EAIE

FORUM

Discussing international education

GAINING PERSPECTIVE FROM BEYOND HIGHER EDUCATION
AN INTERVIEW WITH MARTHA NUSSBAUM
CHARMS OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE
UNIVERSAL DESIGN IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

SUMMER
2012

Summer issue highlights

12

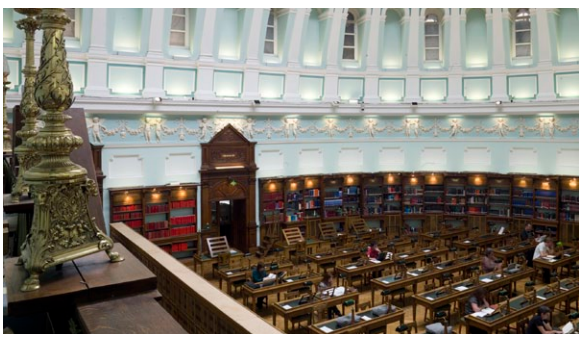
"We need to broaden and deepen our imagination."

MARTHA NUSSBAUM, PHILOSOPHER

18

"Irish writers have been willing to push the boundaries of literary conventions."

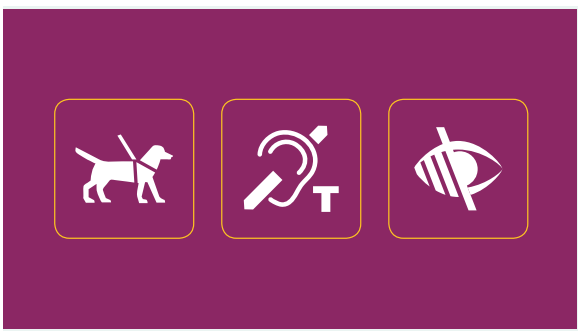
CHARMS OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE



24

"It's wise to view Universal Design as a process which aims to level the playing field."

JOAN MCGUIRE AND FEMKE TEN BLOEMENDAL



31

"Cooperation is the underlying fundament of almost everything we do in internationalisation."

GAINING PERSPECTIVE FROM BEYOND HIGHER EDUCATION

Contents

EAIE UPDATES
News from the Association

SPOTLIGHTS
Regularly occurring themes

FEATURES
Investigating hot topics

02 **EDITORIAL**

06 **MEMBER NEWS**
Essay contest; EAIE Elections

07 **BOOKS & WEBSITES**

35 **CALENDAR**

08 **THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL STUDENT DATA PORTABILITY**
A ground-breaking seminar

12 **MARTHA NUSSBAUM**
An interview

16 **WHAT WILL YOU BE TALKING ABOUT IN DUBLIN**
EAIE Conference conversation starter

18 **CHARMS OF THE IRISH LANGUAGE**
A literary journey

34 **TALKING HEAD**
An interview with Steve West

22 **SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTING A STRATEGIC INTERNATIONAL PLAN**
Challenges and advice

24 **A NEW PARADIGM FOR INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION**
Universal Design

28 **STUDENT INITIATIVES FOR GLOBAL HEALTH**
A new voice

31 **GAINING PERSPECTIVE FROM BEYOND HIGHER EDUCATION**
Driving forces of cooperation

Published by
European Association for International Education
PO Box 11189, 1001 GD Amsterdam, the Netherlands
TEL +31-20-344 51 00, **FAX** +31-20-344 51 19
E-MAIL info@eaie.org, www.eaie.org

Editor Michael Cooper

Publications Committee Michael Cooper (Chair), Linda Johnson, Laura Howard, Timo Ahonen, Frank Wittmann, Jill Archer, Mary Bishop

Marketing & Communications Manager Elise Kuurstra
Graphic Designer Nhu Nguyen
Publications Coordinator Sarah Fencott
E-MAIL publications@eaie.org

Cover photography Andrew Rich (istock)

Advertising
Contact geraghty@eaie.org for more information.
The EAIE welcomes requests for advertising space from companies and organisations whose aims and values are compatible with those of the Association and its members. Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement by the EAIE.

Printed by Drukkerij Raddraaier, Amsterdam

Copyright © 2012 by the EAIE
All rights reserved. Extracts from *Forum* may be reproduced with permission of the Editor. Unless stated otherwise, opinions expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect the position of the EAIE.

ISSN 1389-0808

A NEW PARADIGM FOR INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION:

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Photo: *Philip Barker (istock)*

__Joan McGuire__ and __Femke ten Bloemendal__ examine a new way of educating which aims to level the playing field in international higher education to ensure that no matter what the (dis)ability or background, every student has a fair chance to succeed.

