**Unboxing the black box: towards a new multi-modality campus**

**Abstract**

Changing times force us to rethink our academic policy in higher education institutions. Traditional narrow views on students coming to campuses might be problematic for full inclusion. In this paper, we present an innovative model for student inclusion with the goal of producing a new framework for practice in higher education. We suggest re-examining the interactions between student characteristics while taking them into account as a whole and adopting a new holistic view of their identity-derived needs. The New Multimodality Diversified Campus (NMDC) model takes into account multiculturism, multi-technologies, multiple identities, multilingualism, multiple religions, and multiple disabilities. This model, based on multiple pedagogies, multiple curricula, multiple evaluations and multiple policies, serves as a compass to reach our desired destination, which is a fully inclusive campus. We present new observations about Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a guiding tool that can be used in higher education, contextualising it in the framework of our model.

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**The New Multimodality Diversified Campus Model**

The modern campus is a meeting point for students from all over the world. When students come to university, they bring with them a constellation of intersecting identities, including, religious, cultural and gender-based identities. However, a broad review of the existing academic literature reveals that each feature of student identity has tended to be treated in isolation. For example, numerous studies have been carried out on multicultural, multireligious and multilingual campuses (REFERENCES NEEDED). However, the holistic interactions between the different aspects of student identity require further study.

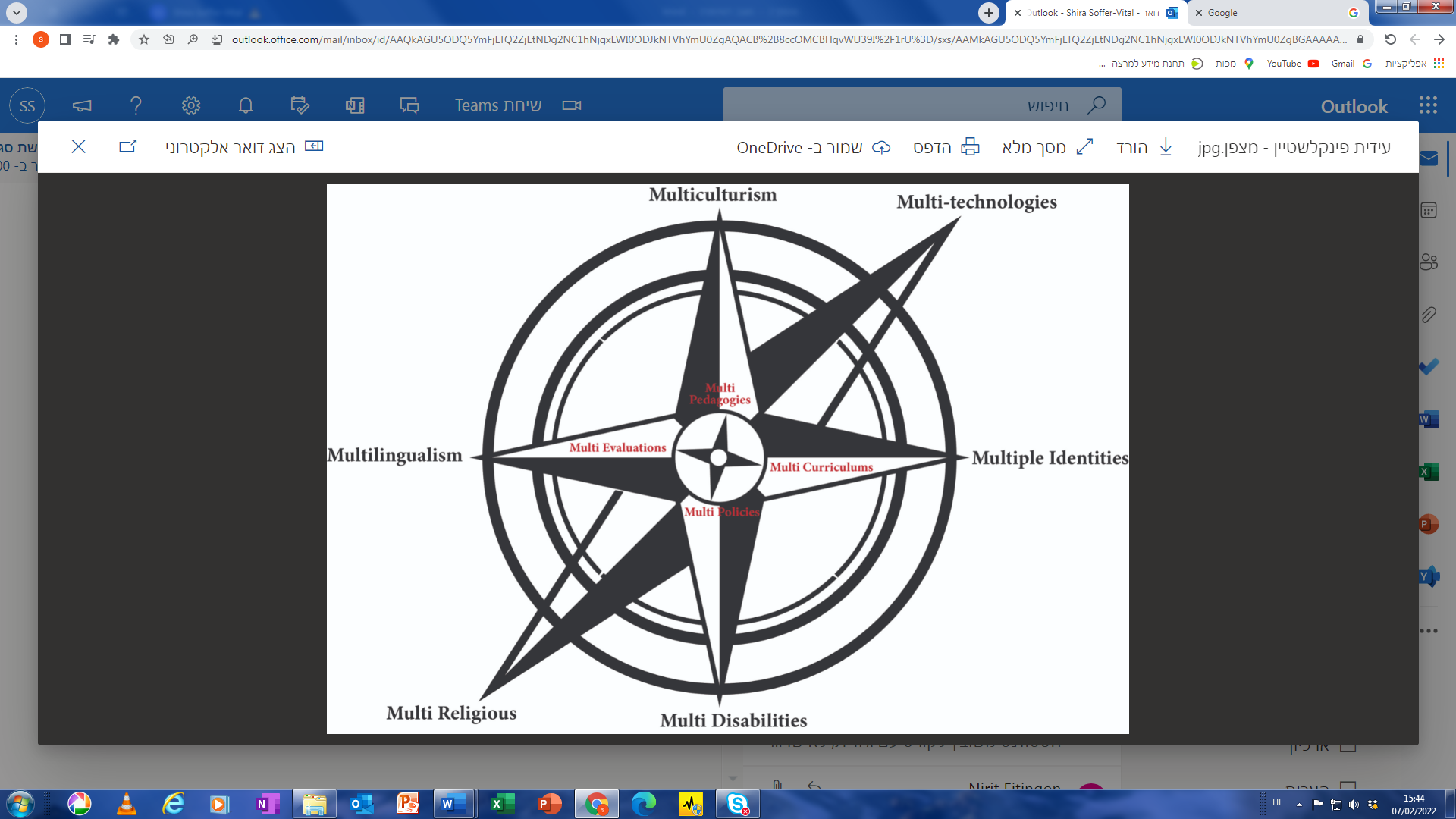
Campuses may overlook students’ identity characteristics because of the fear of opening ‘the black box’ and facing the difficult philosophical and ethical questions it inevitably contains. Should lecturers only teach according to the curriculum? Are students aware of the alignment between needs derived from their identity and the accommodations of the campus to these needs? Students registering at academic institutions may be unaware of existing campus policies that bear upon their religious identity and practices.

