



/ Gregersen - Hermans
research, consultancy & training

Higher Education Internationalisation



DEVELOPMENT OF AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

*BASED ON A STUDENT-
CENTERED APPROACH
UNDER THE
EMERGENCIES*





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Acknowledgement of the unimaginable suffering of the Ukrainian people and the extreme circumstances for Ukrainian Higher Education

/ Opportunity to ask a question

There will be several ways to ask a question or share a comment.
You can use any language you prefer. It will be translated for me.

- Write your question in the chat
- Address your question to the chair of the seminar

Questions will be responded to
at regular intervals within this session.



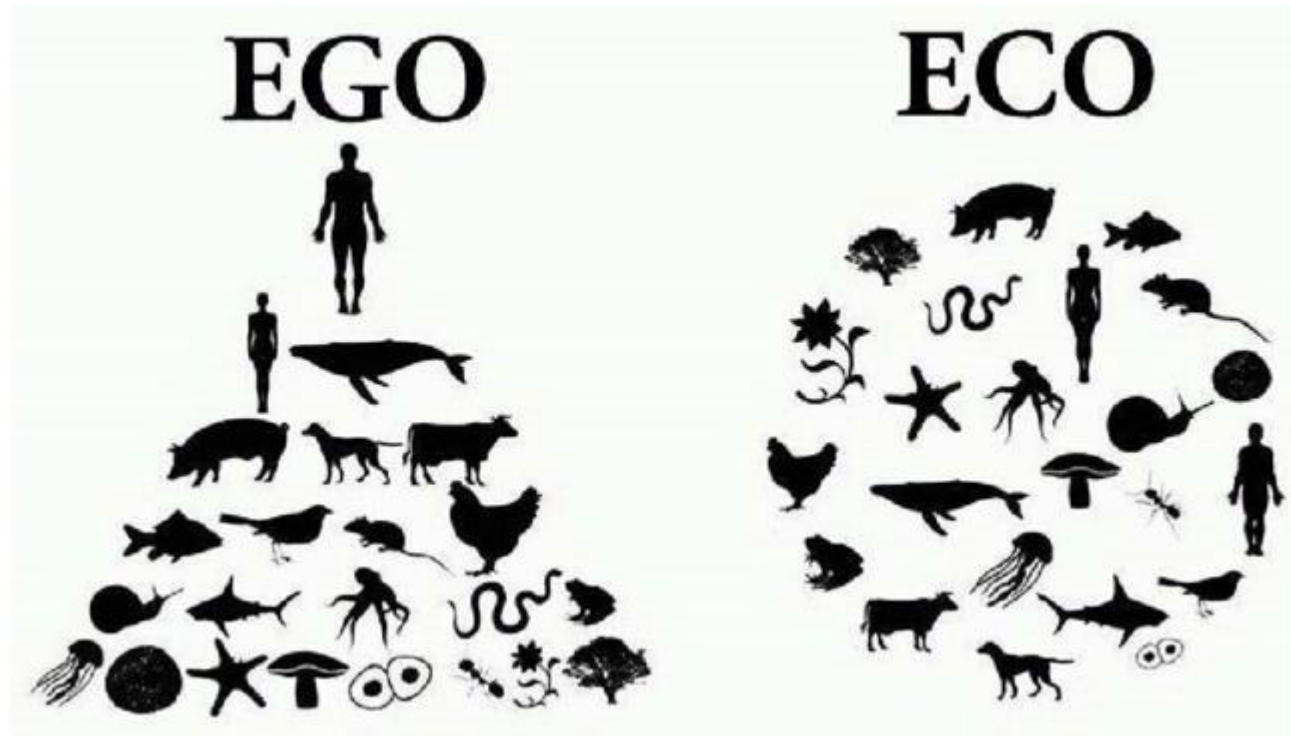
/ Agenda session 1

- Underpinnings
- EHEA policy background and context (the WHY)
- Student centred learning applying **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**
 - What is UDL?
 - What are its implications?
 - Focus for ‘under emergencies’?

/ Underpinnings

- Learning is an inherently social activity, where knowledge is co-constructed through interaction and collaboration within a community (Vygotsky, 1978).
- A constructivist and transformative worldview on education implying learning needs to be aimed at professional development, socialization and identity formation (Biesta, 2020).
- Inclusivity is not a problem to be fixed but entails a continuous critical dialogue including all stakeholders (Gregeresen-Hermans et al., 2025).
- Learning that is inclusive implies education that views
 - Students as partners and active agents, who are intrinsically motivated;
 - humans as intrinsically part of nature.

