? Why is this the area where you are succeeding in offering variety the most? How can you use those strengths in another area?

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| **Start here:** | **Then try:** | **Then consider:** |
| * Aim to provide crucial course concepts in at least two mediums (e.g., speech, text, drawing, diagram, video, film, etc.) * Encourage the use of multiple tools in the classroom (e.g., both calculators and manipulatives) | * Solving example problems or exploring course concepts with a variety of strategies to allow for diversity of approach (differentiated models). * Modelling and encouraging the use of discipline relevant [concept mapping](https://provost.rpi.edu/learning-assessment/teaching-tools-and-resources/teaching-strategies/concept-maps) tools. | * Providing differentiated feedback in a variety of mediums (e.g., written feedback with a verbal note) * Providing sentence starters, partially filled concept maps, or other [scaffolded tools](https://wiki.queensu.ca/display/ASOCR/FAS+-+Assessment+Scaffolding+Strategies) to allow students to practice strategies in a low risk way. |

**Guideline 6: Provide options for executive functions**

6.1: Guide appropriate goal setting

6.2: Support planning and strategy development

6.3: Facilitate managing information and resources

6.4: Enhance capacity for monitoring progress

***Reflect:*** What kinds of project planning, rubrics, and feedback do you value the most in your own life? Are you tending towards these methods in your course? If so, how can you offer alternatives?

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| **Start here:** | **Then try:** | **Then consider:** |
| * Clearly state and provide course goals, learning objectives, and schedules in a variety of locations for easier goal setting and time management. * Provide project planning templates and/or clear rubrics that articulate the key elements of assignments. * Provide rubrics and encourage students to self-evaluate with them prior to assignment submission or learning objective completion. | * Providing approximations for how long contents should take each week using a [course workload estimator](https://cte.rice.edu/workload?fbclid=IwAR3I_PQlTsXXQDGbA9G0nDGUD4OGcT51iU__MCWxFKNNpBy28tp36GlEk3o). * Developing rubrics in collaboration with students to facilitate the recognition of learning objectives and intrinsic motivation. * Prompting learners to identify the type of feedback or advice that they are seeking. | * Providing [time management](https://sass.queensu.ca/resources/online/time-management) and goal setting resources and modelling their use where possible (e.g., creating essay timelines in class). * Embedding interactive prompts throughout the course for students to reflect on their progress so far and course correct as needed (e.g., mid-term self-survey [CTL link here eventually]) * Providing opportunities for self-evaluation and grading conversations, where students determine what grade they feel reflects their work. |

# PRINCIPLE 3: PROVIDE MULTIPLE MEANS OF ENGAGEMENT

**Guideline 7: Provide options for recruiting interest**

7.1: Optimize individual choice and autonomy

7.2: Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity

7.3: Minimize threats and distractions

***Reflect:*** How does privilege show up in which students speak-up in class, and by extension participation grades? Is there a connection between who is speaking-up and who is represented in the syllabus?

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| **Start here:** | **Then try:** | **Then consider:** |
| * Create opportunities for students to choose the topic or focus of their assessments (e.g., essay, presentation, lab report). * Facilitate [interactive activities](https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/teaching-resources/classroom-practices/active-learning/interactive), and/or use [case-based learning](https://teaching.usask.ca/articles/case-based-learning.php) to encourage students to draw on their own positionality and synthesize course material with their lives. * Build a supportive classroom environment by starting the year with a [meaningful land acknowledgement](https://www.queensu.ca/ctl/resources/decolonizing-and-indigenizing/land-acknowledgements), stating your [positionality and teaching values](https://www.queensu.ca/ctl/resources/equity-diversity-inclusivity/positionality-statement), and explicitly expressing an active approach to accessibility [CTL link here eventually]. | * Building in opportunities for students to choose the medium or method of their assessment. Ensure that you are prepared to help make [alternative assessments accessible](https://www.queensu.ca/ctl/resources/accessibility/accessibility-checklist-alternative-assessments). * Inviting students to reflect on their own experiences and engage with their peers through low-risk polls and contributions via platforms like [Menti](https://www.mentimeter.com/). * Encourage [a variety of methods of participation](http://gtc-blog.blogspot.com/2013/04/say-what-nonverbal-modes-of.html) in class (e.g., speaking in class, forum posts or written participation, attending office hours) and avoid valuing verbal participation above other forms of engagement. | * Bringing students into the conversation around how their assessments are evaluated. Consider building a rubric together or choosing assessment methods in collaboration. * Varying sources of information and course texts to include a wide variety of perspectives through [diversifying your syllabi](https://www.ou.edu/cfe/teaching/inclusive-pedagogy/diversifying-course-content). * Accounting for sensory stimuli and building in occasions for students to care for their sensory needs (i.e., minimizing overlapping noises, having dimmer lighting in parts of the classroom, providing movement breaks). |

