



## INCLUSIVE COURSE DESIGN

York University Teaching Commons  
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Todd is having difficulty following Professor Moma's lectures. The slides include a lot of text and they are moving faster than he can take notes. He approached her to inquire about the possibility of getting the slides before each lecture. Professor Moma hesitates. If she were to grant Todd his request, she feels she would have to provide the slides to all of her students. Yet she spent countless hours preparing them and is worried about widely sharing them. She also wonders if attendance will decrease. She decides to ask the student for a formal accommodation request.

1. **The accommodation approach to inclusion** is based on the premise that learning needs are addressed on an individual basis as a result of a request.
2. **Accessible education**, on the other hand, is the process of designing courses to pre-emptively meet the needs of people from a variety of backgrounds, abilities and learning styles, so that all can learn better.
3. **Accessible education rests on three curriculum development principles** articulated by Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL acknowledges that there is not one means of teaching and learning that will be optimal for all learners, so providing options is essential.
4. **The first principle – Providing multiple means of representation** – recognizes that better learning occurs when the content is approached in various ways such as offering alternatives to auditory information or illustrating concepts through multiple media.
5. **The second principle – Providing multiple means of action and expression** – acknowledges that there is no mode of expression equally suited for all learners or for all communication. In a good learning environment, learners practice and develop a variety of literacies (e.g. digital, numerical, visual, etc.).
6. **The third principle – Providing multiple means of engagement** – recognizes that learning requires sustained attention, effort, and motivation. Self-regulation can be promoted by optimizing individual choice and the relevance, value, and authenticity of the learning material. Offering a range of assignments with built-in feedback keeps learners better engaged.
7. "Inclusivity is a journey. It is not about being all things to all people all of the time but about continually reflecting on teaching practice and asking, how can I do better?"

**If you would like to explore this topic further, consider these events at the TC:**

- <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/for-cds/workshops-and-courses-for-cds/workshops/course-design-york/#inclusive>

**Further reading on this topic:**

- Rose, D. H., & Meyer, A. (eds.) (2006). *A Practical Reader in Universal Design for Learning*. Boston: Harvard Education Press.

**Resources on this topic:**

- <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/resources-2/accommodations-and-inclusive-teaching/>
- <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/whatisudl>