SREB

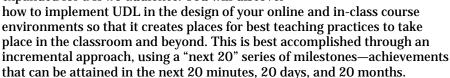## Educational Technology Cooperative

SREB-ETC 2017 Annual Meeting

Keynote:
Wednesday, September 20, 2017

Universal Design for Learning: Beyond Accessibility

Thomas J. Tobin, PhD, MSLS, PMP, MOT

This keynote will introduce you to Universal Design for Learning, especially as it has been expanded for a K-20 audience. You will discover how to implement UDL in the design of your online and in-class course environments so that it creates places for best teaching practices to take place in the classroom and beyond. This is best accomplished through an incremental approach, using a "next 20" series of milestones—achievements that can be attained in the next 20 minutes, 20 days, and 20 months.

You'll also find out where to look for help at your institution, even with limited funds, staff, and time. If we view accessibility through a legal-requirements lens, the challenges can seem so daunting that we never begin. This keynote provides practical ways to identify where to apply often-scarce resources to maximum benefit for learners and teachers. Recent research from CAST and the Center for Universal Design in Education suggests that institutions whose support-staff members use UDL, too, see better adoption rates and deeper penetration of UDL principles across all courses.

By attending this keynote presentation, you will be able to:
- ✓ help teaching colleagues to incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) elements into their courses,
- ✓ design/retrofit existing course components using UDL principles,
- ✓ expand your institution's use of UDL elements beyond the legally-required minimum, and
- ✓ make the case for UDL both "up and down the chain" to senior leadership and to colleagues at the operational level of your institutions.

This keynote uses active-learning techniques and provides use-them-now resources for participants. Especially by relating UDL to broader access benefits for all learners, this session's activities serve as a model for participants to re-frame accessibility and inclusion conversations there.

This keynote posits diversity in its most inclusive form: instead of relying solely on providing accommodation services to learners with disabilities—which is most often a last-minute, ad-hoc, reactive process—adopting UDL as part of an institution's culture of course design and teaching practices allows all learners to benefit, regardless of their place on the ability spectrum.

Thomas J. Tobin

Thomas J. Tobin spent five years as the Coordinator of Learning Technologies in the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, and is now a faculty developer and professional consultant in State College, Pennsylvania. He is an internationally-recognized speaker and author on topics related to quality in distance education, especially copyright, evaluation of teaching practice, academic integrity, and accessibility/universal design for learning.

In the field of online-course and -program quality, he is best known for his work on administrative-evaluation techniques; his article on "Best Practices for Administrative Evaluation of Online Faculty" (2004) is considered a seminal work in the field, and has been cited in more than 150 publications.

Tom serves on the editorial boards of *InSight: A Journal of Scholarly Teaching*, the *Journal of Interactive Online Learning*, and the *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*.

His most recent book is *Evaluating Online Teaching: Implementing Best Practices* (Wiley, 2015) with Jean Mandernach and Ann H. Taylor. He is currently writing *Reach Everyone, Teach Everyone: Re-Framing Universal Design for Learning in Higher Education*, expected from West Virginia University Press in early 2018.

His comic book (yes, comic book) on copyright, entitled *The Copyright Ninja: Rise of the Ninja* was published on May 15, 2017. It teaches college and university faculty members, support staff, and campus leaders about copyright, fair use, licensing, and permissions. Plus, it has ninjas.

Tom is also proud to represent the United States on a Spring 2018 Fulbright Scholars core grant, under which he will help Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, Hungary to develop its first faculty-development program.