UDL in 15 Minutes

With Carolee Clyne Transcript with audio descriptions

[The words, "UDL in 15 Minutes" typed and stacked inside a circle using green, blue, and purple followed by a close up selfie of Carolee with snow covered conifers in the background. Carolee is a white woman with light brown hair wearing glasses]

LOUI: Hello, and welcome to UDL in 15 minutes where educators discuss their experiences with UDL. I'm LOUI Lord Nelson, UDL author and leader. Today I'm talking with Carolee Clyne who is an open education advisor at BCcampus in British Columbia. Today, Carolee is going to share how UDL and Open Education are important concepts that support one another. Hi Carolee, how are you?

CAROLEE: Great! Greetings, Loui!

LOUI: It's so great to talk to you!

CAROLEE: This is exciting for me as well. I am delighted to be here with this opportunity to share about UDL and Open and Inclusive Education.

LOUI: Oh, great! Well, thank you! So, first off, please tell us about your teaching background.

CAROLEE: Well, primarily my roles have included supporting education in post-secondary since about 1993 in a range of areas such as technology, library systems, student services and online instructional design. My instructional focus has been to faculty and staff generally introducing new systems while also ensuring services are working for students and their work. So, I am often in classrooms assisting and have observed many times where there could be maybe another approach that may engage students deeper. And that's what led me to learn and study a little more about UDL.

LOUI: Oh, nice. So, I know that people are wondering what BCcampus is and then what your focus is so could you please share that. [The BCcampus homepage]

CAROLEE: BCcampus is an organization whose mandate is to support the adaptation and evolution of teaching and learning practices in post-secondary institutions across British Columbia through collaboration, communication, and innovation. BCcampus is under the provincial ministry of Advanced Skills and Training. The UDL framework is part of the key values BCcampus brings to teaching and learning practices and I work

on the Open team focused on Open Education Resources and Open Pedagogy. And in this role, I work with targeting institutions in the north covering an area of about 230,000 square miles to bring the Open Education conversation to the forefront. [A screenshot of the BCcampus Open Education page]

I also get to be that voice pointing out the challenges encountered in the north and rural spaces such as limited connectivity, accessing digital resources. So, these issues are often beyond the realm of just post-secondary and are often points captured under broader conversations such as the digital divide. [A map showing the United States and Canada with the words British Columbia circled in yellow]

LOUI: Ok. And I also want to point out to folks that since we have listeners from around the world, literally like over 50 countries now, that British Columbia is in Canada, so I'm talking to a fellow North American, but in a different country! So, from Canada, if people aren't familiar with British Columbia. So, okay, so for people who are not familiar with the term "Open Education" how do you describe that? That's a lot of different ways, right? [Screenshot of BCcampus page titled, "What is Open Education?"]

CAROLEE: Yes, yes, there are a couple elements to sort of that umbrella of Open Education. The simple more tangible elements are the Open Education resources, known as OER which are the teaching, learning and resource resources such as textbooks or slide decks, that through permissions granted by their creator, allow others to use, distribute, keep, or make changes in them. The Open pedagogy, or is also sometimes called Open Educational Practices are where teaching and learning practices, where openness is enacted within all aspects of the instructional practice, such as, including the design of the learning outcomes, selection of the teaching resources, and the planning of activities and assessments. Open Education practices. Engage both the teacher and students with the use and creation of Open Education resources that draw attention to the potential afforded by open licenses, facilitating, open peer review, and supporting participatory student directed projects. Many of these key concepts are also embedded in the UDL framework.

LOUI: Yeah, yeah. So, I was just gonna ask that. There's obviously a lot of overlap here with UDL. I'm thinking flexibility. There's a lot of that, but so that I know but what else, where else do you see an overlap? [The UDL Guidelines graphic organizer]

CAROLEE: Well, a lot of the overlap that I see between the UDL framework and Open Education are they're both trying to help reduce the barriers for students. The more work that I do within the open realm, the more I can see the inclusive elements of UDL aligned within the open aspirations. The following is a statement from BCcampus that I want to share that I think captures it well. "Open and inclusive education opportunities go beyond financial benefits. Open pedagogy, and OER enabled pedagogy, look at the practices that can be incubated and nurtured when we unlock access to learning and investigate what students and teachers can do with it to improve the overall learning experience and outcomes." And I think this statement, for me, also captures the UDL framework aspiration. So the work I'm doing that BCcampus provides me the opportunity to support the adoption, the adaption, the creation of open and inclusive education in BC embedding UDL in all of that. And working towards this evolution of open practices, making way for open pedagogy to influence students and learning across the province and around the world, and moving away from the static and hierarchical approaches to yesteryears classrooms to kind of welcome these new methodologies are, I think, where the future of learning, and it certainly aligns with the UDL goal of developing expert learners. [A graphic showing the 6 characteristics of expert learners]

LOUI: Yeah, that's exactly what I wrote down in my notes. I'm scribbling furiously as you're talking, and the thing that I was hitting on in my brain was, was this is it is a tool. It's a tool to help create an environment where we can establish the supports necessary to help learners move toward becoming expert learners. And what I also was hitting on in my brain was that with all of this flexibility, and like you said, it's kind of kicking out hopefully, some of that hierarchical stuff of "I hold the knowledge and you must learn from me!" as the sage on the stage, but there still needs to be design, right? The teacher/facilitators still need to take the lead on how they're going to provide the steps into open access and, and how students will participate with the resources and the pedagogies, and that's what's going to lead the students towards expert learning. So hopefully I've gone down the right road here. Would you say so?

