



Dear Instructor/Faculty:

This kit was prepared for you as an introduction to the concept of **Universal Design in Higher Education** and includes six Posterettes that offer several easy-to-use tips and strategies to assist you in the design of accessible teaching and learning. “Universal design of instruction simply focuses on minimizing or eliminating barriers to learning opportunities by increasing access to information”¹.

The number of students with disabilities in post-secondary education is increasing, particularly students with so-called hidden disabilities (e.g. learning disabilities, mental health disabilities, and chronic medical problems). With this increase, the current system of one-on-one accommodations becomes strained, with its limited resources. Also, we know that many students do not come forth to obtain disability services within the current system due to stigma and the need to self-identify and provide documentation of their disabilities. Creative approaches are needed to facilitate the inclusion and success of this large proportion of students with disabilities. A climate of inclusiveness will benefit a campus in a myriad of ways.

Simply put, **designing accessible instruction benefits all students**. Some of the individualized accommodations that you may provide for students with disabilities, such as electronic versions of Word documents and captioned media, are alternative methods for reaching every student.

Please contact us if you would like more information or have questions (contact information below). Please also check out our website <http://access-ed.r2d2.uwm.edu/>.

We hope you have a successful year ahead.

The UD ITEACH Project Team

¹ Rickerson, N., & Deitz, J (2003). Integration of Universal Design of Instruction in Occupational Therapy Professional Education: Responding to Student Diversity. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 57(5), 594-597.