/ Nature inclusive



/ Rome Ministerial Communiqué 2020

We commit to building an inclusive, innovative and interconnected EHEA by 2030, able to underpin a **sustainable, cohesive and peaceful Europe**:

- **Inclusive**, because every learner will have equitable access to higher education and will be fully supported in completing their studies and training;
- **Innovative**, because it will introduce new and better aligned learning, teaching and assessment methods and practices, closely linked to research;
- **Interconnected**, because our shared frameworks and tools will continue to facilitate and enhance international cooperation and reform, exchange of knowledge and mobility of staff and students.

/ Tiran Ministerial Conference 2024

An inclusive EHEA by 2030

- **Access and Completion for All:** to remove barriers to access for underrepresented and disadvantaged groups in society.
- **Social Dimension Framework:** to guide and monitor inclusive education to foster social justice and cohesion.
- **Student Well-being:** to consider the interrelated physical, psychological, social, and economic aspects of well-being for student success.
- **Support for Refugees and Displaced Persons:** to remove barriers to enrollment and recognizing qualifications.

/ Connecting EHEA to the European Green Deal and SDGs

Explicit connections with Green Deal

- Promoting Green and Digital Competencies (LLL)
- Supporting the Green Transition
- Encouraging Institutional Sustainability
- Linking to EU Recovery and Resilience Plans
- Regional impact of institutions

Explicit connections with SDGs

SDG 4 – Quality Education

SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities

SDG 5 – Gender Equality

SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-being

SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

/ Opportunity to ask a question



*Session 1:
Approaches to creation of
inclusive educational
content using Universal
Design for Learning*



/ INCLUSIVE STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

WE ARE GOING TO MAKE A WORD CLOUD TOGETHER

Please share one or more words you associate with

INCLUSIVE STUDENT –CENTRED LEARNING

Please take out your phone or table and scan the QR Code.

You can also go to **votezuyd.me** and login with **zuyd868**

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<https://dashboard.sendsteps.com/>.*

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The results will be shown as an animated Word Cloud
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**ZU
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Transformative Experiential
Flexible Entrance level
Learner needs Effective
Cocreation Collaborative
Deep learning

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/ Ensuring inclusivity: a systems' approach

Inclusivity is

- Not a problem to be fixed, it is an attitude and a way of working
moving from deficit thinking to acknowledging cultural capital of all students
- About ensuring transparency
access to information and sensitivity to (un)intended hidden messages
- Equity in power and influence
participation, representation, decision making, co-creation
- A continuous critical institutional dialogue and action to ensure every student can benefit from Higher Education based on equity and respect.

/ No Student Is The Same: Universal Design for Learning

“How do I design learning environments that anticipate variability and remove barriers so that all students can succeed?”

“How can I enhance learner agency that is purposeful and reflective, resourceful and authentic, and strategic and action oriented?”

1. Engagement (Why of Learning)

- How can I motivate and sustain interest for all learners?
- What choices can I provide to increase relevance and autonomy?
- How can I reduce anxiety and stress while maintaining challenge?

/ UDL continued

2. Representation (What of Learning)

- How can I present information in multiple ways so all students can access it?
- Are there barriers in language, format, or sensory access that I can remove?
- How can I make content culturally and contextually relevant?

3. Action & Expression (How of Learning)

- How can students demonstrate what they know in different ways?
- What supports or scaffolds can I provide for planning, organizing, and self-regulation?
- How can I ensure assessment flexibility without compromising rigor

CAST Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

The goal of UDL is **learner agency** that is purposeful & reflective, resourceful & authentic, strategic & action-oriented.

Design Multiple Means of Engagement



Design Multiple Means of Representation



Design Multiple Means of Action & Expression



Design Options for Welcoming Interests & Identities ⁽⁷⁾

- Optimize choice and autonomy (7.1)
- Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity (7.2)
- Nurture joy and play (7.3)
- Address biases, threats, and distractions (7.4)

Design Options for Perception ⁽¹⁾

- Support opportunities to customize the display of information (1.1)
- Support multiple ways to perceive information (1.2)
- Represent a diversity of perspectives and identities in authentic ways (1.3)

Design Options for Interaction ⁽⁴⁾

- Vary and honor the methods for response, navigation, and movement (4.1)
- Optimize access to accessible materials and assistive and accessible technologies and tools (4.2)

Design Options for Sustaining Effort & Persistence ⁽⁸⁾

- Clarify the meaning and purpose of goals (8.1)
- Optimize challenge and support (8.2)
- Foster collaboration, interdependence, and collective learning (8.3)
- Foster belonging and community (8.4)
- Offer action-oriented feedback (8.5)