We argue in this paper that there is a dual blindness in academia to students’ identity-derived needs on the part of both academic staff and students themselves. This blindness can result in conflict and frustration when the academic environment does not take into account identity-derived needs. Students entering academic institutions for the first time may fail to consider the potential conflicts arising from their identity-derived needs when choosing an institution or a subject matter. This can lead to frustration, disappointment and alienation as the academic programme unfolds.

In this paper, we discuss the issue of the identity-derived needs of students and the responses of academia to multiple cultures, religions, languages, nationalities, gender identities and disabilities on campuses. Only when all of these are addressed can true inclusivity be achieved. For this to occur, the student must be considered holistically. With the goal of providing accommodations for complex, intersecting student identities, we have developed a new conceptual model named the New Multimodality Diversified Campus Model (NMDC).

On the student axis, the model is designed to take into account (1) multiculturalism, (2) multi-technologies, (3) multiple identities, (4) multilingualism, (5) multiple religions and (6) multiple disabilities. On the institutional response axis, the model includes multiple pedagogies, multiple curricula, multiple evaluations and multiple policies. The model is visually represented in the form of a compass, as shown in Figure 1 below,following which the various elements of the model are explained.

***Figure 1: the NMDC model***



***1.*** ***Multiculturalism: inclusive, multicultural, diversified******academia*** Traditionally in academia, differences between students have been considered an obstacle to educational equality (Ladson-Billings 2006; Au 2010). However, this perception has recently shifted towards acknowledging the value of diversity and cultural capital. Bourdieu (1984) claims that, beyond economic capital, cultural capital is a driver of social mobility. Bourdieu (1984) defined cultural capital as familiarity with the legitimate culture within a society that includes things like intellectual resources

Educational reforms have typically tried to bring all students to the same level of academic achievement by standardising the curriculum, regardless of the background, race, or status of students (Patton 2011). However, studies have shown that such reforms have been largely ineffective at minimising gaps in student achievement (Bjorklund-Young and Stratte Plasman 2020). Some scholars attribute the failure to address achievement gaps between students from different cultures to a reliance on the student deficit model (Hambacher & Thompson 2015). The common assumption is that achievement gaps are largely due to the cultures of minority groups that are viewed as dysfunctional and lacking important characteristics found in the dominant culture. This perception has led policymakers to demand that educational institutions raise the achievements of all students, regardless of social or ethnic background. However, this position has not proven successful in shrinking higher education learning gaps (Au 2009; Bjorklund-Young & Stratte Plasman 2020).

Contemporary approaches promote the opposite policy, favouring culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) – an approach that valorises cultural differences as a source of academic excellence. In a previous paper, we developed a multidimensional Culturally Relevant Academic Evaluation (CRAE) model suitable for the technologically advanced, multicultural environment of the 21st century using the CRP framework (reference removed for peer review). In contrast to the traditional inclination to view student weaknesses as deriving from their cultural backgrounds (Gay 2000; Ladson-Billings 1995; Vavrus 2008), our approach emphasises the importance of the culture and identity of the students and is designed to validate student diversity and harness it as a motor for academic achievement.

