



# Getting the message across silos: exploring the difficult art of involving multidisciplinary campus partners in UDL implementation and growth

ATU National UDL Conference  
June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 – ATU, Sligo



**UDL  
Conference**  
Climbing the UDL Ladder  
Building a Culture of Inclusion in  
Higher Education:  
"Overcoming Obstacles to Enhance  
and Sustain UDL Collaboration in  
Further and Higher Education"

# Land Acknowledgement

- Thompson Rivers University campuses are on the traditional lands of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (Kamloops campus) and the T'exelc (Williams Lake campus) within Secwépemc'ulucw, the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwépemc. The region TRU serves also extends into the territories of the St'át'imc, Nlaka'pamux, Tâilhqot'in, Nuxalk, and Dakelh



# ‘Being UDL’ in the format of delivery

- It is always challenging to be fully “UDL” in plenary format.
- Here are some of the ways I have created multiple pathways within the session:
  - I welcome interactions through social media
  - I am using a Paddlet for exchanges before/ during/ after the presentations
  - Slides will be shared on SlideShare and posted to LinkedIn and Twitter
  - Grab me for a chat anytime today during the event.



# Objectives of the Session

- *Over-arching conference theme: UDL in Leadership: Opportunities and challenges in supporting sustainable inclusive learning in further and higher education*
- Explore what 'multidisciplinarity' means within the context of UDL implementation and why it is necessary as a flavour
- Examine ways to create genuine understanding between faculty and accessibility folks
- Examine ways to involve senior administration in the UDL discourse
- Explore best practices to share the UDL framework with student affairs and student services
- Explore how to best 'dribble down' UDL to all front line staff, particularly within accessibility services
- Examine best practices to include student perspectives in UDL implementation
- Examine the remaining challenges surrounding multidisciplinarity in UDL implementation





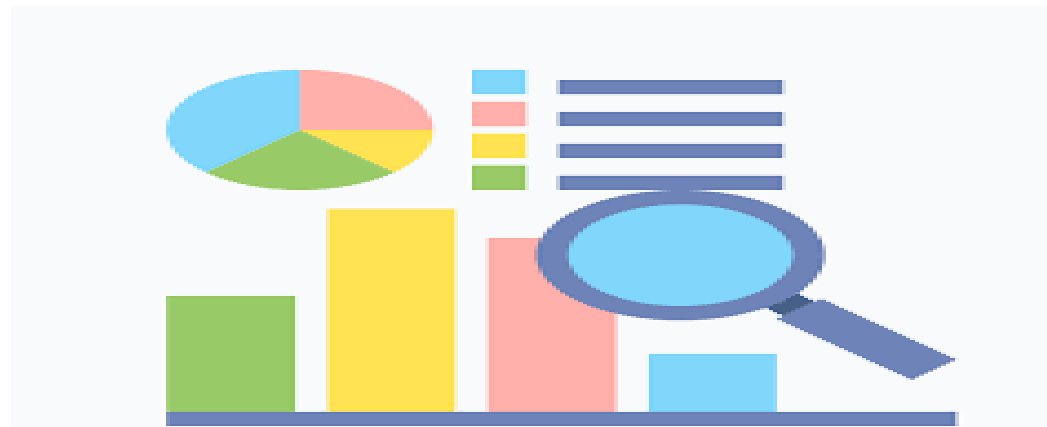
# Personal lens

- Unique positioning as a scholar: have been both an Accessibility Services manager and a faculty member
- Was involved in large scale UDL implementation from 2011 to 2016 across a campus – experienced this process in its full complexity
- Have also been Academic Lead/ Program Head at UPEI and RRU, and have needed to guide contract faculty around inclusive teaching and the use of UDL.
- Act as a UDL consultant with colleges and universities in Canada.
- My research and scholarship also focuses on UDL
- I will be drawing from these multiple and varied perspectives



