

# DIFFERENTIATION WITH UDL FOCUS

**EFFECT SIZE:** 0.51

## High-Quality Instruction Cycle Connection:

Step 2: Planning Instruction

## Utah Effective Teaching Standards Alignment:

- Standard 1, Elements 1, 3
- Standard 2, Element 3
- Standard 3, Element 4

## Personalized, Competency Based Learning Framework Essential Component:

Culture of Learning  
Learner Agency  
Customized Supports

## WHAT?

**Differentiation** refers to a wide variety of teaching techniques and lesson adaptations that educators use to instruct a diverse group of students. It can involve different activities to different groups of students, recognition of multiple pathways and flexibility of time to complete the tasks.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a proactive approach to designing learning experiences to be accessible for all students, while differentiation is a reactive evaluation of the needs of individual students where adjustments are retrofitted into the learning environment. Some people use the terms synonymously, but they are different.

## WHY?

The effect size of differentiation is 0.51 which is a little more than one year of growth for one year of learning. Both UDL and differentiation focus on changing the learning environment to accommodate the student, rather than expecting the student to change to fit into the environment.

## HOW?

Our classrooms are diverse in many ways due to different experiences, socio-economic

backgrounds, religion, race, gender and ability. Teaching toward the statistical average results in poor outcomes because the average student does not exist. When we acknowledge diversity and utilize the frameworks of UDL and differentiation all students benefit. Planning Instruction: Consider the evidence-based curricular options available and plan strategies to personalize, accommodate, scaffold, and access background knowledge.

### **PREPARATION:**

Teachers plan high quality, personalized instruction that is inclusive with support for all students, and allows multiple opportunities and means for demonstration of competency. Teachers design and implement the supports that allow entry points to daily activities for every student in their classroom.

### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

#### **Teacher Actions**

- Design lessons based on students' learning preferences.
- Group students by shared interest, topic, and identified barriers to learning.
- Assess students' learning using formative assessments to provide flexible grouping based on abilities and needs.
- Manage the classroom to create a safe and supportive environment.
- Continually assess and adjust lesson content to meet students' needs.

#### **Student Look-Fors**

- Engage with the content and curriculum through a variety of ways to acquire information and knowledge.
- Demonstrate their learning and growth through a variety of projects, tasks and assessments.
- Incorporate interests of the learners into learning experiences for increased motivation.

#### **Reflection**

- How effective was the design of the learning experience in minimizing or removing the identified barriers to learning?
- Were students successful in achieving the learning goal? What contributed to this?
- What would I do differently and why (aligning this reflection to the UDL guidelines)?

#### **Go Deeper—Resources to learn more**

Visible Learning - Differentiation: <https://www.visiblelearningmetax.com/influences/view/differentiation>

Universal Design for Learning & Differentiation, <https://inclusiveeducationplanning.com.au/uncategorized/universal-design-for-learning-udl-and-differentiation/>

CAST - Center for Applied Special Technology “transforming education design and practice until learning has no limits.” <https://www.cast.org/>

UDL Guidelines from CAST, <https://udlguidelines.cast.org/>

What is Differentiated Instruction? Examples of How to Differentiate Instruction in the Classroom, <https://resilienteducator.com/classroom-resources/examples-of-differentiated-instruction/>



## HOME CONNECTIONS

- Help your child express their educational needs and wants, including when and how to ask for additional support.
- Maintain focus on the learning process, both successes and failures, not the outcome.
- Align home expectations with school expectations when possible.

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