



**College of Education and Human Development
Division of Special Education and disAbility Research**

Spring 2024

EDAT 524 DL1: Universal Design for Learning

CRN: 10600, 3 – Credits

Instructor: Dr. Anya Evmenova	Meeting Dates: 1/16/24 – 5/8/24
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Office Hours: By appointment	Meeting Location: N/A; online
Office Location: Finley 201A	Other Phone: see Blackboard

Note: This syllabus may change according to class needs. Teacher Candidates/Students will be advised of any changes immediately through George Mason e-mail and/or through Blackboard.

Prerequisite(s):

None

Co-requisite(s):

None

Course Description

Describes the foundations and principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Focuses on teaching students with various disabilities including those with learning disabilities from preschool to postsecondary education implementing technology-based and other UDL strategies. Applies UDL principles to the design of accessible instructional materials. Students have the opportunity to develop and implement UDL lesson plans.

Advising Contact Information

Please make sure that you are being advised on a regular basis as to your status and progress in your program. Students in Special Education and Assistive Technology programs can contact the Special Education Advising Office at 703-993-3670 or speced@gmu.edu for assistance. All other students should refer to their assigned program advisor or the Mason Care Network (703-993-2470).

Advising Tip

Have you planned your coursework for the AT program? Courses are offered every semester. Contact an advisor (speced@gmu.edu) to outline a plan.

Course Instructional Method

EDAT 524 is an asynchronous online course. Using Blackboard, students are expected to complete assignments weekly and be engaged in course activities throughout the semester.

Course Delivery Method

EDAT 524 is an asynchronous online course. Using Blackboard, students are expected to complete assignments weekly and be engaged in course activities throughout the semester.

Learning activities include the following:

1. Class lecture and discussion
2. Application activities
3. Small group activities and assignments
4. Video and other media supports
5. Research and presentation activities
6. Electronic supplements and activities via Blackboard

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using asynchronous format via the Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on January 16th, 2024.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: [Browser support \(https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support\)](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Ultra/Getting_Started/Browser_Support)
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.

- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - [Adobe Acrobat Reader: https://get.adobe.com/reader/](https://get.adobe.com/reader/)
 - [Windows Media Player: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player)
 - [Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

Expectations

- **Course Week:**
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on **Tuesday** morning and finish on **Monday** at midnight. Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- **Log-in Frequency:**
- Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least **2 times per week/module**.
- **Participation:**
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- **Technical Competence:**
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- **Technical Issues:**
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- **Workload:**
Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- **Instructor Support:**
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- **Netiquette:**
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must

always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

- Accommodations:
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Service.

Learner Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define similarities and differences in human development as well as major issues and concerns for individuals with disabilities, including those with learning disabilities to participate in general education curriculum.
2. Identify and understand different principles of UDL.
3. Describe and discuss no technology to high technology tools and strategies available for multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression in the general academic curriculum.
4. Identify a repertoire of evidence-based UDL resources to use with students with various disabilities in order to make the curriculum more accessible.
5. Develop a lesson plan selecting instructional materials that meet the standards of UDL as well as individual and environmental needs, personal interests, preferences, values, and cultural influences.
6. Describe and discuss the standards of UDL to be used for monitoring outcomes of interventions and reevaluations.

Professional Standards

This course is part of the George Mason University, School of Education, Assistive Technology Program. The Assistive Technology Program has developed program specific standards in accordance with NCATE requirements. The Assistive Technology Program Standards incorporate several elements within the professional standards from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), while also expanding upon them to meet the specific needs related to assistive technology. The primary AT Program standards that will be addressed in this class include the following: Standard 2: Knowledge and Skills and Standard 4: Practical Experience. *NOTE: NCATE Assessments (in many but not all courses) may address additional AT Program standards.

Required Texts

Nelson, L. L. (2021). *Design and deliver: Planning and teaching using Universal Design for Learning* (2nd ed). Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. Inc.

Note: This textbook is available online for free from GMU library -

<http://mutex.gmu.edu/login?url=https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/gmu/detail.action?docID=6519445>

Recommended Texts

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Meyer, A., Rose, D.H., & Gordon, D. (2014). *Universal design for learning: Theory and practice*. CAST Professional Publishing. (free online book)

Additional Readings

Additional readings relevant to the Universal Design for Learning research and practice will be provided by the instructor on Blackboard. Readings may include chapters, journal articles, web sites, video clips, audio clips (e.g., podcasts), and slide shows.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement

It is critical for the special education program to collect data on how our students are meeting accreditation standards. Every teacher candidate/student registered for an EDAT course with a required Performance-based Assessment (PBA) is required to upload the PBA to VIA/SLL (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a one-time course or part of an undergraduate minor). A PBA is a specific assignment, presentation, or project that best demonstrates one or more CEC, InTASC or other standard connected to the course. A PBA is evaluated in two ways. The first is for a grade, based on the instructor's grading rubric. The second is for program accreditation purposes. Your instructor will provide directions as to how to upload the PBA to VIA/SLL.

