



Universal Design Primer:

Universal design is an inclusive process aimed at enabling all of us to experience the full benefits of products, environments and services regardless of our ages, sizes or abilities. By designing for a diverse population, universal designers integrate safety, health and usability for everyone into their work on a routine basis. This approach leads to greater inclusion for many groups often neglected in the design process (e.g., children, the elderly, women, people of small stature, frail people, etc.). While building codes and standards provide minimum requirements for accessibility, safety, and health, universal design seeks a higher standard. The process of universal design will not accommodate everyone in every circumstance, with every budget. Rather, it continuously moves the bar toward the goal of universal usability. Consequently, a more appropriate term may be universal designing, a verb rather than a noun. In short, universal design seeks to improve safety, usability and social participation for the broadest population possible within the resources available for any project. (IDEA Center, University at Buffalo, 2010)

Learning Objectives:

UDNY introduces the concept of universal design and the rationale behind it. To demonstrate how universal design can be practiced in architecture, it provides both general guidelines for building and site design and specific guidelines for different building types. It is heavily illustrated with best practice examples to illustrate the guidelines and in-depth several case studies.

UDNY 2 is intended to enhance UDNY by distinguishing the difference between code compliant accessible design and universal design. It provides a summary of the major building code requirements for accessible design with associated universal design guidelines that can be used to go beyond the building codes.



Principle 1: Equitable Use

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

Principle 2: Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Principle 3: Simple and Intuitive Use

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

Principle 4: Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Principle 5: Tolerance for Error

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Principle 6: Low Physical Effort

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Principle 7: Size and Space for Approach and Use

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

References:

Universal Design New York & Universal Design New York 2 are available under "Books" on the IDEA Center Publications and at the following website,

<http://udeworld.com/dissemination/publications.html>)

Additional Teaching references are available at www.udeducation.org

National Endowment for the Arts

<http://www.arts.gov/resources/Accessibility/rlists/UDesResources.html>

Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access

<http://www.ap.buffalo.edu/idea/>

The Institute for Human Centered Design

<http://www.humancentereddesign.org/>