**Guideline 8: Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence**

8.1: Heighten salience of goals and objectives

8.2: Vary demands and resources to optimize challenge

8.3: Foster collaboration and community

8.4: Increase mastery-oriented feedback

***Reflect:*** How are you showing up in community with your students? How do you *feel* in the classroom, and how is that reflected in your teaching approach?

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| **Start here:** | **Then try:** | **Then consider:** |
| * Clearly state learning objectives and goals at the start of each session and make explicit how they connect to the overarching goal of the course. * Facilitating times for students to engage with each other’s perspectives through ungraded small group discussion, exploration, and work ([cooperative learning](https://www.utc.edu/academic-affairs/walker-center-for-teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources/pedagogical-strategies-and-techniques/cooperative-learning)). * Provide feedback that is frequent, timely, and specific to the individual student (differentiated feedback). | * Prompting students to explicitly reflect on, or reformulate/restate in their own words the learning goals at the end of each session. * In collaboration with your students, establishing classroom guidelines for engaging respectfully with course content and each other. Explore in conversation how you might create a caring environment and mitigate the effects of triggering material [CTL link here eventually] * Giving feedback that is descriptive, substantive, informative and emphasizes effort and improvement towards learning goals rather than relative performance to others. | * Having students critically reflect on how the learning goals connect to their own ideas of success, academic progress, or cultural expectations at the start of the course or mid-semester. * Identifying the ways you are also learning in the classroom and modelling how to ask questions and think out loud collaboratively. Get involved in small group discussions and participate in rather than lead student conversations. * Using the principles of [compassionate communication](https://okanagan.mcmaster.ca/communications-toolkit/) to provide [feedback](https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/assessing-student-work/grading-and-feedback/receiving-and-giving-effective-feedback) that is compassionate and encourages perseverance and development of self-efficacy, and rewards effort. |

**Guideline 9: Provide options for self-regulation**

9.1: Promote expectations and beliefs that optimize motivation

9.2: Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies

9.3: Develop self-assessment and reflection

***Reflect:*** What are your own beliefs and values around productivity? What do you think success is? Are these values reflected in your structuring of student workload? If so, how can you provide space for students to develop their own ideas of productivity and success?

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| **Start here:** | **Then try:** | **Then consider:** |
| * Provide reminders of upcoming assignments in class and through the announcements feature in OnQ * Proactively providing links to mental health resources and suggestions for coping skills and strategies throughout the semester. Consider including these resources in your syllabus [CTL link here eventually]. | * Emailing students at the beginning of each week with the list of activities and deadlines for the week (consider copy-pasting from the syllabus to reduce workload). * Providing opportunities for students to anonymously express frustrations (through things like [Microsoft Forms](https://forms.office.com/)) with the course prior to QSSETS and offer resources based on feedback. | * Setting aside time in class to create timelines for course work and projects, prompting students to consider their own study methods and goals. * Modelling self-compassion and building access into your course through extended deadlines, compassionate late policies, and avoidance of bureaucratic measures where possible (e.g., academic consideration portal, medical documentation). |