

The UDL-IFT: A Flexible Tool for Measuring UDL Implementation

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INTRODUCTION

The Universal Design for Learning – Implementation Fidelity Tool (UFL-IFT; Johnson-Harris, 2014) was designed to measure UDL implementation fidelity. It allows users to determine the extent of UDL implementation on a scale of “not UDL” to “robust UDL”. The tool can be used by teachers to guide or evaluate their own UDL implementation practices or by instructional coaches or peer coaches to facilitate discussions related to UDL implementation.

BACKGROUND

This tool was initially developed to measure whether student engagement increased when UDL was implemented during instruction. In order to consider UDL as a factor in increasing engagement, measuring whether UDL was happening was necessary first.

THE UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING-IMPLEMENTATION FIDELITY TOOL (UDL-IFT)

The UDL-IFT allows one to determine the extent of UDL implementation on a three-level scale: “not UDL”, “toward UDL”, and “robust UDL”. It is composed of the three principles of UDL, each broken down into three guidelines (as identified by CAST) and worded as questions. Beneath each guideline is a list of *potential* indicators ranging from practices that would not be considered UDL (e.g., lecture and print as the only means of representation) to practices that

would be considered moving toward UDL implementation (e.g., lecture along with purposeful availability of digital or audio texts if requested) to robust UDL (e.g., customizable representation of information). The lists of *potential* indicators are not (and could not possibly be) all-inclusive and they are not checklists. The point of these is for teachers to indicate what element *types* are and are not included in their lessons. The UDL-IFT has a simple, but clear manual and accompanying scoring tool, which provides a quantitative UDL implementation fidelity score. While an overall percentage score may be helpful in considering movement toward holistic UDL implementation, examination of individual guidelines and related indicators is a more practical and meaningful way to discuss movement toward robust UDL implementation.

SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERT VALIDATION STUDY

Experts in the field of UDL ($n=41$) examined the UDL-IFT and answered questions related to whether each item of the tool measures what it is intended to measure. Most respondents felt that the tool measures what it intends to measure (see Table 1). SMEs were encouraged to provide feedback on the tool items and as a result some changes were made when the tool was updated in August of 2019. Feedback and subsequent updates to the UDL-IFT are outlined in Table 2.

Table 1
Subject Matter Experts Agreement with UDL-IFT Validity

Tool Item		Agreement with Not UDL	Agreement with Limited UDL	Agreement with Robust UDL
<i>Multiple Means of Representation</i>	Guideline 1	59%	61%	81%
	Guideline 2	78%	61%	86%
	Guideline 3	78%	61%	83%
<i>Multiple Means of Action & Expression</i>	Guideline 4	76%	66%	81%
	Guideline 5	73%	63%	81%
	Guideline 6	76%	59%	83%
<i>Multiple Means of Engagement</i>	Guideline 7	78%	61%	81%
	Guideline 8	76%	63%	81%
	Guideline 9	71%	51%	76%

Note. Not UDL Agreement: Respondents agreed that the indicators scored as “not UDL” are representative of UDL not happening. Limited UDL Agreement: Respondents agreed that the indicators scored as “limited UDL” are representative of limited UDL happening. Robust UDL Agreement: Respondents agreed that the indicators scored as “robust UDL” are representative of robust UDL happening.

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT FEEDBACK

Feedback from subject matter experts can be grouped into three themes: theoretical, tool development, and comments that revealed respondents did not read the manual or directions. Theoretical feedback included topics such as technology dependence and expert learner model. Tool development feedback included topics such as expert learners, teacher-student interactions, tool flexibility, tool wording, providing examples for scoring, and loosening the scoring structure. Feedback indicating that respondents either misunderstood the manual and tool directions (or did not read them before completing the survey) included topics related to checklists and lesson planning.

UDL-IFT 2019 UPDATE

As a result of the SME validity study feedback, some changes were made to the UDL-IFT. First, the manual and tool directions were updated to provide more clarity and emphasis regarding lesson planning (e.g., beginning with a measurable objective) and tool use (e.g., not a checklist). Second, the word “all” was removed from each item to decrease the assumption that checking more items is better. So, instead of the direction, “check all items that apply” the directions are now, “check items that apply”. Third, on the scoring tool, the requirement for employing multiple items from certain sections to score at level 2 was removed.