For EDAT 524: No requirement to upload a Performance-based Assessment (PBA) to VIA/SLL.

Assignments and/or Examinations

Performance-based Assessment

(VIA submission required)

N/A

College Wide Common Assessment

(VIA submission required)

N/A

Other Assignments

Below is a brief description of the course assessments. More information will be provided prior to each activity/assignment.

UDL Instructional Plan (140 points)

Students will identify a classroom/environment (K-12, postsecondary, online, professional development) to observe and evaluate the existing curriculum/lesson plan/training using UDL standards. Video case studies will be offered if classroom observations are not possible. Students will create a UDL instruction plan for designing and intentionally implementing UDL principles within an existing curriculum/lesson plan. The UDL instructional plan will include the following:

a. Curriculum/Lesson Plan/Training Overview

Students will provide a description of the curriculum/lesson plan/training. The description should include the goals, instructional elements and activities as well as the explanation of the environment in which the curriculum/lesson plan/training takes place.

b. Learner Characteristics & Barriers

Students will provide a rationale for selecting the UDL guidelines and standards to match the characteristics of learners. A listing of the learners' prerequisite skills as well as the needs they have for potentially using UDL strategies will be outlined.

c. UDL Design Plan

Students will identify the UDL standards addressed in an existing curriculum/lesson plan/training as well as propose additional UDL strategies that could enhance the learning opportunities for identified learners. The plan should integrate a variety of instructional and assistive technology to offer multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression for students accessing general education curriculum in K-12 or postsecondary settings.

d. Demonstration

Candidate records a 3-5 minutes video documenting that the candidate can demonstrate a portion of the UDL Plan. The video will accompany the UDL Plan write-up as evidence that the candidate has proficiency in the use of the UDL principles and strategies.

e. Reflection

Candidate provides a reflection on the UDL Plan. The reflection will also include recommendations for resources and potential professional development opportunities for the UDL Plan implementer. Potential impact that the UDL strategies might have on individuals with various learning preferences and needs will also be discussed.

Learning Module Assignments and Discussions (140 points/5-10 points each)

Students will participate in various activities in order to explore various applications of Universal Design for Learning. Activities will include introduction forum, various technology tools explorations, UDL evaluation project, as well as others. Detailed descriptions and step-by-step instructions for each module activities will be provided by the instructor and posted in the corresponding Learning Module. Students will also complete class textbook and article readings, watch various educational and inspirational videos, and review specific websites during each Learning Module. In which module, students will be asked to participate in class and group discussion boards. Students will be asked to make **ONE** thoughtful post (e.g., connecting the information from the module to their personal experiences and ideas) as well as to provide a

meaningful response to at least **TWO** of their classmates. The feedback may focus on ways to improve/enhance the post ideas; it may provide ideas on further ways to use assistive/instructional technology; it may describe real life situations when these or similar ideas have been used as well as their outcomes.

UDL Research Review (40 points)

Students will find and summarize a journal article that explores the effectiveness and applications of Universal Design for Learning in various environments. Students may use UDL-IRN Research database to find article of their choice. Papers chosen for this requirement must be from peer-reviewed published journals (no ERIC documents!) and should be data-based examinations of issues relevant to the UDL implementation in various environments (e.g., K-12, postsecondary, professional environments.) A research study includes a “methods” section and a “results” section. The purpose of this assignment is **twofold: first**, to identify research-based findings that are relevant to the outcomes of the UDL principles and **second**, to critically explore and summarize the “state of the practice” of UDL.

UDL Resource Notebook (80 points)

Throughout the semester, students will compile UDL resources of their choice that would be useful for teaching/working with a target population. Students will research, collect, and analyze resources in various categories to address abilities and needs of the target population. Students may choose to conduct this assignment individually or in groups. All resources will be compiled in one electronic resource notebook. The electronic resource notebook may be organized by content areas and may be presented in written, multimedia presentation, or video format.

