

Effect of Universal Design for Learning on Student Engagement

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ABSTRACT

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework that focuses on 3 main principles: multiple means of engagement, multiple means of representation, and multiple means of action and expression. This framework is intended to reduce barriers to learning and embrace the neurodiversity of learners. Use of the UDL framework may increase student engagement, which is defined as the tendency to be behaviorally, emotionally, and cognitively involved in academic activities. One way to engage students is to allow them to demonstrate their learning through multiple means of expression and to provide them with multiple assessment options. This research seeks to evaluate the effects of incorporating UDL principles in a 16-week undergraduate lecture course in clinical bacteriology. Students

were surveyed at the beginning of the course to establish their previous experiences with each of the 3 UDL principles (representation prescore, expression prescore, and engagement prescore). They were surveyed at the end of the course to determine their perception of how the course incorporated the UDL principles (representation postscore, expression postscore, and engagement postscore) and their level of engagement with the course material (interest and engagement score). The results demonstrate that there is a significant association among each of the postscores, the interest scores, and the engagement scores.

ABBREVIATIONS: UDL - Universal Design for Learning.

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