

Center for Teaching Excellence

Feinstein 304

<https://teaching-excellence.providence.edu/>





Programs/Events



PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE

Center for Teaching Excellence

- Workshops and Seminars
- Networking and Social Events
- Faculty Learning Communities
- Reading Groups
- Consultations

<https://teaching-excellence.providence.edu/events-calendar/>

Upcoming Event CTE/TLT

Teaching Writing & Research in the Age of AI
Tuesday, August 26th 11:30–1:00

[RSVP Link](#)

Join us for lunch and a discussion of AI syllabus policies, low and high-stakes writing assignments, and support structures for faculty and students.

Open House

- Tues, September 9th 12:00 –2:00 PM
- CTE Lounge (Feinstein 304)
- Stop by to learn about the CTE
- Food and Book Raffles!

MAPs

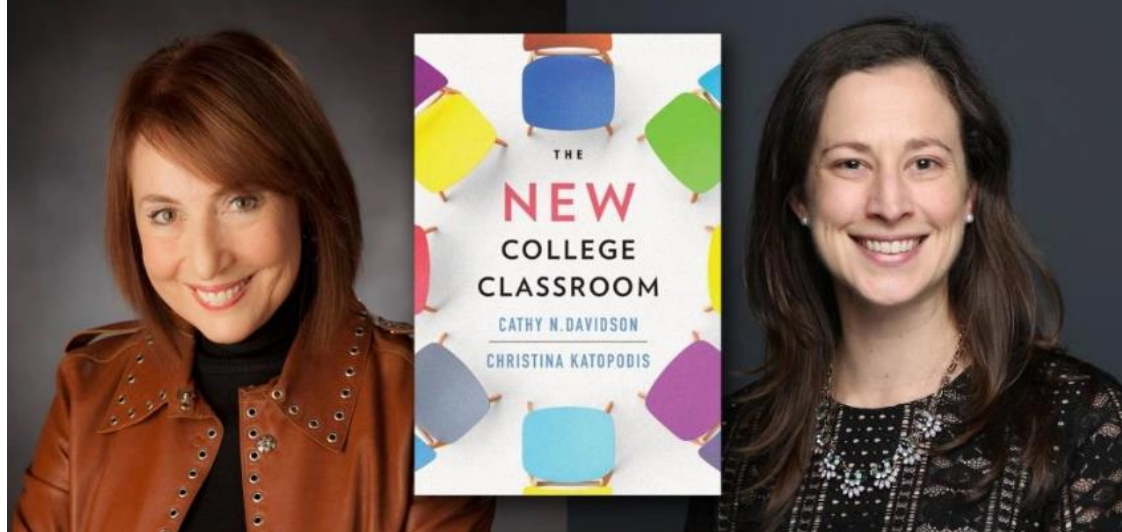
Guided Student Feedback Sessions ([Midsemester Analysis Program](#))

The MAPs facilitator asks students to respond to three prompts:

- What do you like most about this course and/or the instructor's teaching of it?
- What about this course and/or the instructor's teaching of it needs change or improvement?
- What suggestions can you offer that would help make this course a better learning experience for you?

Book Group

- The New College Classroom



OneHE

(Online learning for educators)

Create your Free Account here:

<https://onehe.org/register/providence-college/>

Micro Courses

onehe.org/courses-resources/



Dashboard ▾

Courses & Resources ▾

Community ▾

Providence College ▾



Community And Belonging

[Find out more >](#)



Course And Curriculum Design

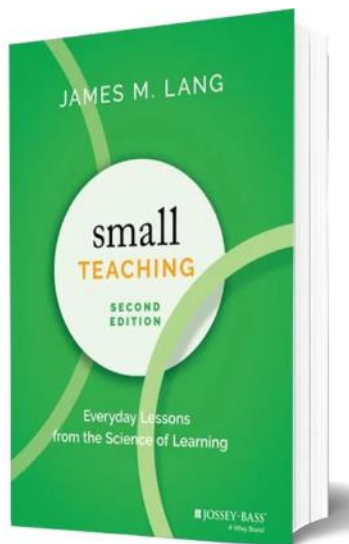
[Find out more >](#)