Given the ineffectiveness of the standardisation project in terms of improving academic achievement and the alienation and distress such a project can inflict on students, academic professionals should acknowledge that histories of racial or socioeconomic exclusion continue to shape curricula and that evaluation tools work to address these pitfalls. The failure of past experiments that have attempted to level differences between students by adopting a policy of blindness towards cultural differences indicates that this approach is both academically flawed and potentially harmful to student wellbeing. Instead, what is needed are culturally responsive pedagogical practices in professional development and the formulation of curricula and evaluation tools derived from a multicultural worldview.

Scholarship concerning multicultural curricula has mainly focused on selection criteria for the inclusion of disciplinary knowledge in the curriculum of a given field (Sleeter & Carmona 2017). According to Banks (2020), a multicultural curriculum entails dealing with content that is taught and learned, for the most part, outside mainstream education and that provides extensive references to cultural and social diversity. Gable (2021) proposed the concept of ‘the hidden curriculum’ to describe the various skills, norms and behaviours which contribute to academic success in tertiary education. She notes that this ‘hidden curriculum’ disadvantages students who have had little or no exposure to the cultural repertoires of academia in their home environment.

Cognizant of the pitfalls represented by this hidden curriculum for students from different cultural and economic milieux, multicultural curriculum development should go beyond the top-down process of selecting discipline-specific content to be included in a curriculum. Rather, it requires a two-way discourse between educational professionals and the student community about values and ideas (Sleeter & Carmona 2017). A curriculum constructed in this way encourages students to take on an integral role in the learning process, legitimise their own voices and personal opinions and directly affects the content studied (Banks & Banks 2019).

***2. Multi-technologies: a humanistic approach to technology***

The modern world is characterised by rapid and transformative technological developments and a flood of information, and there is a growing need to adjust educational perceptions and evaluation processes in light of the changing conditions of the knowledge economy. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgent need to modify how students in higher education are evaluated to better accommodate technological platforms that require diverse and meaningful online evaluation systems. The pandemic has also highlighted the importance of the argument of Marginson and Considine (2000) concerning the willingness of academic institutions to reinvent themselves. The challenge for academic instructors and tertiary institutions is to keep pace with these rapid changes and adjust teaching, learning and assessment so that they remain relevant to the students’ world.

**Digital technology is integral to culture.** Sherry Turkle **(**2005)defines the computer as more than just a tool, but as a part of our daily personal and psychological lives. She examines the way computers influence the way we view ourselves and our relationships with others and stresses that technology defines the way we think and act.

Technology serves as a mediator to learning. In this context, Gartner’s (DATE) notion of Digital Humanism, according to which people should be at the centre of any manifestation of digital learning, is instructive. Academic institutions that embrace digital humanism use technology to redefine the way students reach their goals and enable them to achieve outcomes not previously possible. Digital humanism aims to centre technology around the interests, needs and well-being of humans (Porter 2018).

The meaning of digital humanism is that current technology, in its global dimension, is *a culture* in that it creates a new context on a global scale. To fulfil technology’s promise of transforming teaching and learning, educators must learn to leverage these tools to engage students and support their personal growth (Blake 2000). However, technology adoption does not occur in a vacuum. It requires both risk-taking and experimentation from academic staff and a commitment to continuous professional development on the part of educators, implementing both top-down and bottom-up approaches

In modern education, humanistic technologies may help introduce dialogue into the learning process and achieve creative communication synergies between lecturers and students. Technology also provides endless possibilities in terms of pedagogical techniques, including problem-based learning, intertextual dialogue, argumentation, discussion and debate. Humanistic technologies also bring interdisciplinary dialogue to the front line of education. The cultural dialogue between lecturer and students stresses the significance of developing and mastering humanistic technologies in education (Barnová & Krásna, 2018).

***3. Multiple identities as a sense of self***

Dialogue is a tool for putting into practice the dialectic of questioning existence. It can promote intercultural exchange and develop question and answer cognition, self-knowledge and professional and personal self-actualisation. Nowadays, we should recognise that identity is fluid and dynamic; thus, campuses must also acknowledge that theoretical models that describe identity as static are limited and should take into account students’ ongoing process of identity construction during their higher education experience – a formative moment in an individual’s identity construction. Campus policies should accept living comfortably with multiple identities rather than simply describing multiple dimensions of identity. Integrating multiple identities also has important implications for learning.

