Developing Online Courses with UDL for Students with Learning Disabilities

2017 UDL Symposium - UDL for Social Justice

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Education Landscape

55 Million K-12 Students in U.S.

- 10% Estimated to Have Taken an Online Course
- 1 in 7 Seven Students Has Some Form of Learning Disability
- 2.2M Students On Formal IEPs
Landmark School Mission

Landmark School enables and empowers students with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities (LBLD) to realize their educational and social potential through an exemplary school program complemented by outreach and training, assessment, and research.
Why Landmark Online Courses for Students with Learning Disabilities?

• Expertise - 45 Year History
• Results - 98% High School Graduation Rate
• Student Profile - Validated Language-Based Learning Disability (Co-morbidity ADHD, Executive Function)
• 50% of Landmark School Population from Public Schools
• Outreach Organization – Established to Extend School’s Proven Methodology to Educators and Students Outside of Our Campus
• Board Level Commitment

Online K12 Offerings Not Meeting Needs of Students with Disabilities

*Equity Matters: Digital and Online Learning for Students with Disabilities*
Why Landmark Online Courses for Students with Learning Disabilities?

- Offer appropriate and positive learning experience
- Build self-regulation needed for online work
- Mission driven
- Explore and create new pathways for students with disabilities

Online K12 Offerings Not Meeting Needs of Students with Disabilities

_Equity Matters: Digital and Online Learning for Students with Disabilities_
However, disability is an issue of Social Justice, prompting us to recognize, and challenge, ongoing beliefs and practices that diminish individuals with disabilities who often evaluate themselves as ‘less than’ human (Pelkey, 2001).
The fact that youths who have deficits in reading are disproportionately represented in correctional institutions suggests that the juvenile justice system has become the default system for many youths who have reading problems.

Learning disabilities such as dyslexia cast a very long shadow. Adults with learning disabilities still had 46% higher odds of having attempted suicide than their peers without learning problems, even when we took into account a wide range of other risk factors including lifetime history of depression and substance abuse, ADHD, early adversities, age, race, sex, income and education.

Esme Fuller-Thomson, PhD, of University of Toronto
Linguistic competence stands at the very center of what is crucially human in each of us. We are as we think, we think what we read, we become human as we understand each other through language.

Leon Esienber, M.D. (Baltimore: The Orton Dyslexia Society)
Intelligent People with Language Disorders

- Gifted in one area...terribly challenged in other areas
- Divergent/dyslogical thinking
- Atypical learning styles
- Cognitive intelligence that does not translate into academic success
What I did not fully appreciate was that the steady day-in and day-out pounding of undermining influences, such as a parent’s scathing criticism, could cause even more psychological trauma than a single traumatic event. These damaging influences, because they blend into the everyday background of our lives, are even more difficult to remember and exorcise. A constantly criticized child can lose as much confidence as one who remembers being humiliated on one particular, horrifying day.

*Author Brian L. Weiss, M.D.*
The “Invisible” Nature of Language-based Disability

- Unseen and unaccepted
- No one clear symptomatic manifestation
- Failure is easy to see...talents need to be discovered
- Significant strengths/significant deficits can be confusing
IMAGINE being...

- Intelligent...misunderstood
- Impaired.....misinterpreted
- Invisible.....misdiagnosed
Enables and empowers students with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities (LBLD) to realize their educational and social potential through an exemplary school program complemented by outreach and training, assessment, and research.

Provides start to finish solutions for online learning; promoting active learning environments that inspire and educate through solid instructional design, multimedia, and client and learner support.

Provides an adaptable and reliable online learning management system that connects the digital tools teachers and learners need all in one place.
The Online Course Design/Development Process

Planning & Design
Program framework, LMS/UDL/ID features matrix, learning path prototype, course design templates (blueprints)

Development
SME/ID collaboration, content creation/ outcomes and UDL mapping, evaluation of instructional methods for varied learners using established blueprints

Production
Build of course into LMS based on blueprints/ learning path design, test and review

Course Support & Maintenance
Faculty/student orientations, tech/content support, continual improvement
### LMS/LMK/UDL/ID Features Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool/Feature</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>LMK Principle</th>
<th>UDL Principle</th>
<th>Notes/ID Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audio/Video Messages</td>
<td>Built into rich content editor in announcements, assignments, discussions</td>
<td>LMK #2</td>
<td>UDL #1</td>
<td>Will need explicit instructions for students on how to use this feature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canvas badges</td>
<td>Canvas Badges let you award badges to students in your class based on performance or completion of modules</td>
<td>LMK #1, LMK #6</td>
<td>UDL #2, UDL #3</td>
<td>This an external app that can be applied to course under settings &gt; apps; motivates students; rewards individual efforts. See tutorial on how to use: <a href="https://canvas.instructure.com/courses/504071">https://canvas.instructure.com/courses/504071</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td>Students can view assignment due dates, etc., and add their own items</td>
<td>LMK #1</td>
<td>UDL #1, UDL #2</td>
<td>Varied format to view assignments due dates, etc.; helps with goal setting. Useful to aid those who need assistance with executive functioning skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat</td>
<td>Real-time collaboration; instructor can enable or disable</td>
<td>LMK #2, LMK #6</td>
<td>UDL #2, UDL #3</td>
<td>Offers a real-time opportunity for student-to-student, students-to-instructor interaction (not currently enabled in LMK sandbox); provides opportunity for students to communicate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Landmark Teaching Principles

1. Provide Opportunities for Success
2. Use Multisensory Approaches
3. Micro-Unit and Structure Tasks
4. Ensure Automatization through Practice & Review
5. Provide Models
6. Include Students in the Learning Process

### Universal Design for Learning Principles

1. Provide Multiple Means of Representation
2. Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression
3. Provide Multiple Means of Engagement
Course Design Template (Blueprint)

Module 1: Types of Essays and the Basics of Argumentative Essays

Welcome to our English 301! In this first week, you will begin with the Course Orientation, which will teach you how to be most successful in this course. Then, you will jump right into Module 1: Types of Essays and the Basics of Argumentative Essays. In this module, you will learn about the different types of essays including the specific attributes of an argumentative essay and become familiar with the basics of your first paper topic. Follow the steps below to get started:

1. Read the Welcome Announcement from your instructor.
2. Set up your profile.
3. Read through the Course Orientation materials and take the Course Success Survey.
4. Start Module 1: Types of Argumentative Essays. Work through each module task in the order presented. Please note that assignments are due by midnight on Sunday unless otherwise noted.

And, remember if you have any questions along the way, reach out! Please share them in the Module 1 Help & Discussion Forum or email the instructor via the course inbox.

Module 1 Overview

After completing this module, you will be able to:

- This is a list of all the learning objectives for each assignment/task

Module 1 Overview (audio)
“To do” this week on home
Sequential flow of content
Text written in active voice
Step by step instructions
Visual and auditory delivery
Participatory
Consistent navigation
WELCOME
Landmark Online Course Orientation Tour

Our Mission
Landmark School’s mission is to enable people with language based learning disabilities (LBDL) to reach their educational and social potential through an exemplary school program complemented by outreach and training, diagnosis, and research.

The academic, residential and online programs are structured to provide a safe and positive environment which supports students in their attempts to acquire and improve academic and social skills. Landmark is looking for young people who are committed to realizing their learning potential and willing to accept this school placement as a means of meeting their academic goals.
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