Design Options for Language & Symbols ⁽²⁾

- Clarify vocabulary, symbols, and language structures (2.1)
- Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols (2.2)
- Cultivate understanding and respect across languages and dialects (2.3)
- Address biases in the use of language and symbols (2.4)
- Illustrate through multiple media (2.5)

Design Options for Expression & Communication ⁽⁵⁾

- Use multiple media for communication (5.1)
- Use multiple tools for construction, composition, and creativity (5.2)
- Build fluencies with graduated support for practice and performance (5.3)
- Address biases related to modes of expression and communication (5.4)

Design Options for Emotional Capacity ⁽⁹⁾

- Recognize expectations, beliefs, and motivations (9.1)
- Develop awareness of self and others (9.2)
- Promote individual and collective reflection (9.3)
- Cultivate empathy and restorative practices (9.4)

Design Options for Building Knowledge ⁽³⁾

- Connect prior knowledge to new learning (3.1)
- Highlight and explore patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships (3.2)
- Cultivate multiple ways of knowing and making meaning (3.3)
- Maximize transfer and generalization (3.4)

Design Options for Strategy Development ⁽⁶⁾

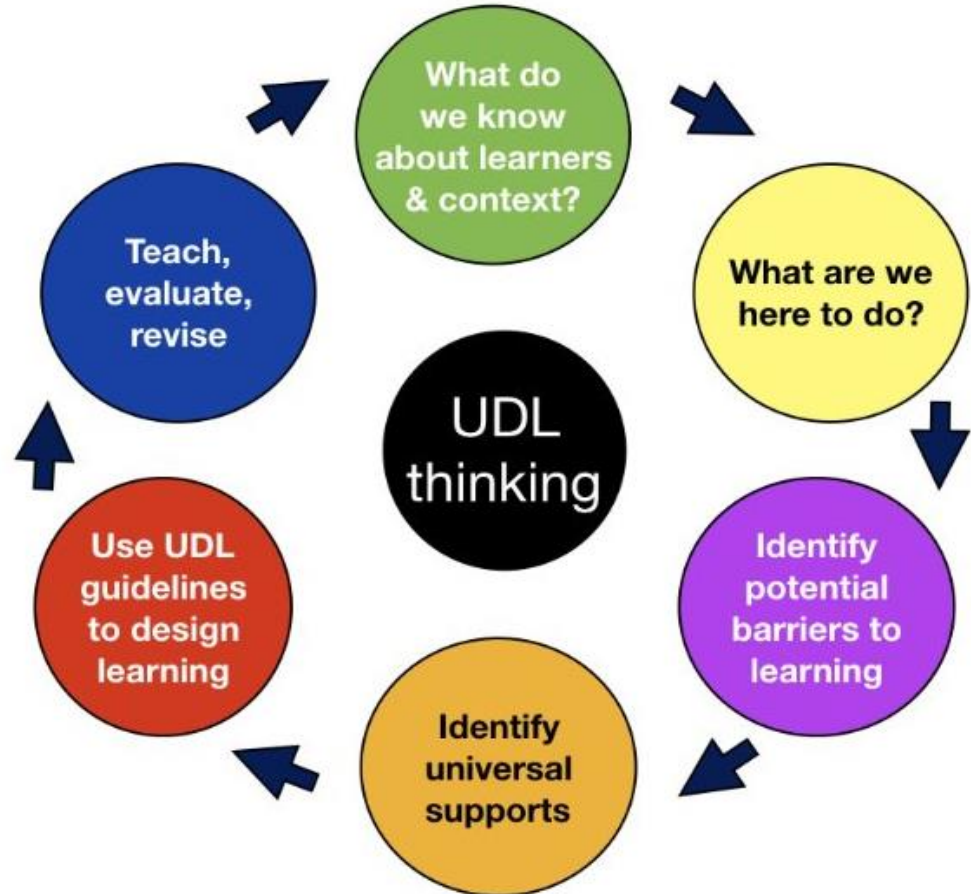
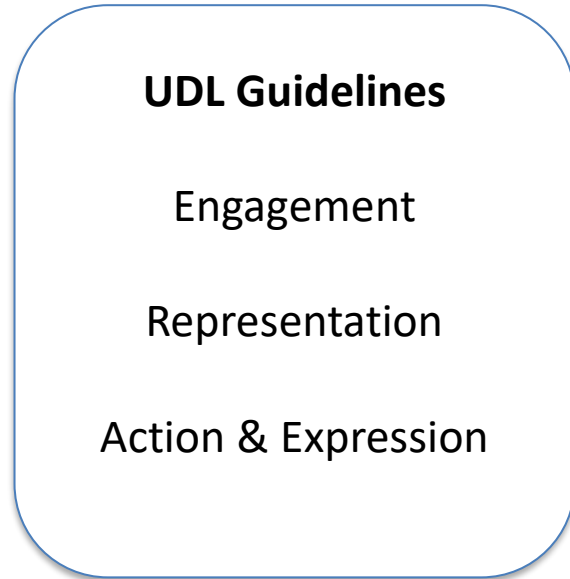
- Set meaningful goals (6.1)
- Anticipate and plan for challenges (6.2)
- Organize information and resources (6.3)
- Enhance capacity for monitoring progress (6.4)
- Challenge exclusionary practices (6.5)

