

CED—2025



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International scientific conference
on economic development and
legacy of Simon Kuznets

October 16, 2025

Simon Kuznets Kharkiv National University of
Economics.

Cycles Economic Development



**Roundtable
"Global Cooperation
and Development
Transformations:
Challenges,
Prospects,
Innovations"**

16/Oct/2025

**Digital Tools and Inclusive Methodologies
in Higher Education**
The Experience of Universidad de Alcalá in the AFID Project
Alfredo Gardel



Goal

How to promote academic freedom and educational inclusion through digitalization

Index

- Introduction and goals of academic freedom
- needs of today's learners
- principles of Universal Design for Learning
- comparisons of digital tools
- MS Teams as enabling tool
- key steps towards a successful implementation.





HEI Digital transformation: Academic Freedom

New Needs

Today's students require flexibility, accessibility, and multiple forms of participation in their learning.



Flexibility

Diversity of Profiles

International students, workers, workers, those with disabilities, disabilities, and different learning styles coexist in our classrooms.



Diversify student participation

Technology Opportunities

Digital tools can remove barriers and create more equitable learning experiences.



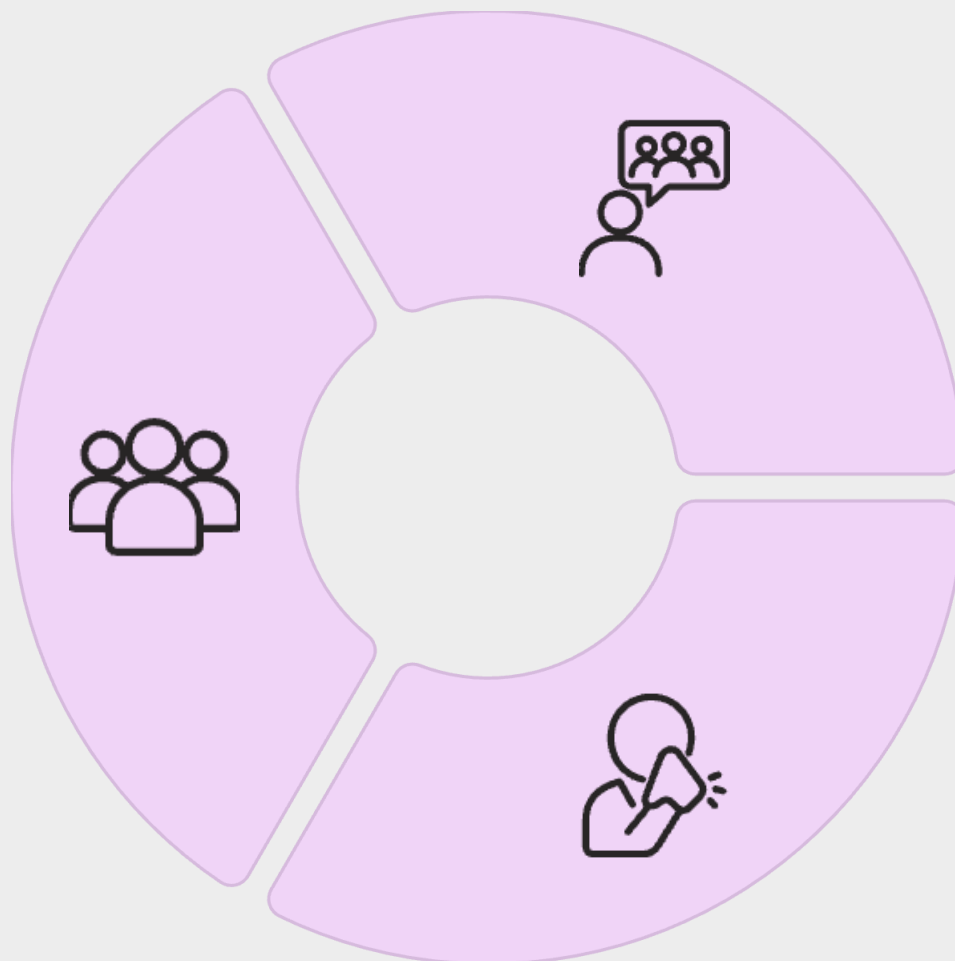


Principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

(UDL)

Multiple Means of Representation

Provide information in a variety of forms: text, audio, video, images, and interactive graphics.