Jones and McEwen (2000) developed a Conceptual Model for Multiple Dimensions of Identity. The model is visualised by intersecting circles of identity comprising race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religion and social class, demonstrating that any given dimension can be understood only in relation to the other dimensions. The model is based on a survey of a diverse group of female college students. At the centre of the multiple dimensions of identity is a core sense of self. Core identity is experienced as a personal identity that incorporates valued personal characteristics. The core is frequently described by participants as their ‘inside self’ in contrast to what they refer to as their ‘outside’ identity. Outside identities are those identity features that are easily identified by others and interpreted by the participants as less meaningful than the complexities of their inside identities. For example, some of the female students in Jones and McEwen’s (2000) study used the following terms to describe their core identity: intelligent, independent, kind, a good friend and compassionate. They did not use terms that conveyed external definitions and identity categories to describe their core sense of self because such labels lack complexity, specificity and personal relevancy. Identity is experienced and lived at a far deeper level than such categories suggest or permit.

Universities are very often highly multinational and multicultural spaces due to the international mobility of both students and academic staff. The contemporary movement of academics takes place within the framework of old hierarchies between nation-states that intersect with new academic stratifications (Kim, 2017). The notion of [transnationalism](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/psychology/transnationalism" \o "Learn more about Transnationalism from ScienceDirect's AI-generated Topic Pages) is highly relevant to academia today. Globalisation embodies the emergence and reconstruction of new identities. Migration questions traditional homogeneous and static notions of identity and implies the generation of new hybrid forms of identity. Esteban-Guitart and Vila (2015) describe how bicultural and multilingual skills become part of self-definitions through the appropriation of cultural voices that manage the origin and host lifestyles, building hybrid and multiple identities that preserve certain connections with the society of origin while taking on certain lifestyles from the new culture and society. Transnational identity is relevant to students that live between two [cultural frameworks](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/psychology/cultural-framework" \o "Learn more about Cultural Framework from ScienceDirect's AI-generated Topic Pages) and must establish a dialogue between their country of origin and their host country.

Multinationalism is another aspect of multiple identities. Nationality diversity in higher education refers to the multiple nationalities that increase language, value and information diversity in institutions. ‘Symbiotic Globalisation’, to use in Byung-Jin’s (2003) term, characterises the 21st century. She emphasises the need to re-examine education and national identity. We should make every effort to ensure that education takes nationality into account.

***4. Multilingualism***

Modern campuses are very often highly multilingual environments. Students studying at universities where the language of instruction is not their mother tongue suffer from an inherent disadvantage and a sense of inferiority in their learning and evaluation processes. This category of student has a dual challenge – dealing with the subject material and studying in a foreign language. However, access to more than one language, if properly valorised and harnessed, can serve as a source of leverage for overcoming academic difficulties.

However, the presence of multiple languages in academic settings can reproduce hierarchical relations among students who study in heterogenous and multicultural classes and between the lecturer and the students themselves. Vygotsky’s (DATE) sociolinguistic theory argues for the importance of the social milieu and claims that sociocultural settings are the primary determining factor in the development of higher forms of human mental activity such as attention, memory, logical thought, planning and problem solving. All these mental activities are critical for student learning. Vygotsky (DATE) advances the idea that humans do not act directly on the physical world but that our interactions are mediated by tools. According to Vygotsky, symbolic tools or signs are artefacts created by humans under culture-specific and historical conditions and carry with them the characteristics of that culture. They also exert an effect on the individuals who use them to give rise to previously unknown activities and previously unknown ways of conceptualising phenomena in the world (Lantolf 2000; Wertsch 1979).

Students who have difficulties with language comprehension tend to avoid collaboration with students from other linguistic and social groups (Mena and Rogers 2017). Since content is derived from language, the two are inseparable. Content should be taught using a foreign or second language. Thus, teaching the subject is intertwined with language. This would allow students to achieve the appropriate level of academic performance while improving their proficiency in the subject based on their mother tongue and the target language. It might also increase student motivation and encourage a positive disposition towards the discipline. Designing the teaching process based on this approach would develop students’ intercultural understanding and prepare them for the globalised world. Moreover, critical thinking skills, linguistic skills and social skills would be developed in the process of implementing this design (Brucker-Kley, Oberle & Keller 2021; Rubin & Jernudd 2019). This approach can further develop student identity as it is shaped by the learning process.

