Transcript: UDL Strategy: Paper Pacing

Hey, friends, Kelly Langley-Cook here. I am the CETL coach on inclusive learning opportunities. And today, we're going to talk about how using Universal Design for Learning and maybe one of the easiest ways I've ever found can really enhance paper writing in your courses or large projects. This could translate into large projects. So first of all, if you've seen any of my other videos, you know that I love to start with Google Docs. They're my favorite. And so I'm going to utilize a Google Doc. And let's look at the way that we typically utilize it. We're going to typically just give a prompt for an essay. Right? Here was my prompt for an essay last semester: "As a historian, how would you analyze and explain the Tokugawa Era?" And then there's a little bit of guiding ideas, perhaps what paragraph one, two, and three need to have in it, very typical, and the links to the sources. Now here is where I'm going to actually come in. And I'm going to employ universal design. So let me go back out really quick. I'm going to be part of the engagement. Right? Section right here. And so, I'm going to come into the green for Engagement, the Heightened Salience of Goals and Objectives. And so in order to help students better realize and understand their goals and objectives, like the objective here would be to write an academic paper at the 100 level. I'm going to encourage division of long-term goals into short-term objectives. Right? Several of these can be employed, but this is what I'm paying attention to today. So after I get through my primary sources, you'll note that for my first paper, I've created a paper pacing guide. Now, true story, the first time I did this, I bet it took me over an hour. But now I'm able to use this formula on all of the 100-level papers that I assign. We have to remember that not only are many of our students coming in here as first-generation students, so they perhaps have not had some of the guidance that they need in order to do college-level work. But they are also coming in after two years of COVID. And due to no fault of their wonderful teachers in the classroom, they haven't gotten some of the guidance they may have gotten previously about how their college professors want them to write papers. That's usually something that at the junior and senior level students are experiencing in the high school, but they're not getting that as much because the high school teachers, God bless them, are playing catch up. So it is up to us, if we want good paper writing, to help them learn how to do that. And that means we need to break it down into simple tasks and things that they can do over time in order to teach them the skill of not writing the paper the night before and not looking at the prompt once. So here you see that I have everything from read the full prompt and the date they should be doing that to dates they can research their paper. You'll note over here that I actually give them some days off because it's nice to see that you don't have to work on your paper every single day. There's lots of examples, like what's a primary source and a secondary source? And this medium to post COVID world, I don't think we should take any learning for granted whatsoever. And then I teach them how to divide up into three topics, do additional research. I would be more than happy to share this exact document with you if you would like to copy it and utilize it for your own class. But as you can see here at the end, I've got something -- this is usually all they ever do. Right? They just do that last checklist. But I will tell you that using this now twice in two different semesters, I've had much more quality papers coming out with what I wanted them to have. And also I'm using a Universal Design for Learning tool in order to solve a classroom problem. The problem was students are not writing the papers I'm asking them to write. They're not even reading the prompts, and they're certainly not taking the time, and it's not 100%. But this paper pacing guide helped quite a bit.