GUIDE TO **UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING** IN

ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & DESIGN

Inspiring Creativity, Innovation, and Artistry

CTE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER OF NY

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework for designing learning experiences that are inclusive, accessible, and engaging for all students. UDL is not a checklist of required practices, but a mindset of continuous improvement. By increasing flexibility and options, UDL helps teachers proactively remove barriers, meet students where they are, and provide everyone with an equal opportunity to learn.

This document is part of a series that illustrates how UDL principles can be applied in each of Advance CTE's 14 career clusters. The series extends and tailors the tips provided in two prior publications, Supporting All Students in New York State CTE Programs [PDF] and Supporting Special Populations in New York State CTE Programs [PDF], available on the CTE TAC's website.

Photo: Nassau BOCES

With its emphasis on relevant, authentic, hands-on learning, UDL is a natural fit for CTE classrooms!

5 REASONS WHY UDL WORKS FOR CTE ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & DESIGN

1. UDL **actively promotes creative expression**. Students participate, learn, and demonstrate achievement in the ways that work best for them, developing fresh perspectives and "out-of-the-box" approaches.
2. UDL provides a **safe and supportive environment** where students can experiment and take artistic or creative risks without fear of failure.
3. UDL provides insight into how **integrating multiple media** can enhance audience engagement and demonstrates ways to **proactively address potential barriers** for audiences with varying needs and abilities.
4. UDL **cultivates the teamwork, interpersonal, and communication skills** needed to thrive in the collaborative environments where artistic and creative innovation often occurs.
5. The UDL framework **models an inclusive design process** that considers the needs and preferences of diverse audiences and clients.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO UDL FOR CTE

Universal Design is the process of creating objects, environments, and experiences that can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by people with a wide range of abilities, needs, and characteristics. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) applies the concept of Universal Design to learning contexts.

UNIVERSAL: UDL is a framework for **creating learning experiences that work for *everyone***. Proactively identifying and removing barriers to learning creates a more inclusive environment where all students have equitable opportunities to learn.

DESIGN: There is no one approach to learning that is optimal for every student in every situation. The UDL principles guide teachers to **plan for learner variability by offering flexibility and options**.

FOR LEARNING: Rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, **UDL empowers students to tailor the learning experience** for their individual needs, goals, and preferences. By discovering how they learn best, students develop into self-directed, resourceful, and skillful learners.

THE UDL PRINCIPLES*

	ENGAGEMENT	REPRESENTATION	ACTION & EXPRESSION
What is it?	The **WHY** of learning	The **WHAT** of learning	The **HOW** of learning
Why is it important?	Students differ in **what interests them** and **what motivates them to learn**.	Students differ in how they **perceive and make meaning from information**.	Students differ in how they **navigate learning environments and express what they know**.
What does it look like in practice?	Students engage in authentic, hands-on learning. Learning is relevant to students' identities, personal interests, and career goals. Students collaborate, co-create, and build community with peers. Students feel safe, included, and welcome. Fun and creativity are encouraged.	Course materials are accessible for all learners. Multiple media are used to present information. Language and symbols are clarified and decoded. The curriculum and course materials represent diverse individuals and perspectives. Learning is structured to help students build knowledge.	Learning activities and assessments are accessible for all learners. Students are guided to organize information, manage time, set goals, and plan their learning. Students communicate and express themselves in different ways. Students participate in class activities and demonstrate their learning in different ways.

** Abridged and adapted from the CAST UDL Guidelines.*

SAMPLE LESSON

Let's look at a sample lesson to see how the general principles described on page 2 can be applied in a CTE classroom.

NOTE: While this example is related to costume design, consider how the lesson and assignment submission could be adapted for your specific CTE subject area – for example, students might create a soundtrack or video trailer for A/V production; a website, playbill, or poster for graphic design; a dramatic characterization or choreography for performing arts; a set design; or virtual avatars for game design.