Multiple Means of Involvement

Increase interest and motivation through personalized and culturally relevant options.

Multiple Means of Action and Expression

Provide alternatives for students to demonstrate their learning in different ways.



Comparative analysis of available tools



MS Teams

Built-in live captions, screen reader support, immersive reader, flexible breakout
Requires institutional Microsoft licensing; training for advanced features; integration complexity



Moodle

Screen reader and text-to-speech support, customizable plugins, open-source adaptability
Learning curve for setup; technical support often limited; UX depends on configuration



Zoom

Automated and manual closed captions, transcript generation, sign language interpreter viewability
Accessibility setup depends on host; basic platform lacks LMS tools; requires add-on guides



Google Classroom

Keyboard navigation, screen reader compatibility, caption upload, integration with Google Translate
Navigation inconsistencies, modal focus issues, lacks skip-to-content shortcuts





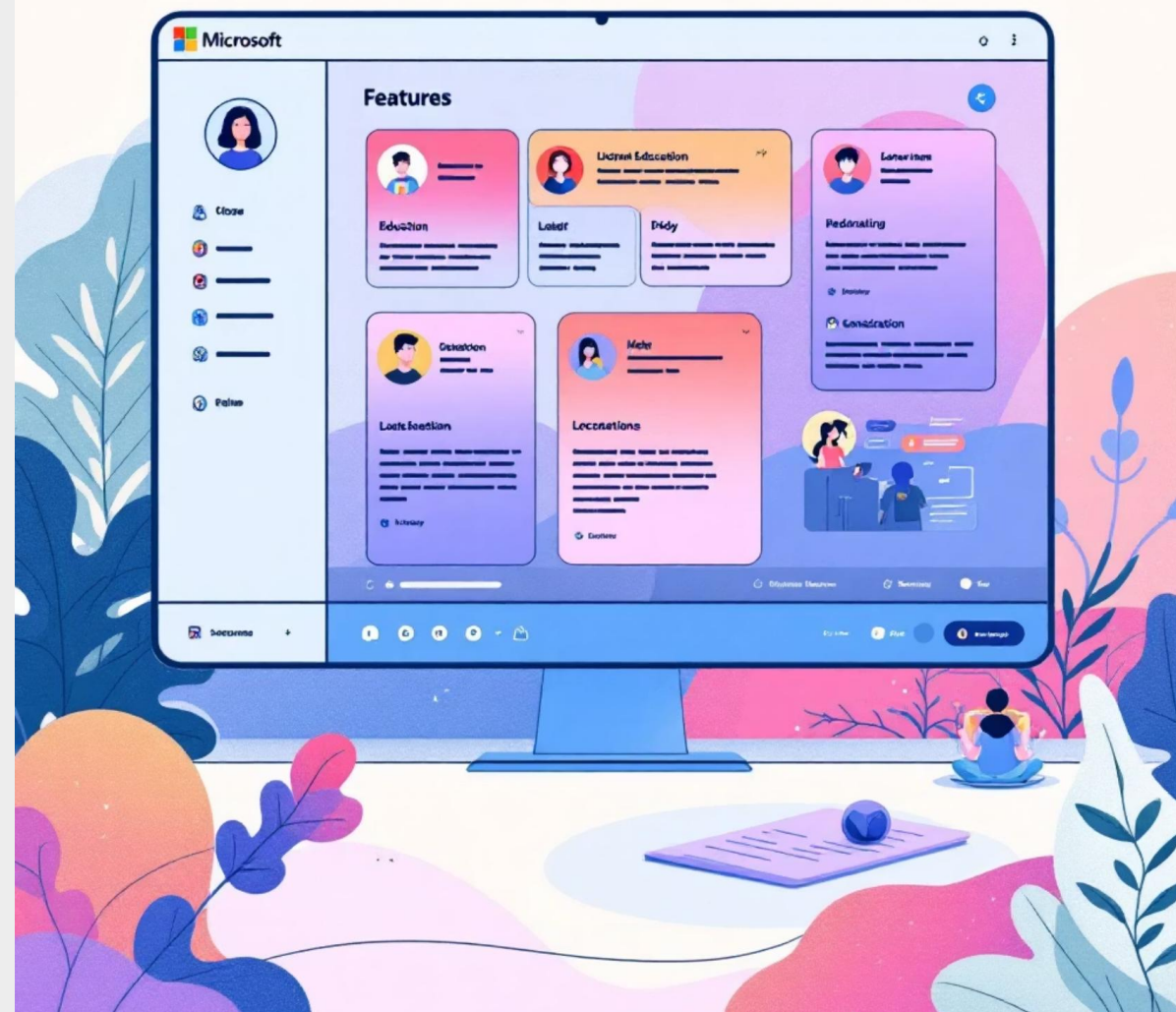
Using MS Teams as a Digital Education Tool

