



# Universal Design for Instruction Guidelines

For Your Online Course

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Universal Design of Instruction is a framework focused on making learning available to all students regardless of needs or learning differences. These guidelines provide a basic framework to help you think about best practices in making your online course accessible.

## Questions?

If you have questions please contact the Instructional Design Studio via email ([ids@udmercy.edu](mailto:ids@udmercy.edu)) or phone (313-578-0580).

## Visual Design

- Course navigation makes it easy for students to find what they need.
- There is a consistent visual theme. (e.g. color scheme, page layouts)
- Units have a consistent layout week after week so that students don't have to re-learn to navigate the course each week.
- The course has descriptive headings and links. (e.g. using "Week 3 Assignment Submission Link" instead of "Assignment Submission")
- Fonts are uniform and sized appropriately. (12 pts or larger for content, 16 pts or larger for headings)
- Color usage is accessible. (i.e., color alone is not used to convey information, there is enough contrast, colors are not too similar)

## Media

- Alt text (a word or phrase that tells viewers the nature or contents of an image) is provided for all digital images.
- Course documents are in accessible formats. (HTML, PDFs that can be copy/pasted and are not images, Word Documents)
- Media files with audio are closed captioned or transcribed.

## Links & File Names

- Underlined text is avoided aside from active links.
- Phrases associated with links, like "click here", are not used in general text.
- Labels (.pdf, .docx, .xls) are included in the names of the links to documents.

## Information & Student Support

- The syllabus uses HTML or an accessible PDF or Word Format.

- Students know exactly where to get started when they enter a course. (A folder named “Start Here” that provides an overview of the course is a common way to do this.)
- The course provides a tutorial or instructions for course navigation.
- You have included and verified that you have up to date links to support services:
  - The Student Success Center
  - Student Disability & Accessibility Support Services
  - The Library
  - The Writing Center
  - The Instructional Design Studio
  - IT Services
- You have clear objectives for units or sections written in student centered language. (e.g. “By the end of this unit you will be able to...”)
- Students are provided with specific and descriptive criteria for assignment expectations.