

Multiple Means of Engagement: Connecting with Students Across Modalities through Choice, Flexibility and Authentic Assessment

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ABSTRACT

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) offers instructors a framework “to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn” (CAST, 2018). The framework consists of three principles: Multiple Means of Engagement, Multiple Means of Representation, and Multiple Means of Action and Expression. This session will take a deep dive into the principle of Multiple Means of Engagement and help attendees think deeply about how to implement that principle in their courses in concrete ways. However, rather than functioning as a traditional panel of experts providing knowledge to an audience, this session will model the practices of Multiple Means of Engagement by emphasizing interactive discussions and activities throughout the session.

The principle of Multiple Means of Engagement is concerned with learner motivation, and centers mainly on the “why” or the reasons behind the instructional choices we make that can help to engage and motivate learners. This principle recognizes that different learners have different motivations for learning as well as different barriers that can impede that learning (CAST, 2018). Indeed, the same factors that might excite and motivate one learner could be off-putting for another. In order to engage the largest number of learners, the principle of Multiple Means of Engagement encourages instructors to provide learners with autonomy and choices, highlight the relevance of the instruction, vary demands and challenges, foster collaboration and community, and promote self-regulation including self-assessment.

The panelists, who both have a strong grounding in pedagogy and instructional design, including the principles of UDL, will provide a framing introduction to UDL and Multiple Means of Engagement, as described in more detail below.

This session will begin with a brief introduction to UDL and the three principles that make up the framework. From there, the panelists will offer a more thorough examination of the principle of Multiple Means of Engagement. They will review each of the guidelines and

checkpoints involved in the principle as well as the theories that underpin them. Further, while the UDL framework is modality agnostic, teaching modalities such as face-to-face and online synchronous and asynchronous each present unique opportunities and challenges with regard to learner engagement and motivation. The panelists will draw on the research and their own experience teaching across modalities to discuss these specific issues. Throughout the framing portion of the session, they will provide concrete examples of the principle of Multiple Means of Engagement in action.

Following this framing presentation, the panelists will model the principles of Multiple Means of Engagement by involving attendees in interactive discussions and activities. Attendees will have an opportunity to share ideas and in collaboration with others, develop strategies for building Multiple Means of Engagement in their own courses.

REFERENCE

CAST. 2018. Universal design for learning. <https://www.cast.org/impact/universal-design-for-learning-udl>

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

curriculum; pedagogy; students; teaching faculty; online learning

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

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