Small Teaching

A workshop for First-Year Seminar instructors led by Dr. James Lang

Small Teaching: From Minor Changes to Major Learning

Ongoing calls to revolutionize and revitalize higher education need balancing with the everyday work that many faculty do in educating their students in traditional classroom spaces or online environments. A small number of key principles from the learning sciences seem to have the power to make a substantial impact on student learning in almost any type of course, from traditional lectures to flipped classrooms. This workshop will introduce some of those principles, drawing from recent publications in the learning sciences, and focus on a small number of classroom practices that can boost learning in powerful new ways.

Small Teaching: Building Motivation, Mastery, and Mindset

This session offers practical strategies that will enable faculty tap into the deepest sources of motivation in their students, help those students take a mastery orientation toward their learning, and gain the confidence and commitment they need to tackle difficult learning challenges. Drawing from research in motivation, mastery learning, and the growth mindset, this session will introduce both small and large course design strategies that can produce powerful learning results.

Biography

James M. Lang is a professor of English and the Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence at Assumption College in Worcester, MA, where he teaches courses in British literature and in creative nonfiction writing. The author of five books and more than a hundred reviews or essays, on topics ranging from higher education to British literature, Lang writes a monthly column for The Chronicle of Higher Education, as well as contributing regularly to America and Notre Dame Magazine. He edits a series of books on teaching and learning in higher education for the University of West Virginia Press. He has delivered public lectures and faculty workshops at more than fifty colleges or universities in the United States and abroad. He is currently a roster member of the Fulbright Specialist Program in higher education, and available to partner with non-U.S. institutions for grant projects related to teaching, learning, or academic integrity in higher education.