Gone are the days that higher education institutions catered for the young, well to do, able-bodied, national male. Changes towards more culturally diverse societies and greater equal rights legislation have led to a much more diverse population in higher education. This growing diversity impacts everybody working in higher education, but notably educators. It changes the services that students need and it will impact internationalisation.

THERE IS A STRONG DRIVE FOR INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS WELCOMING A DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATION

Traditionally, international educators and administrators have been apt to working with cultural differences and to dealing with language barriers. However, when it comes to other forms of diversity, for example, students with disabilities, students from non-traditional backgrounds, and second career (mature) students, there is not that same level of comfort among educators. At the same time, there is a strong drive for inclusive institutions welcoming a diverse student population.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

When new legislation in the 60s and 70s called for accessible buildings, it entailed changing original constructions. Similarly, the call for equal opportunities in education for people with disabilities necessitated special arrangements to ensure these students received the same opportunities as able-bodied students. The approach of retrofitting buildings and instruction to accommodate people with disabilities is not only time consuming and costly but is also, in a sense, counterproductive and does not lead to a truly inclusive environment.

A movement to create more inclusive physical environments called Universal Design (UD) has been evolving since the 1970s. UD is defined as the process of designing products and environments that are usable by all people to the greatest extent possible without the need for retrofitting changes.[1]

An underlying assumption of UD is human diversity and an awareness of a variety of needs. Examples of UD are plentiful: ramps and electronic doors to facilitate entry to buildings, captioning on television screens to provide text of narrative, large print or pictorial signage. An unanticipated outcome of intentional design is that many people, not only those with disability-related accommodation needs, benefit – as witnessed by a parent pushing a baby stroller who can easily access a space using a ramp or somebody delivering a heavy package who can use the electronic door.

Recently, the notion of UD has been expanded to the instructional environment via a concept called Universal Design for Instruction (UDI).[2,3] UDI is an approach to teaching that consists of the proactive design and use of inclusive instructional strategies that benefit a broad range of learners including students with disabilities. From the outset of UDI, it was thought that applying the principles would be beneficial for other groups of students such as language learners and students with a different cultural background.

Is it reasonable to suggest that the principles of UD and UDI might provide a template for international educators and administrators to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students? The table overleaf includes the principles of UD and UDI, definitions, and examples that are drawn from teachers who are thinking inclusively about their teaching and the diverse learning needs of students. For clarification/illustration purposes, the principles are applied to the case study below.

CASE STUDY: JENNIE

Jennie, an American student, is accepted onto an MA programme at a European university. She has indicated that she has a learning disability. The institution promised to do its utmost to help her to be successful. Upon arrival, she shows the list of the accommodations and adjustments she received at her former US institution: extended exam time, use of a laptop, and a note taker. She is insecure about disclosing her disability and stressed about doing well and finishing the programme in time.

The aim of any higher education institution would be for this student to feel welcome and, most importantly, to succeed academically. The institution would probably come up with a special arrangement to accommodate Jennie. Nevertheless, it is expected that Jennie will encounter

Photo: *ayzek (shutterstock)*

additional issues as illustrated in the table opposite. Using the UDI principles, the institution would be looking at some of the recommendations and actions in the forth column of the table to better assist Jennie during her studies.

In this case study, the focus is on the teaching environment, but many suggestions are easily transferable to administrative procedures. UDI aims to proactively diminish barriers by anticipating and designing for a diverse population. Designing instruction and administrative procedures for a diverse population gives users options instead of limitations. UD changes at an institutional level will limit the need for specific accommodations and parallel services for 'special' student groups.

MARRIAGE OF CONCEPTS

Recommendations in the table opposite will be familiar to many teachers and administrators in international higher education.

SUCCESSFULLY TEACHING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS REQUIRES TEACHERS TO BE EXPLICIT IN THEIR EXPECTATIONS

The principles of UD and UDI tie in with guidelines on teaching an international classroom and even with the some of the ideas on Internationalisation at Home (IaH). Successfully teaching international students requires teachers to be explicit in their expectations, in teaching and assessment methods,[4] which matches UDI principles 1, 3, and 4 in the table. IaH places a strong emphasis on a culturally diverse student body which matches the principles of UD(I). Both IaH and UD(I) aim to make an impact at an institutional level as well as strategies that are beneficial to the growing diversified population of students.

The principles of UD and UDI have been applied to many areas including UD for student services and UD for assessment. Literature on these developments can help us to understand the way UD principles work in other areas – it can teach us the pitfalls and possibilities and help us to develop UD in international higher education. At the same time, it is important not to lose sight of the original principles, the holistic theory behind UD and not to deviate too far from the base of proactive inclusiveness, rather than develop practical solutions for specific higher education areas.