# Methodological stance

- This session showcases the qualitative analysis of phenomenological data accumulated through the presenter's journey with UDL as manager of accessibility services/ UDL consultant/ faculty supporting instructors, etc.
- A degree of triangulation which occurred during the creation of UDL promotion material in my four-year term of head of accessibility on a large campus
- Use of findings from various projects I am/ have been involved with in relation to the strategic scaling up of UDL across higher/ further education institutions



## Section 1: Explore what ‘multidisciplinarity’ means within the context of UDL implementation and why it is necessary as a flavour

- “Multidisciplinarity” is a very popular topic at present within the post-secondary and further education sector.
- What exactly does it mean in practice?
- Why is it so important in our sector?
- How does it fit into the UDL implementation challenge?



## Section 2: Creating genuine understanding between faculty and accessibility folks

- Dichotomous realities
- Lack of understanding of either side's 'lived experience'
- Reasons for resistance with UDL implementation often have little to do with adherence to its key values or objectives
- The current landscape is tense, competitive, politicized, and
- For more reflection on this dichotomy and ways to ease this tension:  
<http://www.twosolitudes.ca/>



# Section 3: ways to involve senior administration in the UDL discourse

- A strategic challenge
- Senior administrators are often interested in UDL but their perspectives on UDL implementation may vary greatly from that of advocates
- What are senior administrators interested in when it comes to UDL?
- The cost element is a key consideration in the current neoliberal landscape
- Inclusion also now forms a cornerstone of most institution marketing (even if the commitment is sometimes shallow).
- How do we address these priorities while also satisfying other stakeholders?



# Section 4: Sharing the UDL framework with student affairs and student services

- UDL is not just about the classroom
- It applies to all interface with students around campus
- Should be integrated by student affairs and student services
- How do we create this osmosis
- Fovet, F., Yarish-Ferland, C., di Genova, L., & Beck, T. (2015) *Nurturing UD Implementation: The case of Student Affairs*. Paper presented at the Universal Design for Learning: Canadian Perspectives. Sowing the seeds, Facilitating the change, Nurturing the Growth, Montreal, May.



# Section 5: Best practices to ‘dribble down’ UDL to all frontline staff

- Best practices to ‘dribble down’ UDL to all frontline staff, particularly within accessibility services
- Structural issue on campuses where models are perpetuated by service model
- The accessibility service model perpetuates medical/ deficit model perspectives
- How can we ‘dribble down’ the UDL values to all interactions with students?
- Beck, T., Diaz del Castillo, P., Fovet, F., Mole, H., & Noga, B. (2014) Applying Universal Design to disability service provision: outcome analysis of a UD audit. *Journal of Post-secondary Education and Disability*, 27(2), 209-222



# Section 6: Including student perspectives in UDL implementation

- Too often missing in the equation
- ‘Multidisciplinary’ includes ‘user perspective’ and ‘user experience’
- Importance of transparency with student body
- Importance of student participation in the momentum
- Key pertinence of ethnographic approaches: The OCAD Inclusive Design Research Centre resources
- <https://idrc.ocadu.ca/>