Assignment Summary

Evaluation will be based upon a point system. The point value for each assignment is as follows:

Learning Module Activities and Discussions	140 points (35%)
UDL Research Review	40 points (10%)
UDL Resource Notebook	80 points (20%)
UDL Instructional Plan Project	140 points (35%)
Total Points:	400 points (100%)

Student Evaluations of Teaching:

The student evaluation of teaching, or SET, is an online course survey. You are strongly encouraged to complete this form for each course as this feedback helps instructors and administrators improve your class experiences. Towards the end of the course, you will receive email and Blackboard notifications when the evaluations open. Your anonymous and confidential feedback is only shared with instructors after final grades have been submitted. More information about the SET can be found on The Institute of Effectiveness and Planning website at <https://oiep.gmu.edu/set/>

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance/Participation

This class does not require any face-to-face or synchronous meetings. However, students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which include viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions. A series of UDL Chat meetings will be scheduled during the semester in order to facilitate discussions about UDL, but the attendance will be optional. Optional Office Hours will also be available via Zoom by appointment.

Late Work

All activities must be submitted via Blackboard *on or before* the due date. **In fairness to students who make the effort to submit work on time, points will be deducted from your grade for late assignments. Assignments will not be accepted more than 3 days late unless prior arrangements with the instructor have been made.** Allow additional time for as well as plan for additional participation during activities that require constructive feedback.

Grading

95-100% = A

90-94% = A-

87-89% = B+

83-86% = B

80-82% = B-

70-79% = C

< 69% = F

***Note:** The George Mason University Honor Code will be strictly enforced. See [Academic Integrity Site \(https://oai.gmu.edu/\)](https://oai.gmu.edu/) and [Honor Code and System \(https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/\)](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/). Students are responsible for reading and understanding the Code. “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.” Work submitted must be your own new, original work for this course or with proper citations.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See [Policies and Procedures \(https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/\)](https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/).

Class Schedule

***Note:** Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Learning Module	Topic	Textbook Readings, Weekly Activities & Assignments Due
Week 1 (January 16- January 22)	Learning Module 1 Foundations and principles of UDL	Nelson (2021) – Chapter 1 Hoekstra & The CIDDL Team (2021a) Learning Module 1 Activities
Weeks 2-3 (January 23- February 5)	Learning Module 2 UDL standards and guidelines for research and practice	Nelson (2021) - Chapter 2 Hoekstra & The CIDDL Team (2021b) OPTIONAL: Rao & Meo (2016) Learning Module 2 Activities
Weeks 4-5 (February 6- February 19)	Learning Module 3 Multiple means of representation: Providing access to print text	Nelson (2021) – Chapter 4 Murawski & Scott (2019) – Chapter 1 Learning Module 3 Activities
Weeks 6-7 (February 20 - March 4)	Learning Module 4 Multiple means of action and expression: Enhancing writing process	Nelson (2021) – Chapter 5 Torres & Rao (2019) – Chapter 4 Webinar by Ablenet Learning Module 4 Activities
Spring Break (March 4 – March 11)		
Weeks 9-10 (March 12- March 25)	Learning Module 5 Multiple means of engagement: Enhancing content instruction	Nelson (2021) - Chapter 3 Root et al. (2022) Learning Module 5 Activities Research Review Due
Weeks 11-12 (March 26 - April 8)	Learning Module 6 UDL in postsecondary/higher and online education	Lubin & Brooks (2021) Novak & Thibodeau (2016) – Chapter 2 Learning Module 6 Activities UDL Resource Notebook Due
Weeks 13-14 (April 9 - April 22)	Learning Module 7 UDL and student progress monitoring	Nelson (2021) – Chapter 7 Novak (2014) – Chapter 9 Learning Module 7 Activities UDL Instructional Plan Draft & Peer Feedback Due
Weeks 15-16 (April 23 - May 6)	Learning Module 8 Designing UDL curriculum	Nelson (2021) – Chapter 6 Learning Module 8 Activities UDL Instructional Plan Due

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: See [Core Values](http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/) (<http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>).

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code. See [Honor Code and System](https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/) (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See [Responsible Use of Computing](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/) (<http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor. See [Disability Services](https://ds.gmu.edu/) (<https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to [Blackboard Instructional Technology Support for Students](https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/) (<https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>).
- [Learning Services](mailto:learningservices@gmu.edu) (learningservices@gmu.edu) - Provides a variety of experience-based learning opportunities through which students explore a wide range of academic concerns. Services include support to students with learning differences, individual study strategy coaching, individualized programs of study, and referrals to tutoring resources. Presentations on a variety of academic topics such as time management, reading, and note taking are available to the university community. The programs are open to all George Mason University students free of charge.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as the [Student Support and Advocacy Center \(SSAC\)](#) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological](#)

[Services \(CAPS\)](#) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website [College of Education and Human Development \(http://cehd.gmu.edu/\)](http://cehd.gmu.edu/).