Examples abridged and adapted from the lesson "There Is a History in All Men's Lives" by Robbie Myles: https://ctetac.us/artslesson

Photo: CA BOCES

Key to abbreviations: **R = Representation**, **A = Action & Expression**, **E = Engagement**

ELEMENT	WHY DOES IT WORK?	GO FURTHER WITH UDL
Learning goals Students will apply close reading to synthesize character and costume notes; expand their research to prepare costume boards; and generate costume designs that capture the needs of the roles.	Allows teachers to envision multiple ways students can achieve and demonstrate learning **(A)**.	Share the learning objectives for each lesson with students to **set expectations and short-term goals** and **demonstrate how it builds upon the previous lesson (A)**. Identify the academic, Common Career Technical Core, and cluster-specific industry standards to **illustrate the lesson's relevance** to students' career goals **(E)**.
Icebreaker activity: "Delicate Beginnings" Students guess the name, purpose, and traditional gender for images of historic undergarments.	Curiosity promotes engagement and focuses attention **(E)**. Provides insight into students' prior knowledge and misconceptions to inform teaching **(R)**.	Share the slide deck so students can **customize the display of information (R)**. Provide a written caption or short verbal description of each garment to **provide an alternative format (R)**. Permit students to work in pairs or groups to **promote collaborative learning (E)** and/or **support vocabulary acquisition for ELLs (R)**. As an **alternative to oral participation**, invite students to share responses using a written "entry ticket," Padlet or collaborative document, or online poll **(A)**.

ELEMENT	WHY DOES IT WORK?	GO FURTHER WITH UDL
Small-group activity: "Emotional Connections & Colors" Students work in pairs to review an illustrated article on color psychology.	Supports collaborative learning **(E)**. Combining visuals and text permits students to perceive information in different ways **(R)**. Graphic organizer supports executive functioning and provides a resource for later review/recall **(A)**.	Invite students to focus on patterns and textures as an **alternative to color perception (R)**. **Model the process** by working through one example as a class before breaking into pairs **(A)**. Suggest students review the document as prework to **extend reading and processing time (A)**. **Manage cognitive load (A)** and **enhance collaboration (E)** with a "jigsaw" activity (i.e., each pair reviews info about a single color and reports their findings to the class).
"Rewind & Revisit" Students integrate new information with output from the previous lesson.	Highlights connections between related ideas **(R)**. Demonstrates progression of knowledge and skills across lessons **(A)**. Character chart template helps students structure and organize ideas **(A)**.	Demonstrate a finished product to **clarify expectations (R)** and **support short-term planning and strategy development (A)**. Offer the option to work in small groups or compile ideas in a shared document to **promote collaboration (E)**. Facilitate a peer review activity to **provide timely feedback (E)** and **develop students' critical thinking and constructive critique skills (A)**.
Hands-on learning Students synthesize their classwork to design a costume. Instruction is provided through a video featuring a professional costume designer, verbal instructions, and teacher demonstration.	Information is represented in multiple formats **(R)**. Video underscores relevance to jobs and careers **(E)**.	**Facilitate a class discussion (E)** to **identify the steps in the design process (R)** as demonstrated in the video. **Optimize challenge** by varying demands and resources (e.g., allow students to sketch their designs, create a collage, use templates, or apply digital tools) according to individual abilities, interests, and skills **(A)**. Share profiles of various costume designers from different backgrounds to **increase representation and inclusion of diverse groups (R)**.

TRY-IT ACTIVITY 1

Apply the framework above to a supplemental activity of your choice. Identify examples of UDL principle(s) and/or practices the activity addresses and propose two or three ways you could adapt the activity to go even further with UDL. Refer to the **UDL Principles** in the **Quick Reference Guide** on *page 2* for ideas.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY (CHOOSE 1)	UDL PRINCIPLES/PRACTICES ADDRESSED	WAYS TO GO FURTHER WITH UDL
Students create a costume board for their design [see lesson plan] Students pitch their costume design to the class [see lesson plan] Students develop a design portfolio that includes their costume design and other course artifacts [see lesson plan] Guest speaker to discuss the design process, costumes, or color psychology Other:		

TRY-IT ACTIVITY 2

How could you make the lesson and/or extension activity more meaningful for the students in your CTE Arts, Entertainment & Design course by:

Tip: Refer to the table on page 6 for information on student demographics and special populations within CTE and CTE Arts, Entertainment & Design in New York State.

Ensuring students see images and examples of people like themselves working in arts, entertainment & design?

Addressing specific barriers they might encounter (e.g., disabilities, access to resources, language skills)?

Making the lesson or activity more relevant to their identities, interests, local context, and/or career goals?

WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS IN CTE ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT & DESIGN?