***5. Multiple religions***

Research has indicated that students’ religious beliefs tend to become more liberal and less orthodox over the course of their studies (REFERENCE). Higher education has been found to weaken religious orthodoxy and promote individualistic beliefs and has thus been described as a ‘faith-killer’ (REFERENCE). Many scholars have studied how higher education affects students’ religious beliefs, but the results are contradictory. Some studies have found that higher education has a significant liberalising effect, while others argue that its impact is minimal, limited, or that religious belief is preserved. More longitudinal studies of the religious commitments of young adults in tertiary education are needed (Mayrl & Uecker 2011; Regnerus & Uecker 2006; Schwadel 2016). It is also important to note that significant differences are likely to exist between students of different ages and those at the undergraduate or postgraduate level in terms of their experiences vis-à-vis religious identity on campus.

Parents are an important influence on younger students. However, peers play a significant role as many students’ religious experiences and discussions take place with friends. Studies of tertiary students have found that peer groups and exposure to peers from different backgrounds play an important role in shaping students’ beliefs (REFERENCES). Students who befriend coreligionists and attend religious structures and services together are, naturally, more likely to maintain exclusive religious beliefs. Studies have shown that those who live at home are more likely to increase their religious participation (Bryant, Choi & Yasuno 2003; Regnerus & Uecker 2006). Universities tend to emphasise rationalism, materialism and empiricism. This may result in a potential conflict between the institutional environment and students who hold religious beliefs or wish to engage in certain religious practices on campus. For example, should university cafeterias cater to the dietary requirements of different religious groups or allow religious symbols, gatherings or manifestations on campus? How can universities manage potential problems arising from students of radically different religious backgrounds studying together in the same space?

***6. Multiple disabilities***

Disability is another aspect of the diversity of higher education institutions. Students with disabilities in multicultural environments are being recognised as a unique cultural group with shared experiences (Mona, Cameron, and Cordes 2017). Academic programmes can no longer be designed around the amorphic ‘average student’. Learning disabilities are diagnosed more frequently, and our awareness and understanding of these matters have grown. The responsibility has shifted from the individual student having to adapt to the learning environment to the academic institution having to adapt to the student. Universities should take student disabilities into consideration in the design of policy, pedagogy and evaluation.

Universities have tended to approach disability from the perspective of the medical model of disability (Collins, Azmat and Rentschler 2019), which views disability as a personal medical problem (Bunbury, 2020). Catering to students with disabilities typically manifests as test accommodations at the evaluation stage. In line with the medical model, students must submit medical documentation before receiving accommodations. The requirement to disclose confidential information may cause stress or discomfort. Students with mental disabilities are especially uncomfortable disclosing this information (Smith, Woodhead and Chin-Newman 2019). Nevertheless, psychological, social and financial resources are needed to succeed throughout the accommodation process (Waterfield and Whelan 2017).

In contrast to the medical model, universal design reflects the social model of disability (Griful-Freixenet et al. 2017), which considers disability as a social issue and delves into aspects of inclusion and exclusion (Collins, Azmat and Rentschler 2019). The community and broader society are responsible for inclusion and accessibility. For example, regulation, obtaining and retaining rights, intolerance, stigma, reducing exclusion and respecting diversity. However, higher education struggles with implementing inclusive practices. The concept of universal design originates from ideas about the inclusive design of physical spaces for diverse people (see Ferguson et al. 2019).

**The basis of the model: multiple pedagogies, multiple curricula, multiple evaluations, multiple policies**

Higher education is changing; it no longer represents a single point of view and, therefore, must adopt a holistic and integrated perspective. While higher education has sought standardised processes and outcomes, times have changed. The so-called ‘average student’ no longer exists. Globalisation and technological developments have affected the way learning takes place and have made education available anywhere in the world with flexible schedules. The ‘melting pot’ approach is no longer relevant, nor should it be our ideal. The higher education sector should reflect the diversity and pluralism that are today’s reality. ‘Inclusive higher education’ refers to the integration of diversity, equity and inclusion into the higher education mission and throughout academic practices and policies. This is achieved when every student is entitled to the opportunity to be included in academic classroom environments and when all students receive the necessary support to facilitate accessibility to the university environment and information.

