Lee Christopher

I am the Director of eLearning and I've been at ACC for 15 years. I have a Ph.D. in Education with a specialization in Instructional Design, a Masters of Fine Arts in Writing and Poetics (MFA) and a Masters in Education (M.Ed). My research interests center on Universal Design for Learning and how we write. I love to write and teach, and I love the world of technology. My latest publication coming out in Fall 21 is a novel, The Promoter. Cara Idol one of our Instructional Designers and our Accessibility Guru designed the cover! My most treasured time is spent with my family and my two dogs, Max and Yoda.

Stephen Knowles II

Hi! My name is Stephen Knowles II and I'm an eLearning Assistant. I'm generally the first face you see in eLearning, and I'm happy to welcome you in! I enjoy playing Magic the Gathering in my free time and co-hosting an award-winning Actual Play Table-Top RPG podcast. I also enjoy graphic design and animation, and look forward to exploring those fields more!

Soma Ghosh

My name is Soma Ghosh and I have been working in the capacity of Quality Assurance and Accessibility Specialist with the eLearning department at ACC for the past 5+ years. I came to Colorado in 2002 after spending time in Germany and India. After graduating with a Bachelor's degree (B.A) in Arts, I completed my MBA from the Institute of Management Technology. Apart from the above degrees, I am a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer and Administrator. I enjoy working with students, faculty and staff members as eLearning continues to encourage and embrace the richness of diversity and the dignity of all persons. When I'm not working, you can find me ei-ther at home spending time with my husband, daughter and our dog, Buddy or enjoying the beautiful outdoors of Colorado.

Taylor McGrew

Hi! My name is Taylor McGrew and I'm the Educational Technologist for eLearning. I love technology, and I'm always happy to help in any way I can! I'm currently finishing my last semester at ACC and plan to graduate with an Associate of General Studies degree, and I look forward to continuing on to a Bachelor's in Computer Science. In my free time, I enjoy learning about programming and studying apologetics, and spending time with my friends and family on camping trips and road trips.

Cara Idol

Hello! My name is Cara Idol. I am the Instructional Designer of Accessibility and Universal Design in eLearning and an instructor at Arapahoe Community College. I have an AA in music and a BFA in studio arts. I am working on a Masters of Humanities, Art and Visual Media. I am passionate about my family, my pets, animal rights, civil rights, nature, music, art, and health care and education for all! Oh, and laughing!

Five UDL Strategies you can implement today!

Adapted from [*Cast.org*](Cast.org) *About Universal Design for Learning Guidelines & Checkpoints*
Arapahoe Community College eLearning department*

We have spent hours designing our course and creating curricula; then, we realize it is only geared to one type of learner. Following are five practices of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that you can quickly implement to fill in some of the gaps for more inclusive learning.

Engagement

Affect represents a crucial element of learning, and learners differ vastly in their engagement or motivation to learn (Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST), 2022). "Some learners are highly engaged by spontaneity and novelty, while others are disengaged, even frightened, by those aspects, preferring a strict routine. Some learners might like to work alone, while others prefer to work with their peers" (CAST, 2022-a, para. 1). "There is not one means of engagement that will be optimal for all learners in all contexts; providing multiple options for engagement is essential" (CAST, 2022-a, para. 1).

1. Rewards

The incentive for student efforts motivates and raises their interest, participation, responsibilities, and learning. Every success story helps students become more self-confident. They are proud and encouraged to achieve another successful result (Renard, 2017).

2. Require learners to formulate and restate a goal

Some learners need support to remember the initial goal or maintain a consistent vision of the rewards of reaching that goal. For those learners, it is essential "to build in periodic or persistent 'reminders' of both the purpose and its value for them to sustain effort and concentration in the face of distracters" (CAST, 2022-b, para. 1).

Representation

Learning is impossible if the information is imperceptible to the learner and difficult when presented information requires great effort or assistance (CAST, 2022-c). To reduce barriers to learning, it is vital to ensure that key information is equally perceptible to all learners. "Multiple representations ensure that information is accessible to learners with particular sensory and perceptual disabilities and easier to access and comprehend for many others" (CAST, 2022-c, para. 1).

3. Customize the display of written information

Malleable prepared digital materials can create engagement while conveying information that is. For example, a call-out box of background information may be displayed in a different location, enlarged, and emphasized using color (CAST, 2022-d). "Such malleability provides options for increasing the perceptual clarity

and salience of information for a wide range of learners and adjustments for the preferences of others" (CAST, 2022-d, para. 1).

CAST (2022-d) suggests

- *Size*
  - *text*
  - *images*
  - *graphs tables*
  - *other visual content*
- *contrast between background and text or image*
- *color used for information or emphasis*
- *layout of visual or other elements*
- *font*

4. **"Chunk" information into smaller elements**

Successful transformation of information into useable knowledge often requires the application of mental strategies and skills for 'processing' information" (CAST, 2022-e, para. 1). Well-designed materials can provide customized and embedded models, scaffolds, and feedback to assist learners with diverse abilities to summarize, categorize, prioritize, contextualize, and remember effectively (CAST, 2022-e).

Action and Expression

"Learners differ in how they can express what they know. For example, individuals with significant movement impairments (e.g., cerebral palsy), those who struggle with strategic and organizational abilities (executive function disorders), those who have language barriers, and so forth approach learning tasks very differently. Some may be able to express themselves well in written text but not speech, and vice versa. There is not one means of action and expression that will be optimal for all learners; providing options for action and expression is essential" (CAST, 2022-f, para. 1

5.   Use multiple media for communication

"Unless specific media and materials are critical to the goal (e.g., learning to paint specifically with oils, learning to handwrite with

calligraphy), it is important to provide alternative media for expression. Such alternatives reduce media-specific barriers to expression among learners with a variety of special needs and increase the opportunities for all learners to develop a broader range of expression in a media-rich world. For example, all learners need to learn composition, not just writing, and the optimal medium for any particular content of expression and audience" (CAST, 2022-g, para. 1).

Arapahoe Community College eLearning department is in Colorado, United States, and they are advocates, educators, and designers of UDL and accessibility. Primary design and editing was done by Cara Idol.

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