Udl solutions plan: educator reflection

[Education](#)

UDL Solution Plan David Henry Licuanan Dithmer Meeting Individual Needs With Technology EDU620 Chenee Gilbert Assistive technology refers to devices that are used by disabled learners to improve their functional abilities. These include hardware, software and equipment such as wheelchair, adapted computers, glasses, talking calculators, high contrast pen and electronic reminders. The employment of AT is accompanied by assistive technology service. This service helps the students with disabilities in choosing, procuring and using the devices that enhances their learning tasks. Therefore, AT is important in ensuring that students with disabilities have equal access to learning and education program. It provides opportunity for this community of learners to perform various learning activities through overcoming physical and environmental challenges within the learning setup. As a result, AT intervention fills the rift between the needs of disabled students and their bodily limitation hence giving them opportunity to pursue their education up to the highest levels (Hersh, 2008). For instance, optical magnifiers enable visually impaired students to perform learning tasks like reading and experimental observation in a normal way. There are various types of disabilities with varying degree of complexity encountered in education set up like school. The term disability here refers to any limitation that hinders a student from performing his or her duties in a way considered to be normal. The affected students deviate from traditional methods of undertaking tasks. For instance, a student may not be able perceive sound properly. A person can be born with disability (congenital) or caused by other factors such diseases like polio, accidents/injuries or medical factors like wrongful use of drugs. The disabilities include sensory impairments like the blind, neurological impairments like the epileptic,

physical impairments like the muscular dystrophic, cognitive impairments like autism and psychiatric conditions such as schizophrenia. Besides, there are another category of disabilities known as learning disabilities. These disorders affect the way students perceive process, store and retrieve information for use. As a result ones thinking, understanding, memorization and retention are impaired. It is important to note that learning disability is not a problem of intelligence. However, learning disability can be suggested through dismal academic performance levels. This form of disabilities is purely neurological. Nevertheless, the situation can be worsened by behavioral and emotional factors such as depression. Some of the common learning disabilities include problem tackling mathematics (dyscalculia), difficulty in reading words (dyslexia), problems of language and speech (dysphasia) and problem of moving and coordinating body parts (dyspraxia). For example, an upper level student who finds it difficult to hold a pen in the right position is a victim of learning disability.

The decision to employ assistive technology to overcome learning challenges experienced by disabled students should be arrived at after a wide consultation between the student, parents, teachers and panels representing the disabled. In most institutions, the special education tutor or school support team should first recommend the use of AT after an assessment of learners need specific needs. The recommendation is then forwarded to competent and qualified panel for further evaluation and assessment. Parents and other concerned individuals are invited to submit information that may help in customization of the chosen AT for the student. Afterward a comprehensive assessment and review is made based on the information gathered during the hearings. If the panel approves a particular AT, the

process of identification and use commences. All the AT devices are listed. The appropriate devices are picked based on learner's background information and needs. Thereafter, procurement, trial, training of student, staff and parent plan is developed. During the trial process, effective equipment is selected as an approved assistive technology.

Assistive technology is all about access to education which is a critical component of United Nations universal declaration of human rights. One platform available for driving this agenda is online teaching. With millions of people connected through internet, e-learning is becoming the most popular mode of education because of reduced cost and flexibility. However, for this method of knowledge transfer to be effective, it must also be inclusive especially to disabled students. Therefore, a number of strategies should be put in place to meet this end. The e-portal should be interactive and easy to use. Again the material stored in should be multimedia in nature. For instance, modules and notes can be stored in sound format for the visually impaired students. This should also be accompanied by online support system. In addition, the teaching should follow step by step model with expected outcomes clearly defined at the beginning of each stage. Finally, students should be given ample time to complete the task and assignments.

References

Hersh, M. A. (2008). Assistive technology for visually impaired and blind people. London: Springer.