# PROJECT SUMMARY

The project will identify 6-8 courses in which the faculty are willing to redesign the course in accordance with the principles of Universal Design. The faculty will be provided training and mentorship in the area of Universal Design in order to redesign their courses. The Universally Designed courses would be expected to improve the learning experience and achievement of learning objectives for a broad spectrum of students. Additionally, there should be a reduction in the need for instructors to make arrangements for individual accommodations in these courses.

# PROJECT RATIONALE

Currently, there is an institutional priority in creating an accessible and inclusive campus with regard to people with disabilities. Additionally, the numbers of students with disabilities has greatly increased over the past few years. Universal Design in instruction is proposed to create greater access for students with a range of abilities and reduce the need for individual accommodation. While UD emerged from a vantage point of creating inclusion for students with disabilities, it has been found to increase access to the curriculum for students without disabilities who may have a broad range of learning styles and individual strengths and weaknesses.

# PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

The first major milestone for this project will be faculty participation in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) training. Following training faculty will be asked to complete a survey regarding the quality of the training, the delivery method, and the applicability to college teaching. This will allow us to assess the perceived quality and effectiveness of the training for university faculty. The second milestone will be the faculty redesign of courses and participation in a learning community. These milestones will occur in parallel as the learning community will be facilitiated specifically to support faculty in addressing challenges and receive peer feedback regarding the implementation of UDL in their courses. During this period faculty will be asked to submit course syllabi that follow UDL standards as well as a sample lesson with a completed planning chart. The concluding session of the learning community will be designed to allow faculty to offer feedback about the effectiveness of the learning community in supporting their implementation of UDL and course redesign. Feedback will be used to assess the effectiveness of the method as well as to increase the effectiveness of learning communities in the future. The final milestone will be the instruction of the redesigned course. At the conclusion of the project faculty will be invited to reconvene to discuss their experience in teaching using UDL and make recommendations for further implementation at Ohio University.

Student achievement outcomes will be measured primarily as the overall rate of students earning D's, F's, or W's in a given course. Grades of students enrolled in the UDL designed course will be compared to the grades of students who last took the class from the same faculty member prior to the implementation of UDL. While there are some limitations in drawing strong conclusions through this comparison, we seek an indication that UDL may be connected to fewer students failing to complete the course with a satisfactory grade to determine whether or not more widespread implementation and study of UDL may be warranted. Grade comparisons will be
made at the conclusion of the project.

Similarly, the impact of UDL in reducing the need for individual accommodations for students with disabilities will be assessed through case comparison. Records of accommodation requests from the previous offerings will be compared to the current course. It is expected that numbers of students with disabilities will be small so quantitative comparisons will not be possible, but case review will offer the opportunity to note trends in accommodations that may be less necessary in a UDL environment. Such data will be used in determining possible benefits of future expansion of UDL implementation.

4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

A:

The Universal Design in General Education Curriculum project will impact the instructional design and delivery of several courses in different academic units. The faculty instructing these courses will be provided training on the principles of Universal Design and offered consultative support to create classes that intentionally aim to teach and access a broad spectrum of abilities and learning styles.

Student Accessibility Services will be the office primarily responsible for the project. The project will also directly include 6-8 faculty from various departments.

5: PROJECT CONTROL

A:

Spring 2016: Faculty participants have been identified as well as identifying a qualified external consultant to provide training
Summer 2016: Faculty will receive UDL training from external consultant and participate in faculty learning community to support their redesign of course
Fall 2016: Faculty teach Universally Designed courses and project concludes

6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

A:

During the previous timeline there was a barrier presented by insufficient faculty response among those who would be teaching the re-designed course in the target semester and had also taught the course recently enough to have comparison data. This resulted in the project not meeting the completion target. The project is now on track for completion in the fall 2016 term as sufficient interested faculty are scheduled to teach courses they have identified for re-design.

7: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A:

Presently there are potential participants from media arts and studies, engineering, nursing, teacher education, management information systems, linguistics, recreation, exercise physiology, modern languages, and restaurant and hotel management. There are twelve to fifteen faculty who will participate in the training and intend to redesign their courses, but it is expected that some may not complete the project.

If the project meets the anticipated goals, the student evaluation feedback should be significantly more positive in the Universally Designed courses as well as seeing an improvement in the overall grades in the courses and a reduction of the number of students receiving below a C and potentially retaking the course later to improve their grade. Faculty should be able to report greater achievement of student learning objectives.

Additionally, there should be a reduction in the need for instructors to make arrangements for individual accommodations in these courses.