CAST (2024).
Universal
Design for
Learning
Guidelines
version 3.0.
Retrieved from
<https://udlguidelines.cast.org>

/ An integrated approach to enablers of learning

Operational element		
Access	Foundational conditions	Ensuring all learners can perceive and engage with materials and environments.
Support	Instructional strategy	Scaffolding learning through tools, strategies, and feedback.
Executive Function	Learner cognitive ability	Skills for goal-setting, planning, organizing, and self-monitoring.

/ UDL as a process



/ Implications of UDL for curriculum design and delivery

A **shift** from

- A focus on disciplinary content **to learner needs, conditions and actions**
- Content-based learning to **competency-based learning**
- Academic as gatekeeper to knowledge and degrees **to coach and mentor**
- Academic as the expert **to reflective practitioner**
- Lecturer control **to trust in the student's intrinsic motivation**
- Summative assessment **to assessment-as- learning**
- **Students as consumers to students as agents of their own learning**

/ Examples of student centred methods and formats

Problem based learning

Nature-based learning

Flipped classroom

Collaborative online learning

Group work

Challenge or case-based learning

Community based learning and internships

Skills training and practical work

Virtual exchange

Experiential

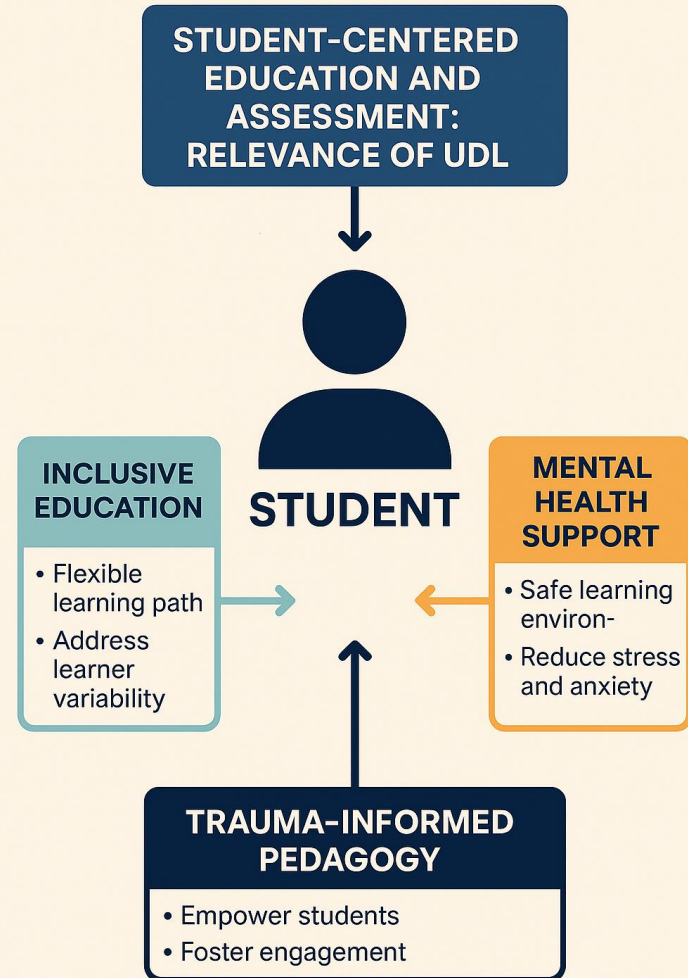
Fit for online and
hybrid

Aligned to UDL

/ UDL under emergencies

Three key points

- How to ensure inclusivity under emergencies?
- The importance of mental health support
- Trauma-informed pedagogy with special attention to nature as a healing force