This general notion of ‘inclusive education’ is well known (Shyman 2015); however, adjustments to the changing face of higher education are needed. This integrative point of view focuses on the importance of inclusive curriculum design in higher education and emphasises measures to ensure inclusive pedagogy and evaluation practices. Academic institutions are aware of the importance of inclusive design and making reasonable adjustments to ensure inclusivity (REFERENCES). However, data suggest that academic staff often struggle to accommodate diverse student bodies (Morgan and Houghton 2011).

Teaching and learning processes, curriculum and assessment, technology and multiculturalism should be integrated into a comprehensive and holistic model. The Culturally Relevant Academic Evaluation (CRAE) model takes into account academic teaching and learning processes, curriculum and evaluation, establishing a more comprehensive framework for higher education settings (reference removed for peer review). While this model focuses on teaching, learning, curriculum and evaluation, we have expanded the model to include diversity and inclusion. Coordination should be at the same level (class, department and faculty level) and also between the various levels. The evaluation will not be meaningful unless all conditions of alignment are met (Pellegrino, Chudowsky & Glaser 2001).

Defining the goals of the academic process is crucial for establishing a cohesive and continuous policy – meaning evaluation, pedagogy and curriculum. The academic curriculum should be based on setting uniform standards for defining the learning goals, content and methods of evaluation. Multicultural evaluation, pedagogy and curriculum design allow access to learners from population groups outside the dominant culture. Evaluation, pedagogy and curricula that are policy driven, should focus on content included as opposed to that which is excluded from the learning arena (Sleeter & Carmona 2017).

Banks (2020) proposes a multicultural curriculum, meaning that academic staff teach inclusive content that is aimed towards creating equal educational opportunities for all students and provides extensive references to cultural and social diversity. We suggest expanding this scope and propose that evaluation, pedagogy and curriculum development should be driven by diversity policy. Moreover, this policy should be based on a two-way discourse about curricular content, ideas and values between academic institutions and the community. This would allow learners to become an integral part of a vibrant community and an active part in the learning and evaluation process, while legitimising their own voices and personal opinions.

UDL is the main framework of reference for teaching a wide range of learners; however, we argue that the parameters of UDL should be expanded for academic policy. UDL, as a design, was developed as an attempt to integrate and include children with disabilities into mainstream educational settings and was subsequently expanded to the higher education context (Rose and Meyer 2006). Bernacchio and Mullen (2007) expanded this frame of reference to three core areas – curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation. Specifically, they mention setting learning goals, selecting teaching materials and methods and developing ongoing evaluation processes. They also highlight the importance of flexibility.

According to UDL, the starting point of the teaching and learning process is to plan the curriculum according to the students’ needs, desires and abilities. In this way, the learning process considers all learners and proactively works in favour of their success (Capp 2017). However, in higher education institutions that implement UDL, student identity-derived needs run the risk of being neglected.

As a frame of reference, UDL delves into the learning process and encourages students to be proactive learners who can navigate their learning process. This is achieved by offering students choices, encouraging them to set personal goals, and helping them develop an awareness of their personal learning skills. Despite the fact that making choices, setting goals and developing awareness can be directly affected by identity-derived needs, the UDL model, surprisingly, fails to take these into account.

Some aspects overlooked by the model are the language spoken in the institution and the representation and legitimacy of students’ religions in the educational setting. Research regarding choices of learning domains for future careers indicates that 65% of students do not know what to consider in terms of career options when choosing their study programmes (Levin & Gati 2019; Gati et al. 2019).

Three dimensions of UDL are particularly relevant for our discussion – engagement, representation and action and expression. Engagement relates to the emotional aspect of learning and places emphasis on the need to promote learners’ involvement in heterogeneous classrooms. For example, learning material may be relevant to one learner but irrelevant to another (Dean, Lee-Post & Hapke 2017). This component also relates to aspects of emotional regulation in the learning process, and it acknowledges the fact that some learners may perceive a certain form of learning as threatening, while others might perceive it as interesting and challenging (Griful-Freixenet et al. 2017).