Appendix

Assessment Rubric(s) - UDL Instructional Plan Project

The instructor will evaluate your final project that is submitted at the end of the course using the rubric below.

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Curriculum/Lesson Plan Overview AT Program Standard 2	19-20 pts Candidate describes an existing curriculum/lesson plan that is offered to learners with various needs including those with disabilities including goals, instructional elements and activities, as well as the environment in which it takes place.	17-18 pts Candidate describes an existing curriculum/lesson plan in details including goals, instructional elements and activities.	0-16 pts Candidate fails to describe an existing curriculum/lesson plan that is offered to learners with various needs including those with disabilities.
Learner Characteristics and Barriers AT Program Standard 1	19-20 pts Candidate identifies specific characteristics of users who could benefit from the UDL strategies based on their understanding of exceptional conditions or other human factors. Candidate considers how issues of human diversity can impact individuals, families, communities, and cultures, and how these complex human issues can interact with issues in the delivery of UDL curriculum.	17-18 pts Candidate identifies specific characteristics of users who could benefit from the UDL strategies. Candidate considers how issues of human diversity can impact individuals, families, communities, and cultures, and how these complex human issues can interact with issues in the delivery of UDL curriculum.	0-16 pts Candidate fails to identify specific and related characteristics of users who could benefit from UDL strategies and/or fails to consider how issues of human diversity can impact individuals, families, communities, and cultures, and how these complex human issues can interact with issues in the delivery of UDL curriculum.

<p>UDL Design Plan AT Program Standards 2 & 3</p>	<p>56-60 pts Candidate identifies the UDL standards addressed in an existing curriculum/lesson plans. Candidate identifies and match additional UDL strategies based on individual and environmental needs while also considering personal interests, preferences, values and cultural influences. Candidate develops and report plans to implement and monitor outcomes of interventions and reevaluate and adjust the system as needed. Candidate utilizes evidence-based UDL strategies to develop personalized supports for individuals with various abilities, needs, and learning preferences.</p>	<p>47-55 pts Candidate identifies the UDL standards addressed in an existing curriculum/lesson plans. Candidate identifies and match additional UDL strategies based on individual and environmental needs. Candidate develops and report plans to implement and monitor outcomes of interventions and reevaluate and adjust the system as needed. Candidate utilizes evidence-based strategies to develop personalized supports for individuals with exceptional needs.</p>	<p>0-46 pts Candidate does not identify the UDL standards addressed in an existing curriculum/lesson plans. Candidate fails to identify and match additional UDL strategies based on individual and environmental needs. Candidate's plans to implement and monitor outcomes of interventions are limited and do not necessarily plan to reevaluate and adjust the system as needed. Candidate fails to utilize evidence-based strategies to develop personalized supports for individuals with exceptional needs.</p>
<p>Demonstration AT Program Standard 2 and 4</p>	<p>19-20 pts Candidate is knowledgeable of and demonstrates proficiency in use of tools and evidence-based strategies to develop universally designed environments</p>	<p>17-18 pts Candidate is knowledgeable of and demonstrates proficiency in use of UDL strategies and tools.</p>	<p>0-16 pts Candidate does not demonstrate knowledgeable of and proficiency in use of UDL strategies and tools.</p>

<p>Reflection & Impact AT Program Standard 1 and 5</p>	<p>19-20 pts Candidate promotes and advocate for the benefits of continued implementation of UDL tools and strategies for individuals with various abilities, needs, and learning preferences. Candidate identifies ongoing professional development to acquire knowledge and skills about new developments in UDL, which may include participation in activities of professional organizations relevant to the field of assistive technology. Candidate discusses the impact UDL can have on individuals with various abilities, needs, and learning preferences and their families within various diverse cultures and communities.</p>	<p>17-18 pts Candidate promotes and advocate for the benefits of continued implementation of UDL tools and strategies for individuals with various abilities, needs, and learning preferences. Candidate identifies ongoing professional development opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills about new developments in UDL. Candidate discusses the impact UDL can have on individuals with various abilities, needs, and learning preferences within various cultures and communities.</p>	<p>0-16 pts Candidate fails to promote and advocate for the benefits of continued implementation of UDL tools and strategies for individuals with various abilities, needs, and learning preferences. Candidate fails to identify specific and relevant professional development opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills about new developments in UDL. Candidate provides a limited discussion that does not specifically address the impact UDL can have on individuals with various abilities, needs, and learning preferences within various cultures and communities.</p>
<p>Total:</p>	<p>140 possible</p>		