/ Questions and answers

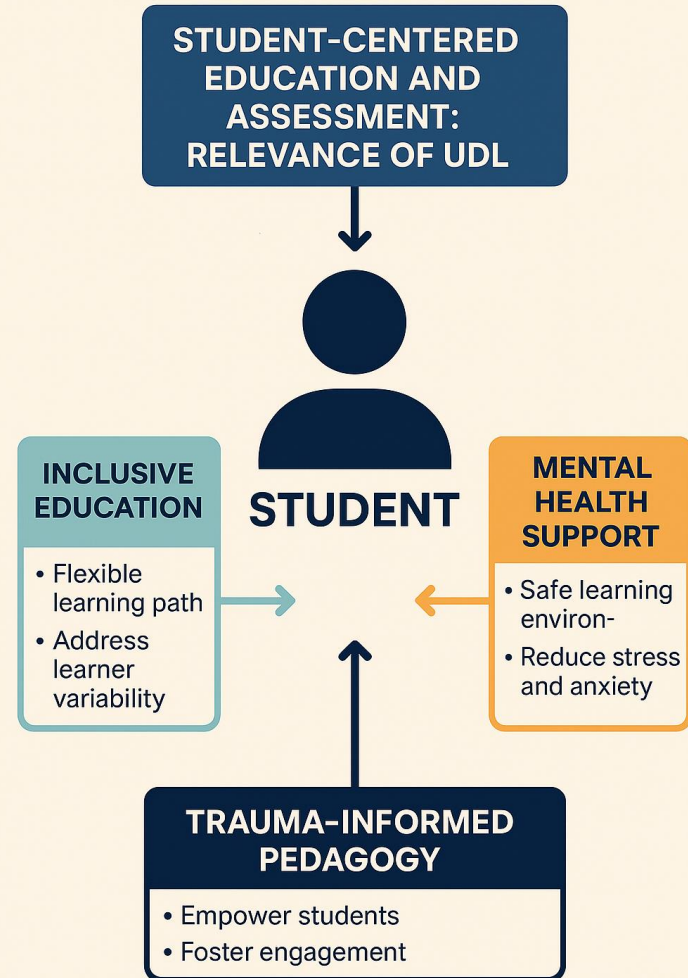




/ UDL under emergencies

Three key points

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/ Inclusivity under emergencies

- **Provide multiple means of access and engagement:** online; hybrid; radio, device flexibility, *online collaborative learning environments*
- **Prioritize flexibility in attendance:** asynchronous provision, recordings
- **Diversify representation of content:** text, audio, visual resources; offer *choice in activities and allow alternative learning tasks*
- **Draw on students' experiences:** engage students *by valuing their input*
- **Break content in small manageable units:** to reduce overload and prevent drop out.
- **Be flexible with assessment and feedback:** focus on formative feedback, *what has gone well and offer suggestions for improvement*

(e.g., Morris et al., 2021; Sewell et al., 2022)

/ Mental Health support

Embed Self-Regulation Supports: Include mindfulness prompts and stress-reduction tips.

Reflection Activities: Weekly journals or discussion boards for emotional check-ins.

Peer Support Networks: Encourage collaborative learning and virtual study groups to reduce isolation, buddy networks

Mentoring and advice opportunities: low threshold with quick responses and referral opportunities for specialised help

Safe Communication Channels: Provide confidential ways for students to share challenges.

(e.g., Marshall et al. 2024; Pointon-Haas et al., 2021)

/ Trauma informed pedagogy

Trauma-Informed Check-ins: Begin sessions with optional well-being check-ins or grounding exercises.

Multi-sensory learning: community and nature-based learning activities

Story telling and art: Validate student experiences and encourage self-expression.

Trustworthiness & Transparency: Communicate expectations clearly; avoid surprises.

(e.g., National Consumer Advisory Board, 2019; Thompson & Carello, 2022).

NATURE AS A HEALING-FORCE IN TRAUMA-INFORMED PEDAGOGY



BENEFITS OF NATURE

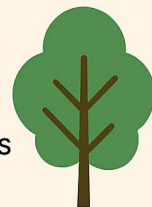
- Regulation of stress responses
- Restoration of cognitive function
- Sense of safety and grounding
- Social connection and belonging

INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

- Outdoor classes or activities
- Nature-based mindfulness
- Biophilic design
- Eco-projects

INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

- Outdoor classes or activities
- Nature-based mindfulness
- Biophilic design



TRAUMA-INFORMED PEDAGOGY



MENTAL HEALTH



/ Opportunity to ask a question



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