



# Small Teaching Strategies

**Graduate Professional and Academic Development (GPAD)**

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# Workshop Overview

- **What is small teaching?**
- **Why should I consider small teaching?**
- **How can I implement small teaching in my course?**
- **What are some examples of strategies?**

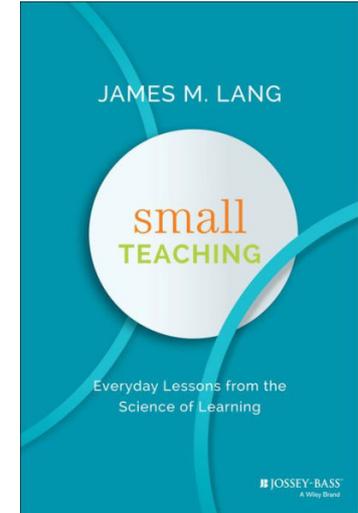




# Small Teaching

- Approach to teaching that seeks to spark positive change in higher education (HIED) through **small but powerful modifications** to course design and teaching practices (Lang, 2016, 5)
- **Deliberate, structured, and incremental approach** (Lang, 2016, 5)

*...stealing bases and hitting sacrifice fly balls...*





# Why Small Teaching

- **Evidence-based improved student learning**
- **Encourages self-directed learning**
- **Encourages increased meta-cognition**





# Implementing Small Teaching

## Three criteria

- **Foundation in learning sciences**
- **Evidence based**
- Positive impact

## Three forms

- Brief in-class or online activity
- One-time (small portion of the course)
- Small course design modification

## Three considerations

- Minimal preparation and minimal grading
- Consider your unique teaching style and your course
- Ask students for feedback



# Examples of Small Teaching Strategies from Student Perspective



## Think – Pair - Share

- **Think about and describe two examples of Small Teaching strategies that your instructors have used that worked for you.**
- **Why do you think those strategies worked for you?**





# Small Teaching Strategies

## Assessment – early and often

- Low or no stakes quizzes
- Instructor, peer, self assessment
- Making connections
- Feedback and rubrics

## Encouraging self-directed learning

- Distributed practice – brief practice sessions in class
- Student created study-guide at end of concept/unit
- Study strategies and outcomes (student reflection)





# Small Teaching Strategies

## Course design and materials

- Syllabus
- Interleaving – learning is cumulative
- Distributed practice – brief practice sessions in class
- Beginning of class – previous class reflection
- End of class - take away, “muddiest point”
- Post-test review (most frequently missed concepts; feedback)





# Small Teaching Strategies

- Share with students what the research has shown
- Get out of your comfort zone
- Show enthusiasm – course material and student learning
- Promote success – prior students' statements document
- Talk with faculty in your discipline and outside of your discipline who are teaching in different formats



# Small Teaching Strategies

## Think – Pair - Share

- Think about a course you teach/have taught/hope to teach.
- Describe two Small Teaching techniques that you would like to implement in that course.
- Describe why you think those techniques would work given the course and your teaching style.





# Resources and References

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- *Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)*
- *Lang, J.M. Chronicle of Higher Ed series; twitter @LangOnCourse*
- *Science of Learning and Education Center (SOLE)*