

examples where multiple methods of representation, engagement and action and expression are evident. Truly effective implementation of the UDL principles involves a thorough examination of student responses to these practices. This should include student performance on related activities and perceptions of the course design, structure, activities, assessments and their own learning. Additionally, Universal Design for Learning is not as simple as learning about and demonstrating good teaching practices. UDL also involves a knowledge of student interests, strengths, needs and preferences for learning and knowing how to effectively meet the needs of all students in the most effective manner. It may be most advantageous for preservice special education teachers to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively implement UDL in their future teaching if they are taught using these principles in their preparation program.

10. Suggestions for future research

As previously mentioned, this study was part 1 of a 2-part study that examined the use of UDL principles in a special education teacher preparation undergraduate course. Part 2 will involve an assessment of student understanding of UDL principles based on archived related course activities. Students will be asked to volunteer to participate in an interview and/or focus group to obtain a deeper understanding of the impact of the course activities, assessments and their understanding and perceptions of UDL. Future research should also involve a systematic evaluation of additional teacher preparation courses and be extended to higher education in general. If faculty across campuses utilized more of the principles of UDL in their teaching, a greater number of student needs will be met by changing how think about teaching and learning.

11. Implications for practice

Effectively incorporating UDL practices in all courses will allow faculty to practice what we preach and become facilitators of student learning. If preservice teachers are assessed on their depth of understanding of UDL throughout their teacher preparation program, the assessment data could be used to inform higher education faculty teaching practices each semester. Most importantly, if students have a thorough understanding of UDL and have opportunities to teach using these principles during their fieldwork and student teaching, they will be highly prepared to use these principles in their

future classrooms to meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities.

12. References

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