Teams integrates chat, video conferencing, file management, collaborative apps, and assessment tools into a single digital space.

- Persistent virtual classrooms
- Collaboration spaces
- Additional integrations: Office 365, Copilot

Complete Digital Online Ecosystem

unified experience for both educators and students





Inclusive Virtual Classroom Setup



01

Team Structure

Create clear thematic channels: Announcements, Classes, Assignments, Doubts and Resources. Establish inclusive participation rules from day one.

02

Accessibility Settings

Enable automatic captions, enable live enable live transcriptions, configure the Immersive Reader, and set differentiated permissions.

03

Visual Customization

Use neutral backgrounds, legible fonts, appropriate contrasts, and consistent consistent visual organization for easy navigation.



Enhancing Visual Accessibility in Microsoft Teams



High Contrast Mode

Enhances contrast for better readability

Zoom Functionality

Allows users to zoom in on content

Screen Reader Compatibility

Converts text to speech for blind users

Customizable Display Settings

Adjusts font sizes and colors for comfort

- **High Contrast Mode:** making it easier to read and navigate the interface.
- **Zoom Functionality:** particularly helpful for students with low vision. Also can be adjusted using keyboard shortcuts.
- **Screen Reader Compatibility:** convert on-screen text into speech. Blind students can use screen readers like NVDA, JAWS, or Narrator to access content.
- **Customizable Display Settings:** adjust font sizes, colors, and spacing to suit individual preferences, to improve readability and reduce eye strain.



Inclusive Communication Tools



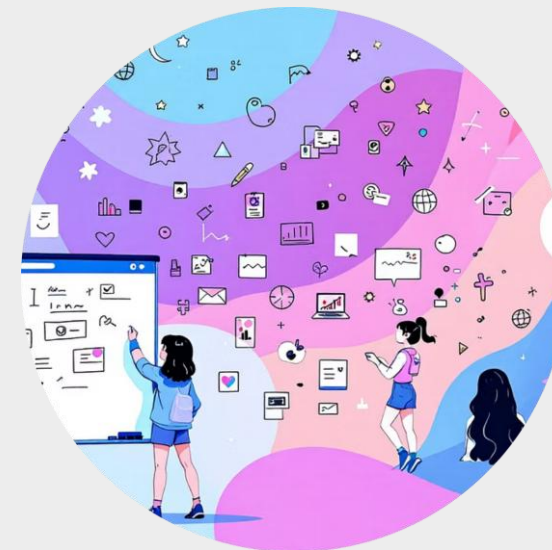
Accessible Video Conferencing

Real-time captioning, automatic recording, recording, virtual breakout rooms, and video-free participation options.



Chat Multimodal

Text messages, voice memos, emojis, automatic translations, and important message markup for future reference.



Collaborative Whiteboards

Shared visual spaces where students can express ideas through text, drawings, drawings, mind maps, and multimedia content.



How to enhance inclusivity in Teams usage?





Assignments and Evaluation Assessment



Creating Differentiated Tasks

Clear instructions in multiple formats, flexible delivery dates, varied delivery options (text, video, audio, presentation).



Multimodal Feedback

Written comments, audio notes, digital rubrics, and one-on-one video calls for personalized support.