It is wise to view UD(I) as a process rather than a product, a process which aims to level the playing field so that everybody has a fair chance to succeed. Its aim is to create a welcoming, open campus that truly allows for a diverse student body including students with disabilities and international students alike. UD(I) may be seen simply as principles for good practice, but what distinguishes its principles from other similar standards is that they were created with inclusion at their core as the one unifying goal that binds them together.[5] Universal Design in international education might give us a framework to rethink our ideas and move internationalisation forward. **F**

LIMITATIONS

Any shift in a paradigm must be carefully and critically examined for its efficacy before its adoption can be touted. UD in physical environments is a widely accepted principle though not without debate. Although efforts are underway to consider the impact of instruction that is intentionally designed to be inclusive, it takes time to gather evidence that universally designed instruction leads to differences in student learning outcomes. It is critical that research efforts continue in a deliberate manner so that the movement for inclusive teaching rests upon a sound foundation. Multi-site approaches to implementing UDI principles including international education would go a long way toward expanding the evidence base for in the classroom. It is evident that many notions on teaching internationally and ideas on achieving an international institution already fit the UD(I) principles.

1. Center for Universal Design. (2011, July 9). Retrieved from www.ncsu.edu/project/design-projects/udi/center-for-universal-design/history-of-universal-design.

2. Scott, S. S., McGuire, J. M., & Foley, T. E. (2003). Universal design for instruction: A framework for anticipating and responding to disability and other diverse learning needs in the college classroom. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 36,* 40–49.

3. 'Universal Design for Instruction' is the term we use in this article. In literature, the terms 'Universal Design for Education', 'Universal Design for Learning/Learners' or 'Universal Learning Design (ULD)' are also used. These terms refer to the same concept.

4. Carroll, J. (2006). Strategies for becoming more explicit. In J. Carroll & J. Ryan (Eds.), *Teaching international students. Improving learning for all* (pp. 26–34). Abingdon: Routledge.

5. Higbee, J. (2008) Universal design principles for student development programs and services. In Higbee, J. & Goff, E. (Eds), *Pedagogy and student services for institutional transformation. Implementing Universal design in Higher Education* (pp. 195–203). University of Minnesota.

UD Principle	Definition UDI	Issues faced by Jennie	UDI recommendations for instruction
Principle 1: Equitable use	Instruction is designed to be useful and accessible for all. Be fair in providing means of use.	Jennie has a hard time writing and reading notes.	Provide multiple ways of accessing notes, for example through podcasts, class notes online, *etc.*
Principle 2: Flexibility in use	Provide choice in methods of participation and presentation.	Jennie struggles to process the visual material in her art history course.	Consider using two projectors to be able to leave the slides on longer. Allow student choice to show mastery of the material; for example through presentations, picture catalogue, *etc.*
Principle 3: Simple and intuitive	Instruction is straightforward. Eliminate unnecessary complexity.	Jennie takes a lab class which uses the metrics system in all their calculations and reports.	Provide an index card in the class and course syllabus. Encourage the use of an online conversion resource.
Principle 4: Perceptible information	Instruction communicates necessary information and is readily perceived.	Jennie blames the mediocre grade of her first assignment on her learning disability.	Make sure to be explicit in the expectations and grading criteria. Provide a grading scale in course syllabus.
Principle 5: Tolerance for error	Instruction anticipates variation in individual student learning pace and prerequisite skills.	Jennie is used to basing her writing on her own opinion but this style is not valued at her new university.	Structure a long essay into sections or design a series of essays so the student can benefit from immediate feedback.
Principle 6: Low physical effort	Instruction requires minimal nonessential physical effort.	Jennie is insecure about the use of her laptop since she feels this will disclose her disability.	Be clear on the rules for using laptops, tape recorders and other devises.
Principle 7: Size and space for approach and use	Consideration is given to appropriate size and space for approach, reach, manipulations, and use.	In discussions, Jennie does not understand the non-native English speakers, and they do not understand her.	Use a circular class arrangement so students can face one another. Use props (like stopwatches or traffic lights) to monitor the discussion.
Principle 8:[i] Community of learners	Environment promotes interaction and communication.	Jennie only interacts socially with other American students.	Switch group work between national groups and multicultural groups. Allow time for getting to know each other and interacting.
Principle 9: Instructional climate	Instruction is welcoming and inclusive. High expectations are expressed for all students.	Jennies experiences a different instructional climate with regards to her disability.	A statement in the class syllabus affirming the need for class members to respect diversity, cultural differences and differences in strengths and abilities.

i. These last two principles have been added in UDI to complement the original 7 principles of UD.