CULTIVATING AGENCY IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ICED26 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

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CULTIVATING AGENCY IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

Proceedings of the ICED26 International Conference on Academic Development

Cultivating Agency in Higher Education brings together contributions presented at the *ICED26 International Conference on Academic Development*, offering perspectives on agency, academic development, and the changing landscape of higher education.

The volume reflects the diversity of conversations, practices, and scholarship shared across the international ICED community, exploring how academic developers, educators, students, leaders, and institutions can exercise and foster agency in response to contemporary challenges in higher education.

These proceedings document the work presented at ICED26 and provide a resource for continuing the conversations, collaborations, and learning that emerged from the conference.

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12:45 – 13:45	**Parallel Sessions B (60')** **Workshops 1:** - How Educational Developers Can Use Community Power to Scale Universal Design Practices ▸ Thomas Tobin · Maureen Haran, Niamh Plunkett, Lisa Padden **Workshops 2:** - Generative Artificial Intelligence for Research ▾ Diana Mireya Cuéllar Sánchez · Diana Marcela Cabrera Navarrete **Workshops 3:** - Teaching portfolios in the age of AI: time to rethink the assessment of teaching competencies? ▾ Anita Iversen · Kristine Ludvigsen, Iris Borch, Marko Lukic, Ragnhild Sandvoll, Katarina Winka **Workshops 4:**

Workshop 1

How Educational Developers Can Use Community Power to Scale Universal Design Practices

Thomas Tobin, Maureen Haran, Niamh Plunkett, Lisa Padden

Abstract

By now, you likely know the basics of universal design (UD): lower access barriers in the physical environment, as well as in the design of learning experiences. How consistently does your center or institution model these principles in your educational programming? Come to our workshop and take away concrete techniques for modeling UD in your educational-development work and scaling up to lower barriers across your institution and in your region. Using the "see one, do one, teach one" approach, you'll learn from a) an advocacy organisation that co-leads a nationwide UD credentialing programme, b) a university that adopted UD across its teaching and service touchpoints, and c) a researcher whose UD-at-scale process is a model for how you can adopt and advocate for UD in your own context. Come prepared to be part of the conversation—equal parts demonstration, proof-of-concept, and collaborative meaning-making. This workshop is for instructors, teaching-centre staff, and campus leaders at all levels.

Keywords: UD, universal design, access, accessibility

Extended Summary

Conceptual Framework: Colleges and universities ask instructors to apply inclusive principles, but sometimes miss opportunities to embody similar practices in our support and educational-development programming. We'll share universal design (UD) techniques to help you to embody, assess, and grow "innovation, communication channels, time, and a social system" (Smith, Greenwald, Nave, Mansure, & Howell, 2020) beyond just instructor training.

Take-Aways: By participating in this session, you will be able to:

- assess your educational-development work to uncover "start-here" gaps;
- build core UD skills for instructor and staff participants;
- concretely model UD in your programming;
- expand UD across campus through center support and partnership approaches;
- define how UD considerations change at the institutional and system-level scales;
- create action plans for UD along three strategic pillars of access, inclusion, and predictability; and
- attract funding, resources, and time for systemic UD application, community, and assessment.

Session Activities: Come prepared to be part of the conversation—equal parts demonstration, proof-of-concept, and collaborative meaning-making. This workshop is for instructors, teaching-centre staff, and campus leaders at all levels. We'll start with an introduction to UD in educational development (10 minutes). Then each facilitator will share an interactive micro session.

Finding Your Tribe: How Learning Communities Can Impact National and Institutional Systems (20 minutes)

> Author 1 will share how a community of practice built a 10-week Universal Design professional-development programme which reached 5,000+ teaching professionals. You'll discover how this influenced national policy and the development of a National Charter for Universal Design in Tertiary Education which ensures everyone is embedding UD across their offerings. You'll get the opportunity to reflect on who your professional-development partners might be for a push towards more inclusive practice in your context, and get key insights into how to build and leverage these communities.

From Grass Roots to Governance: Embedding UDL in Institutional Strategy at Institution 2 (20 minutes)

> What began as a grassroots effort at Institution 2—championed by a passionate community of educators and professional staff—has grown into a system-wide commitment to inclusion, equity, and access.
>
> Author 2 will outline the early momentum generated through informal communities of practice and the National UDL Digital Badge (Institution 1, 2025) which equipped thousands of educators with a shared language and approach that ultimately shaped the ALTITUDE Charter (2024)—a national framework guiding UD adoption in Country 1's tertiary systems.
>
> Author 3 will share how Institution 2's bottom-up efforts transitioned to strategic integration, through executive support, getting UD into the strategic plan, and how a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee expanded the adoption. Professional development moved beyond badge completion to meaningful institutional recognition for staff committed to inclusive design.

You'll reflect on your own institutional context by mapping existing committees, working groups, and strategic plans where you can champion and scale UD principles.

A 5-Stage Model for Scaling Universal Design (20 minutes)

How do we go from having a few people who know a lot about inclusive design (Pace, Middendorf & Shopkow, 2017-18) to helping everyone to know and do a few keystone practices based on the UD framework?

Author 4 will demonstrate how the UD framework translates into action along three strategic pillars of access, inclusion, and predictability (Tobin & Behling, 2018). You will take away models for attracting funding, resources, and time for systemic UD application (Pusateri, 2022, 39-60).

At scale, systemic UD addresses fewer, more strategic goals: learner persistence, retention, and satisfaction (Smith, Greenwald, Nave, Mansure, & Howell, 2020). As focus shifts to systemic practices, UD leverages the power of defaults and applications move beyond the classroom and formal teaching-and-learning interactions.

The work of campus support units encompasses the development of curriculum, teaching approaches, instructor career paths, and institutional policy. We will examine a five-part maturity model for adopting UD as part of your center's work and beyond (Tobin, 2026).

Collaboration, Equity, & Evidence: During our ending conversation (15 minutes), you will engage in a facilitated collaborative session with our presenters to design one actionable technique to share back with colleagues and eventually incorporate in the programming in your own college or university.

Creating safe and welcoming spaces: This session emphasizes innovative practices for which ICED members are among the campus vanguard. Collaboration in safe and welcoming opportunities for professional development helps us to "anticipate and respond to emerging institutional and student needs." Our exemplars of micro-, meso-, and macro-level professional development are designed for equity, able to be completed by everyone in varying ways, in order to "build capacity for the future of our campuses."

Principles for accessibility & inclusion: This session will provide multiple ways to keep participants engaged (solo, collaborative, and interactive), multiple ways to present information (slide visuals, video sharing, text-chat, side-channel, spoken dialogue), and multiple ways to join the conversation and show skills (in-person conversation, text chat, self-guided reflection).

Modeling equity: We will use active-learning techniques and provide use-them-now resources for participants. Especially by relating instructor-development programming to broader access, attention, and persistence benefits for all instructor participants, this session's activities serve as a model for attendees to re-frame accessible and inclusive educational-development conversations.

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