Progress Tracking

Engagement analytics, early identification of at-risk students, and proactive adjustments in methodology.



Practical Tips for Inclusive Teams Usage

Use Channels Effectively

- Organize channels by topic, project, or group to help students easily find the information they need.

Record videos

- Record meetings and classes so that students who are unable to attend live can watch them later.

Polls and Quizzes

- Use polls and quizzes to check for understanding and gather feedback from students.

Encourage Collaboration

- Use Teams' collaboration features, such as shared documents and whiteboards, to encourage students to work together.

Technical Support

- Provide technical support to students who are having difficulty using Teams.



Practical Use Cases



Paper readings seminars

Asynchronous discussions on thematic channels, recording of master classes, small groups, and recorded student presentations.

Laboratory Practices

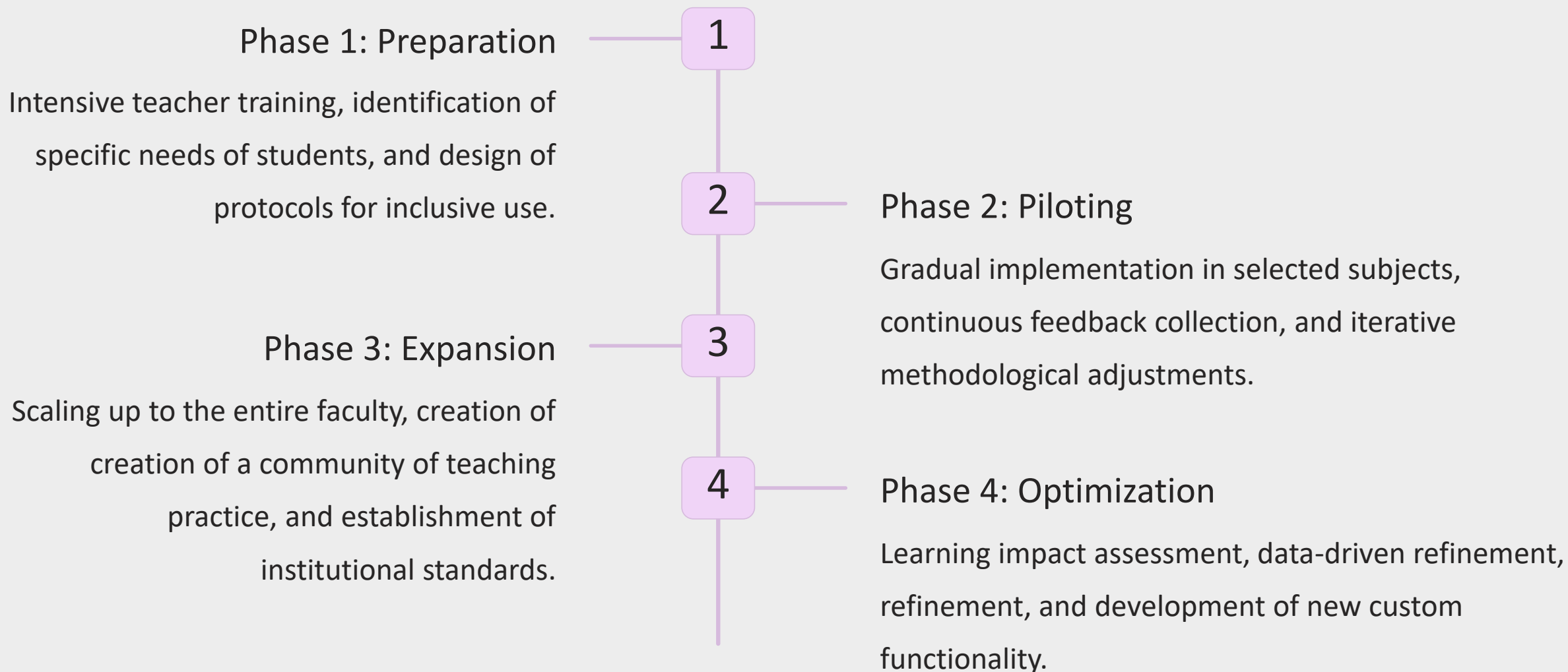
Recorded virtual demonstrations, demonstrations, shared interactive simulators, real-time collaborative reports, and one-on-one tutorials.