However, the emotional dimension as presented here is also affected by the dominant language used on campus and the representation of religion on campus.

Representation, the second dimension of UDL, relates to the sensory aspect of learning, emphasising the need to make the material accessible to different learners by diversifying its presentation (Cast, 2018). In contrast, our model aims at flexible representation. In UDL, representation relates to the various preferences through which the study material is absorbed and understood by the learners. It emphasises the importance of presenting the information using different input modalities (e.g., watching, listening, reading), organising information in a comprehensible and clear manner (e.g., flowcharts, highlighting important information), and using tools that support understanding the material (e.g., course glossary, concept cards) (Black, Weinberg, & Brodwin 2015). Our model is designed to expand the representation component and focus on the different material designs. For the material to be relevant and meaningful, it must be adapted to the students’ identity-derived needs.

Action and expression are the third dimension. This relates to the diverse modes of expression that are enabled (Cast 2018). It addresses the various activities taking place in the classroom that allow personal expression, such as group work and class discussions, as well as the products the learners are required to present (e.g., written assignments, practical projects, presentations). However, this model overlooks language, which is the basis of the ability to engage in classroom activities and personal expression. Language is the main tool for action and expression, and, if it is not considered, action and expression are not possible.

Educational inclusion is both theoretical and practical.For example,Amara and Merei (2008) argue that the language used in the public arena affects the way individuals and groups perceive themselves and others .(أمارة ومرعي, 2008 Language is intimately connected with identity and, therefore, it is extremely important for minorities to be free to use their native languages (بركة,2013) .

The reality is that students for whom the language of instruction is not their native language may avoid participating in discussions. UDL also deals with technological tools that enable various modes of expression and learning-support technologies that enable learners with disabilities to express themselves (Evmenova, 2018). Another aspect of action and expression includes the need for education professionals’ contributions to breaking down the learning process into stages, providing students with self-supervision tools and feedback at different stages of learning, providing support in terms of effective learning strategies, and referring students to instructors/guides who can help them use technology and improve their learning skills (Thomas et al. 2015).

**Discussion and summary**

Globalisation and its related political and social processes have created a multicultural world where students from many social groups are present in institutions of higher learning. The cultural diversity of students in higher education is of great importance; it helps reduce social disparities, promotes equality and social justice and better prepares students for the labour market (Banks and Banks 2019).

The NMDC modelmight serve as a guideline for designing the new campus. Globalisation, migration and technological developments require that a new holistic and integrative learning framework be adopted. Our model represents the complexity and incorporates the relevant components that characterise pluralist societies today – multiculturism, multi-technologies, multiple identities, multilingualism, multiple religions and multiple disabilities. The model is based on multiple pedagogies, multiple curricula, multiple evaluations and multiple policies. This model portrays a new academic vision in which students’ identity-driven needs are considered. While higher education does make reference to the conscious identity needs of students, there are a number of unconscious identity needs to which higher education continues to be blind.

We presented the prevailing UDL model; its three major components create a full, meaningful learning process, and it offers various ways to apply diversity throughout these components (Cast, 2018). Examining these components is important to fully understand whether we view the student holistically. However, our model enables full expression and enactment of UDL. Academic policy should be aware of diversity and accessibility in the fullness of its meanings and implications (Doyle and Robson 2002; Morgan and Houghton 2011). Our approach allows students to achieve their full potential, which ultimately ensures inclusion within the academic institution and student empowerment.

Our model also expands upon Banks and Banks’ (2019) approach. They elaborated five dimensions as a guide to school reform for implementing multicultural education: content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, a pedagogy of equity and empowering school culture and social structures (Banks and Banks 2019). We propose that this scope should be expanded to the entirety of student identity.

In the globalised world, higher education institutions comprise a variety of religious, ethnic and immigrant groups that have different cultures and languages as well as students with disabilities. Students from Western backgrounds are no longer the dominant population in higher education institutions. Many ethnic minorities are challenged to belong and feel included in academia, and their special needs are not always addressed. Their family backgrounds, values, attitudes, practices, community, ethnicity, culture and values, as part of the students’ processes of acculturation and socialisation, should be taken into account when planning academic policy. We hope that our NMDC model of the new campus will be a source of empowerment and resilience for students all over the world.

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