



Assessment Design Using UDL

Designing assessments with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in mind begins with a simple premise: students should be evaluated on what they know and can do, not on their ability to navigate unnecessary barriers. UDL-aligned assessment focuses first on the learning intention, then offers flexible pathways for students to demonstrate that learning with equal rigor.

In practice, this means separating *core disciplinary skills* from *incidental demands*. When analysis, reasoning, or application is the goal, students may be permitted multiple modes of expression—written, oral, visual, or applied—so long as the intellectual standard remains constant. Clear criteria, transparent expectations, and purposeful choice support both equity and academic integrity.

UDL is not about lowering standards or creating individualized assessments for every student. Rather, it is about designing assessments that anticipate learner variability and make success attainable through thoughtful structure.



Sharing is Caring!

Assessment Spotlight & Swap

February 19th, 2026 from 9:00 - 11:00am

This workshop invites faculty to bring an assessment they would like to redesign and present it to colleagues.



Event Format: This will be a hands-on, in person workshop

Everyone brings as assessment they want to redesign and the learning objective(s) connected to the assessment

- 5 minutes to present the assessment to colleagues and receive feedback
- Practical examples of how to redesign assessments for a variety of reasons will be shared for inspiration and to guide discussion:
 - Designing AI *in*, or designing AI *out*
 - Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and increasing student choice
 - Aligning Success Criteria with learning intentions
 - Redesigning traditional assessments
 - Improving accessibility in assessment design
- Co-creative time to discuss, make suggestions, experiment, and support each other in redesign exercises

Facilitators: Dr. Steven Van Zoost, School of Education & Danielle Pierce, Coordinator of Teaching Initiatives

Date & Time: February 19th 2026 from 9:00 - 11:00am

Location: Wu Welcome Centre

For more info: [Acadia Events Calendar Details](#)

[Register Here](#)



GenAI in Higher Ed: A Primer and Lessons Learned

February 4th, 2026 from 3:00 - 4:00pm

A Maple League Better Together session with Dr. Christian Muise from Queen's University

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has rapidly shifted from a research curiosity to a widely used technology influencing how we write, create, learn, and make decisions. This talk will offer a high-level introduction to both traditional AI, as well as GenAI, along with some of the many challenges it poses to higher education and use more broadly. We will cover common education-oriented use cases for GenAI, such as support for lesson planning, creative expression, personalized learning, and formative feedback, and also examine the key risks and challenges, including biased outputs, hallucinations, energy and resource use, and the cognitive impacts of over-reliance on AI by both students and instructors.

Rather than offering simple solutions, we'll explore both the pros and cons of the technology, and see several examples of where it has been successfully integrated into higher education, as well as those cases where it has failed to live up to the promise. No prior knowledge of GenAI is required, and there will be ample opportunity for discussion.

Date & Time: February 4th, 2026 from 3:00pm - 4:00pm

Location: Online, via Zoom

[Register Here](#)



Working Lit: Feminism and the Office in Canadian Literature

February 27th, 2026 from 2:00 - 3:00pm

A Sabbatical Showcase presentation by Dr. Kait Pinder, Department of English & Theatre

This talk examines how feminism became a source of inspiration for Canadian writers in the early and mid-twentieth century by focusing on two now-canonical texts. J.G. Sime's short story collection *Sister Woman* (1919) and P.K. Page's poem "The Stenographers" (1942) connect the labour of typists to the work of creative writing. In critiquing the gendered inequities of women's paid labour, Sime and Page also comment on their own working conditions as writers and the patriarchal contexts in which their writing was received and valued.

Kait Pinder is an Associate Professor in Acadia's Department of English and Theatre. Her research focuses on twentieth-century and contemporary Canadian literature. She has published on Leonard Cohen and Friedrich Nietzsche, Sheila Watson and Simone Weil, Margaret Laurence and the Vietnam War, and Tracey Lindberg and the ethics of care, among other authors and topics. Her Introduction to Feminisms in Canadian Literature, co-authored with Andrea Beverley (Mount Allison), is forthcoming from Routledge.

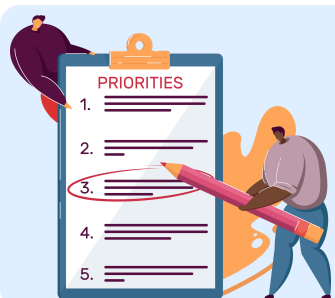
Presentation Date & Time: February 27th, 2026 from 2:00pm - 3:00pm

Location: KC Irving Centre Auditorium

For more info: [Acadia Events Calendar Details](#)

*The Sabbatical Showcase is a monthly opportunity for faculty to share their research with campus and community. This program is a partnership with the Adult Lifelong Learning (ALL) Group. If you are interested in presenting your sabbatical research as part of our 2026-2027 programming, let us know! **teaching@acadiau.ca***

Supporting Students



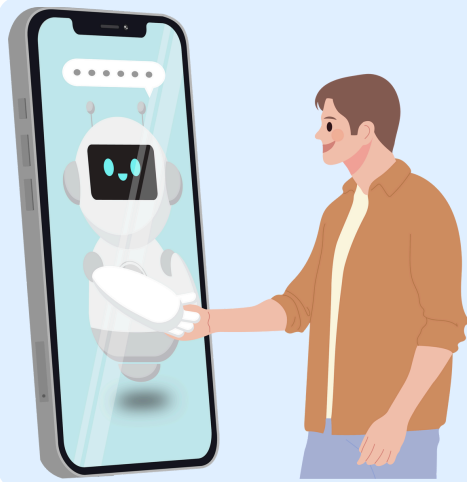
Accessible Course Outline Template

Making one small change to your course outline can have a big impact!