Internationalization – Language courses

Virtual cultural exchanges, conversation practice in separate rooms, pronunciation correction with AI, and digital immersion.



Successful Implementation: Key Steps





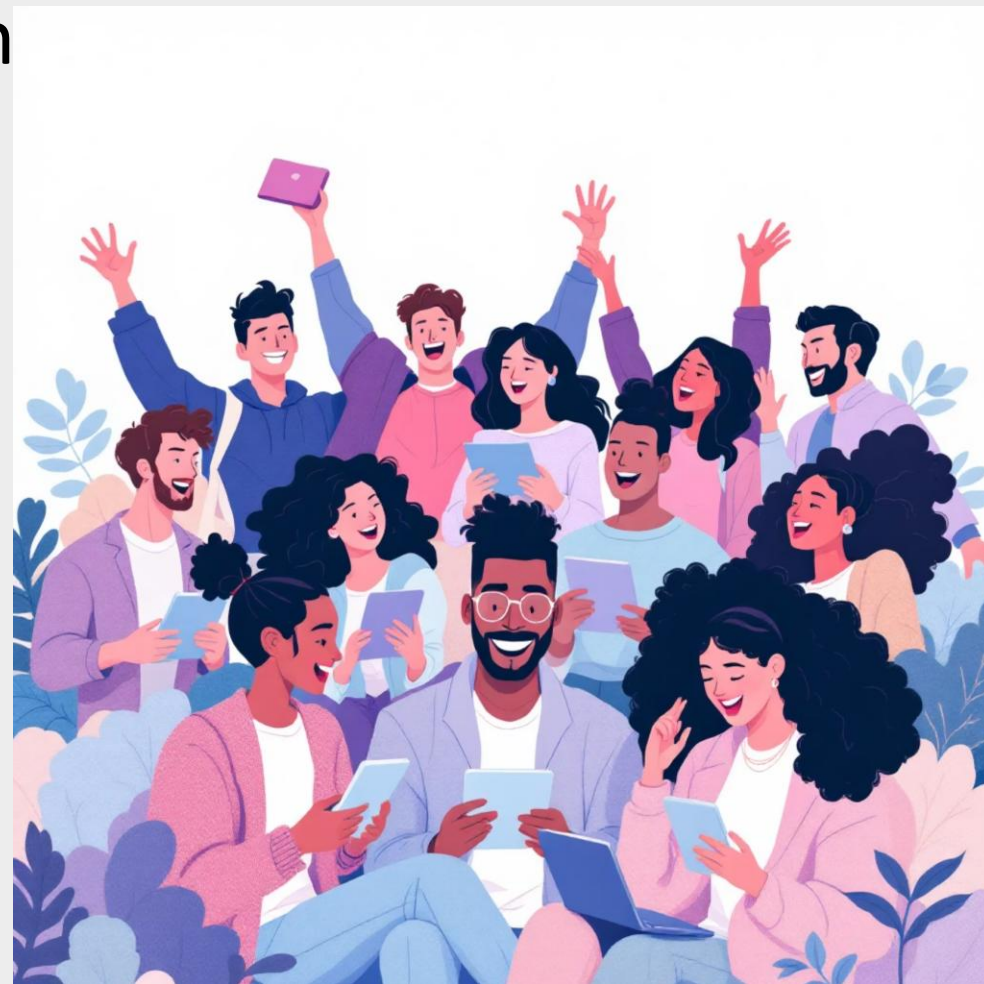
Building the Future of Inclusive Education

Transformative Impact

Tools as MS Teams is not just a technology tool, but a catalyst for creating truly inclusive and accessible educational environments.

Success lies in combining technological power with a pedagogy focused on student equity and diversity.

Tool adoption requires a continuous professional development for faculty, including specific digital and pedagogical training modules



LINK FROM THE EDUCATIONAL TOOL TO ADMINISTRATION TOOLS

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Thank you for your attention!
Alfredo Gardel



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