POPULATION	All U.S. CTE	All NYS CTE	NYS CTE ARTS, A/V, TECH & COMMUNICATIONS
Female	46.7%	42.6%	**59.6%**
Nonbinary	*no data*	0.1%	***no data***
Students of Color	51.0%	59.0%	**74.6%**
American Indian or Alaskan Native	*0.9%*	*0.8%*	***0.7%***
Asian	*4.6%*	*12.3%*	***11.8%***
Black or African American	*13.1%*	*13.9%*	***18.3%***
Hispanic/Latino	*28.0%*	*29.4%*	***40.9%***
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*0.4%*	*0.3%*	***0.4%***
Two or More Races	*4.0%*	*2.3%*	***2.5%***
Individuals from Economically Disadvantaged Families	45.3%	59.7%	**65.7%**
Individuals Preparing for Nontraditional Fields	24.3%	18.0%	**10.6%**
Individuals With Disabilities (ESEA/IDEA)	10.7%	18.6%	**22.2%**
Homeless Individuals	1.4%	3.5%	**6.0%**
English Learners	5.4%	3.5%	**5.9%**
Youth in Foster Care	0.2%	0.2%	**0.2%**
Youth With Parent in Active Military	1.0%	0.3%	**0.2%**
Migrant Students	0.3%	0.02%	**0.0%**

Sources: PCRN National Enrollment Profile, 2021-22; NYSED Enrollment Data, Secondary CTE Concentrators, 2022-23

GUIDED APPLICATION
GETTING STARTED WITH UDL IN CTE

Implementing UDL doesn't require special pedagogy or training. In fact, you're probably using UDL principles in your teaching without even knowing it! Here are a few ways you can build upon the good teaching you already do.

Complete a printed worksheet by hand or populate a digital copy to share with your principal, consultant teachers, or others who can support your UDL journey. If you share the sheet, don't forget to fill in your information below!

My name:

My CTE program(s) or course(s):

STRATEGY 1: IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

For ***each*** of the three UDL principles, list one or two examples of strategies you're not currently using in your teaching, but you'd like to learn about or try. Indicate any resources, information, or support you need in order to be successful.

Refer to the **UDL Principles** in the **Quick Reference Guide** on page 2 for ideas.

ENGAGEMENT	REPRESENTATION	ACTION & EXPRESSION
[Example: I want to use polls or games to introduce lessons]	*[Example: I want to learn how to enable auto-captions in Google Slides]*	*[Example: I want to create graphic organizers to help students take notes]*
Resources required:	**Resources required:**	**Resources required:**

⚠ **Remember that UDL is not a checklist! You don't need to implement every practice to have a positive impact. Start with one or two small changes. See how they work for you and your students before adding others.**

STRATEGY 2: THE PLUS ONE (+1) APPROACH

Plus one (+1) means adding one option to each resource, activity, or assignment in a lesson or course, as appropriate. Start with options that require a minimal investment of your time and effort to build your momentum.

Choose a specific lesson or learning activity from your course. List each element of the lesson or activity, then propose a +1 for each element. Identify which UDL principle your +1 reflects and briefly explain how that principle is reflected.

Photo: Long Island High School for the Arts

Tip: Refer to the examples in the row What Does It Look Like in Practice? in the table on page 2 to help you explain how your +1 represents one or more UDL principles.

For example:

- Add a short video to a traditional lecture for **multiple means of representation**.
  Bonus: *Make sure the video you select has captions or a transcript to double your impact!*
- Allow students to submit a video, podcast, infographic, or other creative product instead of a written essay, lab report, or research paper to provide **multiple means of action and expression**. Or, offer a choice of a multiple-choice quiz or an open-ended essay question to check students' comprehension.
  Bonus: *Foster critical thinking by inviting students to co-create assignment guidelines and grading criteria, propose quiz questions, and/or participate in peer assessment activities.*
- Offer **multiple means of engagement** by allowing students to choose whether to complete some learning activities individually or in teams. Or, let them choose their own topics and/or formats for assignments.
  Bonus: *Permitting a choice of formats is a UDL double-dip of boosting engagement AND providing options for action and expression!*

Lesson or activity title/topic:

WHAT YOU DO NOW	YOUR +1	WHICH UDL PRINCIPLE(S) DOES YOUR +1 REFLECT? HOW?