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
A NEW PARADIGM FOR INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION:

UNIVERSAL DESIGN
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.

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. 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). 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 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 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 case study below provides an example of how the principles of UD and UDI can be applied to a specific situation.
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, 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 UDI(I). Both IaH and UDI(I) aim to make an impact at an institutional level as well as in the classroom. It is evident that many notions on teaching internationally and ideas on achieving an international institution already fit the UDI(I) principles.

**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 far from the base of proactive inclusiveness, rather than develop practical solutions for specific higher education areas.

It is wise to view UDI(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. UDI(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. Universal Design in international education might give us a framework to rethink our ideas and move internationalisation forward.

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

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