CAROLEE: I think so, I mean I think the exciting things with the open pedagogy is sometimes, and it's quite a shift for educators to shift away from being completely in

control, but you enable students to have a voice and you empower them in some of your conversations of "What are we going to do?" and really hear some of their choice I think is, is some of the shift that's that aligns in the UDL but it's still, it's still a transition, it still takes a lot to make that shift.

LOUI: Oh, yeah, yeah, I'm sure. Well, I know that I wanted to ask you about how you think all of this can or does affect k 12 education and we've already started down that road a little bit, but why don't you go ahead and address that and then I just think we're gonna spiral out from there because this is, this is great. [A photo with three students working together at a table in an outdoor setting using a computer and pen and paper]

CAROLEE: Oh good. I think it is a tremendous value to the K to 12 as context is so much a part of the UDL framework, and the ability to adapt the materials is part of the OCR premise. Teachers using OER can adapt them to best suit their classroom, whether it's changing the examples to be more representative of their students, or combining a few resources to best provide the materials that are determined to be needed for their class. So, this enables teachers to decide what resources are more relevant for their students than just a static textbook, because they can pick and choose, they can pull elements, they can adapt the elements as they find maybe something isn't working. So that's, that's part of it. Open resources also support educational equity with the open distribution. So, there's, there's some really exciting discussions happening about what's happening in the pre K to 12. [A screenshot of a search result in newamerica.org website. The search term used was OER] One campaign to raise the awareness of OER in this arena has been #GoOpen. It was a campaign started by the United States Department of Education in October 2015. And there's a website that I was been looking at and sort of exploring some of this aspect of it: www.newamerica.org has several reports about OER in pre K to 12 that are discoverable. Looking for OER, just saying OER in the search, so I'd encourage people to go explore some of these because some of these reports that I've looked through have got great ideas. There's a Making Connections. One that has information about tracking districts that have been using OER and within that report the suggestions to look at starting points such as ideas when textbooks are due for renewal, or where the curriculum is lacking, and which is also really a UDL framework challenge. So, this

report had all kinds of resources to getting started in the classroom as well as a list of resources for professional learning. [A screenshot of newamerican.org after a search using the term LGBTQ] Another report that I found on this www.newamerica.org was one of interest that aligns with bc campus as we do a lot of work in diversity, equity and inclusion and it was a report about supporting LGBTQ, inclusive teaching, and how digital materials can help. This report had lots of about the barriers, removing the barriers, and I think, removing barriers to learning it's the very core of UDL, so these inclusive areas are important and of great value to any teachers. So, on that site, I would say there's some really great material for starting the OER journey, which, at its very core includes values aligned to the UDL framework.

LOUI: Nice. So, let's say we have a listener who is hearing this, and they're like "Oh my gosh this sounds so cool, but we are not using anything that is OER." Did I phrase that correctly? [laughter].

CAROLEE: Yeah!

LOUI: "We're not using anything that's OER in my district right now and I feel like I could go talk to my director curriculum, or my director secondary director of elementary whoever would be part of that decision making." Where would they start? Where would they partner and start looking to try to gather more information? [A screenshot of the Making Connections report]

CAROLEE: I think that that site I was speaking of the www.newamerica.org had fabulous reports, and the one, Making Connections, was really a good document about looking at where do you start where are the policies that need to be changed? How do you get the conversation? Who else is doing this? I mean, we all know there's strength in numbers, so finding out other school districts that have been doing it. Like it lists the school districts it lists the primary grade levels that have been targeted, it talks also with the content area that has been, that is adopted the OER so in a lot of the districts, I can see that it's not everybody has jumped on board. But targets have and if you can align yourself with whatever subject or grade group that you're involved in, then you can probably find likeminded people that you can start to build those alliances to help you bring that forward and sort of talk about the barriers that have been encountered and how they got around them. It lists a lot. I mean that one report "Making Connections:

Bringing OER into Practice", certainly listed lots of steps, little things. There were several other reports throughout there about creating systems of sustainability. Looking towards a long term, it's not just about finding new ways to use it, it's how do you sustain it how do you make sure that it's still got the quality that you want and that there's that dialogue happening, and there's that commitment to that materials being available. So, there's lots of places to start on just that site alone I thought had a lot to get people going. [A photo of Carolee walking her dog in the snow followed by screen captures of the UDL site and the UDL in 15 Minutes logo]

LOUI: That's fabulous that's like a gold mine. Well, this has been a great conversation, Carolee. We have hit up against our 15 minutes and I always go so fast, but thank you! This was a great introduction! I think a lot of people are going to learn a lot and www.newamerica.org is going to get quite a few new hits after people hear this! So, thank you so much for being a guest on the podcast!

CAROLEE: Thank you so much for inviting me to, Loui. I have really enjoyed this.

LOUI: Oh, absolutely. So, for those listening to this podcast, you can find supplemental materials like an image montage with closed captioning, that montage with audio descriptions, a transcript, and an associated blog at my website www.theudlapproach.com/mCaroleeia. Finally, if you have a story to share about UDL implementation for UDL in 15 Minutes, contact me through www.theUDLapproach.com . And thanks to everyone for your work in revolutionizing education through UDL and making it our goal to develop expert learners.