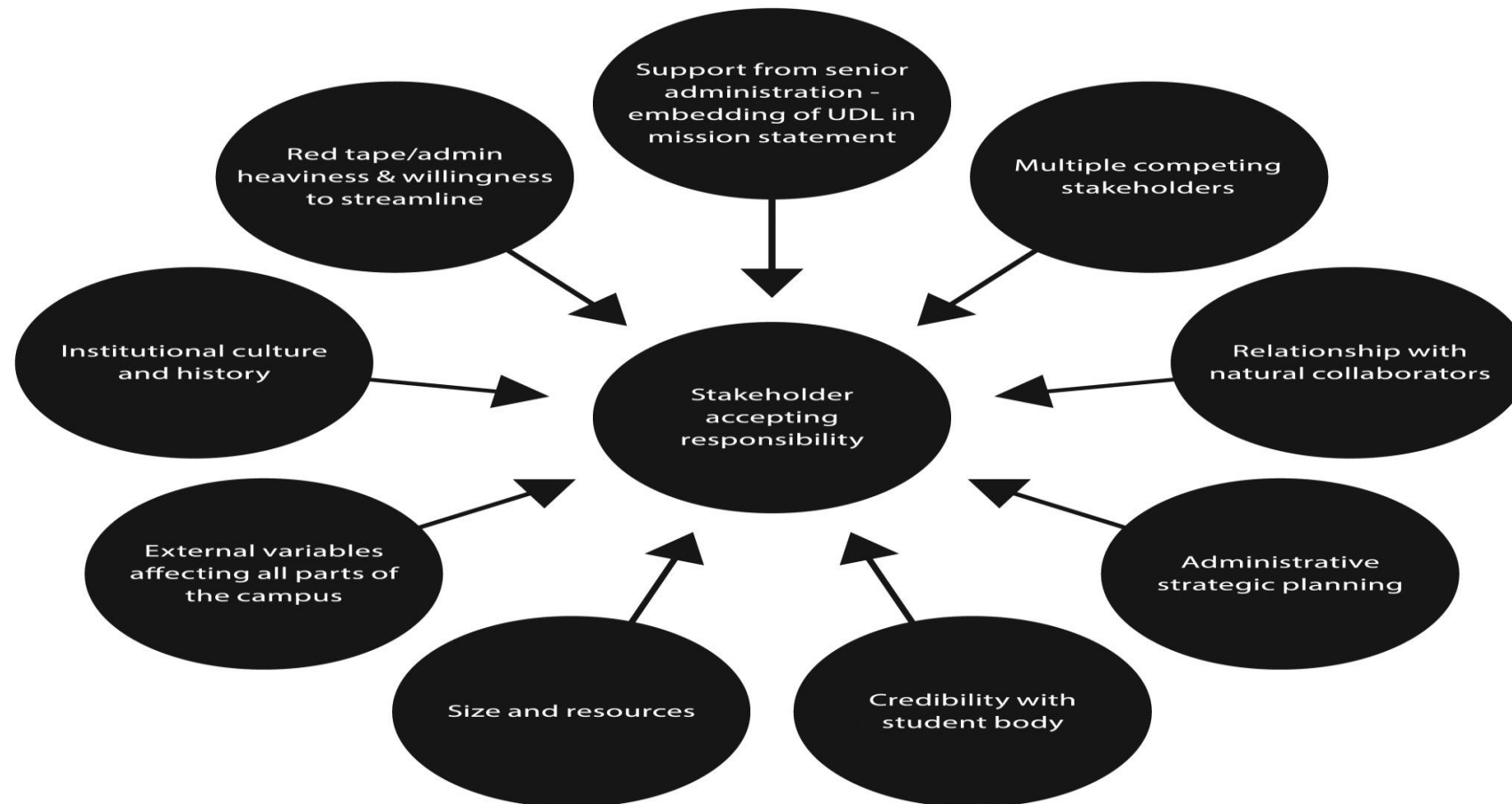
# Section 7: Remaining strategic challenges

- There are specific organizational and strategic issues that remain to be tackled
- These existed before the pandemic and have been exacerbated by the online pivot
- Who is in charge and drives implementation?
- Who should be in the driver seat?
- How does an ecological approach allow us to be strategic in this respect (ownership)?





# Need for an ecological lens on UDL implementation across institutions



# Questions



# References & Resources

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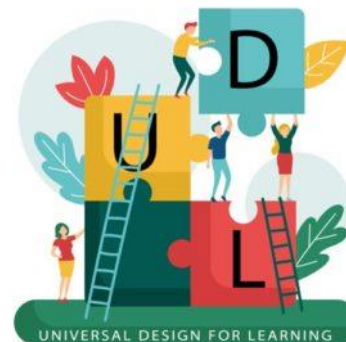
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