This course outline template resource is broken into discrete sections, which can be rearranged or modified to best fit your course, teaching style and any template that your academic unit already uses. Adjust descriptions of activities and outcomes to fit your course.

Download a copy of Acadia's Accessible Course Outline below!

[**Download Here**](#)



Introduction to AI Literacy

This student resource is an online, self-paced, co-curricular and non-credit module that introduces foundational knowledge about what artificial intelligence is, how it works, and guides students to consider how they might use it responsibly in courses.

Developed in partnership with Dr. Dan Lametti, Department of Psychology, this is designed as a primer for students on AI literacy, offering a foundation in what AI is, how it works, and ethical considerations surrounding its use in higher education. It introduces key ideas around responsible engagement, the limitations of AI tools, and the enduring importance of human judgment, creativity, and integrity when engaging with this new technology.

While the module touches on many important concepts, it is not intended to be an exhaustive exploration of AI in university. Instead, it serves as a starting point for students and an opportunity for us to gather feedback that will help inform future training and supports related to AI use in teaching and learning at Acadia.

If you are interested in sharing this module directly with your students, add a direct link to your courses:

[Introduction to AI Literacy Student Course](#)



Supporting Faculty

Teaching Consultation

This service provides faculty with focused support for improving course design and instructional practice. By completing a short intake form, instructors can identify the specific areas in which they seek guidance.



Support is available for:

- Redesigning assessments
- Classroom engagement strategies

- Course Outline design
- Integrating or limiting artificial intelligence (AI) within coursework
- Enhancing Accessibility
- Applying Universal Design for Learning
- Improving use of the learning management system, Moodle
- Addressing other course design needs

[Book a Consultation Here](#)



Online Faculty Community of Practice

For our second cohort of faculty going through the **Accessibility, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Training Course**, we're going online!

If you've been on the fence about completing this free training in **Accessibility, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, now is your chance to join a new online cohort of faculty!

We will meet online on Microsoft Teams once every two weeks, moving through the course modules and taking time to reflect on the learning together. *(Final Schedule TBD by participants)*

Why Join?

- Earn a Certificate of Completion and participate in a collegial learning community
- Deepen your knowledge of the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act and education standards
- Explore UDL principles to make your courses more inclusive
- Discuss AI tools & consider when they might support accessibility for faculty and students alike.
- Exchange ideas and build practical strategies for teaching and learning at Acadia.

[Register Here](#)

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Training

The **Accessibility, UDL & AI Training Course** is also available as a self-paced training for any interested faculty. It is online, asynchronous, and explores the merging of Accessibility, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education.



Faculty will learn how to create inclusive learning environments that meet the criteria aligned with Access by Design, Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act, Nova Scotia Education Standards under the Act and the NS Public Sector Body's Accessibility Plans while leveraging Universal Design Principles and cutting-edge AI technologies.

[Enroll Here](#)

Dig Deeper



Something to Listen to

[Measuring What Matters \[8:35\]](#)

In this episode of *The Education Table*, Dr. Katie Novak explores one of the most common questions educators face when implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL): How do I know if it's actually working? Through stories, research, and practical strategies, Katie unpacks how to assess growth and improvement in inclusive classrooms. She emphasizes that UDL isn't about perfection—it's about steady progress and reflection over time. Listeners will walk away with clear guidance on identifying meaningful evidence of impact beyond engagement, focusing on student outcomes and authentic growth.



Something to Watch

[UDL in Higher Education \[2:10\]](#)

The resources shared here provide a brief overview of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) for postsecondary settings, links to the UDL Guidelines and the National Center on UDL, videos discussing the retention in higher ed and the intersection of UDL and accessibility and a list of resources.



Something to Read

[Accessibility, Usability, and Universal Design for Learning: Discussion of Three Key LX/UX Elements for Inclusive Learning Design \[9 pages\]](#)

Abstract: In this paper, we aim to provide readers with three critical concepts that can maximize inclusivity of learner experience (LX) and user experience (UX) design: accessibility, usability, and universal design for learning (UDL). Although recent K-12 and postsecondary education have experienced rapid change in its student population with the growing awareness of the equal opportunities for all, general design methods of addressing such diversity across formal and informal learning contexts are still prone to retrofitted changes to predefined instructions in favor of standardization. This is due in part to the limited interpretation of accessibility as the concept for the medical model of disabilities where learners with disabilities are not regarded as users or consumers, but as clients or patients. Moreover, LX and UX have been widely designed with the usability of dominant group in mind while trading off exclusion of those who cannot fit themselves into it. However, accessibility and usability are not mutually exclusive; rather, a truly inclusive learning design (i.e. UDL) comes from the interplay between them. Through the paper, we provide definition and description of each concept and provide practical examples of how UDL principles can be applied to inclusive learning design.



Something to Do

[UDL Course Assessment v.4](#)

The **UDL Course Assessment** is a tool for educators to identify the UDL elements already included in a course, and offer suggestions and resources for additional UDL implementation. The tool contains a series of questions based on the UDL guidelines, as well as the data from Mohawk College's recent research studies. The objective of the course assessment is not to answer “yes” to all of the questions, but to consider each of the suggestions; determine if that UDL element is already occurring, or is able to be added; and learn more about UDL in the process.

Take the UDL Course Assessment to determine the UDL elements currently in your course(s) and gain additional, targeted resources to support further UDL implementation.



[CONTACT US](#) | Feb 2026