

**Colleen Thoma, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University**

Colleen Thoma, Ph.D., FAAIDD, has built a career around research, policy, and practice aimed at improving transition outcomes for youth with disabilities, grounded in their visions for adult life. As a professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, she established herself as a leading expert in self-determined transition planning and services, transition assessment, and special educator preparation.

Dr. Thoma developed the Universal Design for Transition (UDT), a framework that connects academic and transition education through Universal Design for Learning (UDL) components as well as evidence-based transition practices. UDT is designed to eliminate the perceived need of educators to prioritize between the two, based on the students' level of support needs.

Her second book on UDT expands the framework to emphasize its use as a culturally responsive and sustaining practice to address the needs of marginalized youth with disabilities.