

Environment

It is not always possible to control the environment that you teach in, but when possible it is good to consider the following UCD steps:

1. Create a campus-wide climate that is safe, caring, and barrier free.
2. Teach cultural respect for all learners.
3. Use physical space to enhance student participation and engagement.

There are many different types of strategies an instructor can choose from. **Below are just non-technology required strategies:**

Make sure that the space is comfortable for students, accessible access, noise controlled, allow for preferential seating.

Move the furniture around to create large, small and individual groups.

Provide periodic breaks during long sessions.

Repeat questions so students in the back can hear.

Engage students who sit in the back of the class by structuring classes so that students take on multiple roles – facilitator, recorder, presenter, etc.

Encourage students to choose or look for internships opportunities in locations that is convenient for them or to pair up to share the travel responsibilities.

Extend time to complete fieldwork assignments.

Be responsive to cultural and ethnic diversities.

Here are a few technology-related UCD environmental strategies:

Use an overhead projector, Elmo or LCD projector to magnify course materials the map or diagram for the class.

Use www.skype.com, Wiki's, blogs or a discussion board to continue class discussions--set a min and max for the length of the post, the numbers of posts, also remind students that technical assistance is available.

Make sure any audio used is amplified enough to reach the back of the room. Use a microphone when lecturing.

Create online portfolios for students to use to upload and share their work with you.

Provide online group folders for each group to share information amongst themselves.

Use video conferencing with your students in remote places.

Use Mimio or Smartboard to record notes on the whiteboard and then post them on the course website or email them to students.

Allow part of the internship/practicum to be completed virtually, through on-line discussion groups, video conferencing and/or chat rooms.

Create a universally designed laboratory. For more information on how to do this see our [UCD Tools section](#).

Give students opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge in alternative formats (presentations, papers, videos, newspaper articles, case-studies, photo essays, etc.).

Encourage students to do their final presentations in a medium that works best for their learning style, provide a rubric as a guide.

Encourage students to use technology as they develop the themes/ideas for their assignments (Concept map tools, spell checks, PowerPoints, digital cameras, etc.).

Assign students to conduct webquests around a topic that they are interested in that relates to the course.

Have students create informative topic specific websites--allow them to provide the information in a manner that works best for them.

Create and monitor online debates between groups. Use a web conferring tool, wikis, a blog or Skype. See [more information on these tools](#).

Encourage students to include their notes and/or pictures in their lab reports.

Ask students to create course-related MP3 files to share with the rest of the class.

Provide online review sessions.