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EDUC 591 (26752)

Diversity: Equity, Power, and Inclusion

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## **Equity and Access Design Summary**

### **Group Members (Zoom Breakout)**

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### **Target Learner Population**

Strategies focus on learners in the middle childhood developmental stage and onwards.

### **Barriers to Address**

Barriers that learners may face include sight and/or hearing impairments (sensory disabilities), impairments affecting motor movement and physical mobility (i.e., dwarfism), and challenges invisible to the eye such as anxiety, stage fright, and even fear of public speaking.

### **Strategies and Techniques to Address Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

[Universal Design for Learning](#) involves a framework emphasizing multiple means of engagement (the “Why” of learning), representation (the “What” of learning), and action & expression (the “How” of learning). Our team came up with multiple strategies that can help bridge the gaps for learners who face a myriad of barriers such as the ones mentioned above. Ultimately, instructors who make accommodations of any kind should ensure that they do so for all learners present in order to avoid labeling the individual learner as an outsider.

For learners facing sight impairments, instructors could design any physical and digital course materials using large font size, which may vary depending on if the material will get projected onto a screen or printed onto a hand-out. Born-digital hand-outs or worksheets can help learners zoom in or out if they need to use a mobile device to access the information. Some learners may also wear a particular kind of glasses that require screens compatible with the glasses in order to assist with their sight.

For learners facing severe forms of anxiety, stage fright, or even fear of public speaking, instructors can allow them an alternative to presenting in front of the large group, and instead have them present in front of another teacher or a small group. The learner may also generate a pre-recorded presentation to fulfill the course submission requirement. Learners facing physical mobility difficulties (such as those resulting from conditions like dwarfism) can have stools for their feet to aid in movement, have appropriate arrangements to use the restroom, and (if at the primary school level) they should also receive assistance from instructors on moving to classes that require relocation, i.e., physical education (P.E.), recess, art, music, and others.

Lastly, a technique that could potentially benefit teachers-in-training can include facilitating a workshop in which participants get asked to remove everyday work items that they may take for granted. In this case, they could get assigned a challenge to navigate a web page or web-based resource using only a keyboard and nothing else. Once they have no mouse or other ordinary tools to rely upon, this exercise can help them understand the need to integrate [accessibility](#) into all parts of a learning experience, especially ones that have technology as a prerequisite. What seems easily usable to a user can become insurmountably difficult, and impart to these teachers-in-training some of the frustrations presented by poor accessibility.

## **Reflections from [Equity & Access Toolkit](#)**

Practitioners of instructional design should always consider their own positionality and multiple identities in creating equitable and accessible learning experiences. Linguistic minorities who face English-only spoken and written course content may do less well just by virtue of a lack of written, visual, and auditory sources in other languages. Recognizing positionality involves a constant assessment and reassessment of the practitioner (within the self and the work environments they inhabit). Learners who may identify as double or even triple minorities demonstrate the intersectionality of identity when it comes to race, gender, sexual orientation, and/or ability. While the eradication of all prejudice and bias is not possible, the active countering and acknowledgment of their existence can do much good to the learners, instructors, and instructional designers who all play important roles in constructing effective learning experiences. Setting this precedent to make equitable environments the norm means first embedding this awareness into workflows and processes, so that practitioners can ultimately treat these considerations as second nature rather than as tedious tasks to complete in a recursive manner.