

Universal Design: Unit Information

Overview

This unit will focus on Universal Design or accessibility for everyone. Universal design has its roots in the creation of environments such as architecture and developing products that are accessible for the widest range of people. When applied to digital resources within web-enhanced, blended, or online courses, it builds off of the WCAG guidelines.

A document may be broken up with headings or bulleted lists to chunk up the content within a document to make it easier for those with vision-impaired or learning disabilities to access and process. Captioning may be added to video to make it accessible for deaf or hearing-impaired individuals.

Those without disabilities can also benefit from these accommodations. Chunking the content helps everyone process the information. Captions can help those who need to view the video in noisy environments or in situations where it wouldn't be appropriate to have the volume suitable for listening. Consider for example, that crosswalk curbs are now required to have ramps. This serves to accommodate those in wheelchairs, but also adds accessibility for a mother pushing a baby stroller.

Objectives

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- List and describe the Seven Principles of Universal Design.
- Discuss the barriers created by various disabilities.
- Discuss the various Universal Design strategies that can be applied to those barriers or to design to prevent them in the first place.

Assignments

1. Read the Universal Design in Education: Principles and Applications PDF.
2. Watch the Real Connections: Making Distance Learning Accessible to Everyone video and then review the PDF document that follows.
3. Read the 20 Tips for Teaching an Accessible Online Course PDF
4. Review the Universal Design Strategies PDF
5. Complete the Universal Design Assessment