Webinars

Webinar Registration

Wednesday, August 27th
4:10-4:30PM



GET READY FOR NEXT SEMESTER

Starting the Semester with Small Teaching

with James M. Lang

As we look for ways to kick off a successful semester, here is the perfect opportunity to discover simple, research-backed strategies that help our students feel motivated and engaged from day one. Join James M. Lang, author of *Small Teaching*, as he explores practical tips for those crucial first days. Jim will be majoring on how we can foster a sense of belonging, set the stage for deep learning, and build on the science of learning so you leave with real strategies to use in your courses. Bring your questions and let's plan together for a positive start to the Fall semester! Remember too that OneHE webinars are free to non-members, so share the link with interested colleagues.



Suggestion for your First Week of Classes

Helpful Suggestions

1. Start by Building Community

- **Learn and Use Names Early:** Research shows that students' sense of belonging and engagement increases when instructors use their names (Cooper et al., 2017).
- **Set a Welcoming Tone:** Greet students at the door or with a warm introduction. Students' first impressions of the instructor strongly shape motivation and perceptions of the course (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993).
- **Encourage Student Introductions:** Even brief icebreakers improve classroom climate and peer connectedness (Tinto, 1997).

Helpful Suggestions

2. Be Transparent and Set Expectations

- **Explain the “Why” of the Course:** Share why the course matters and how it connects with the goals for their program of study. Transparency about purpose and process supports student motivation (Winkelmes et al., 2016).
- **Review the Syllabus with Intention:** Instead of reading it verbatim, highlight key policies and invite students to discuss expectations. Students are more likely to follow policies when they understand their rationale (Harnish & Bridges, 2011).
- **Clarify Classroom Norms:** Early conversations about participation, technology use, and collaboration establish a respectful learning environment (Brookfield & Preskill, 2005).

Helpful Suggestions

3. Engage Students Actively from Day One

- **Use a Low-Stakes Activity:** Research shows that engaging students in small, active learning tasks from the first class increases retention and participation throughout the term (Freeman et al., 2014).
- **Ask a Big Question:** Frame the course around a central problem or theme. Curiosity-driven learning boosts motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985).
- **Check Understanding:** Incorporate quick polls, think-pair-share, or brief writes to signal that student input matters (Crouch & Mazur, 2001).

Helpful Suggestions

4. Balance Authority with Approachability

- **Share a Bit About Yourself:** When instructors disclose appropriate personal or professional information, students perceive them as more approachable (Goldstein & Benassi, 2006).
- **Communicate Enthusiasm:** Expressing excitement about the subject increases student interest and engagement (Patrick et al., 2000).

Helpful Suggestions

5. Plan for Inclusivity

- **Design with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Principles:** Offering multiple ways of engagement, representation, and expression supports diverse learners (CAST, 2018).
- **Acknowledge Student Diversity:** Demonstrating awareness of varied backgrounds and learning styles increases participation and persistence (Gay, 2010).
- **Encourage Multiple Forms of Participation:** Not all students are comfortable speaking up in class discussions. Offer different ways to engage. Such as written reflections, small group work, or digital discussion boards. Research shows that providing varied participation options increases equity in voice and supports deeper learning, especially for first-generation and underrepresented students (Hooks, 1994; Tanner, 2013).

Helpful Suggestions

6. Practical Logistics

- **Test the Technology Early:** Arrive a few minutes early to check classroom setup and technology. Reducing disruptions helps establish authority and smooth flow.
- **Have a Backup Plan:** Prepare a short activity that requires no technology. Research on teaching resilience highlights that smooth transitions maintain student trust (Svinicki & McKeachie, 2014).
- **End with a Preview:** Close each session with a short summary and “next time” preview; this improves knowledge retention and signals course coherence (Brown, Roediger, & McDaniel, 2014).

Helpful Suggestions

7. Seek Support and Reflect

- **Reflect on Each Class:** Keeping short teaching notes helps identify strategies that worked well and areas to improve (Brookfield, 2017).
- **Connect with Teaching and Learning Resources:** Engage with campus centers (CTE & TLT) and their resources early. Faculty who do so report higher teaching confidence and student success outcomes (Sorcinelli, 2007).

Thank you!
**We look forward to seeing
you at the CTE.**