

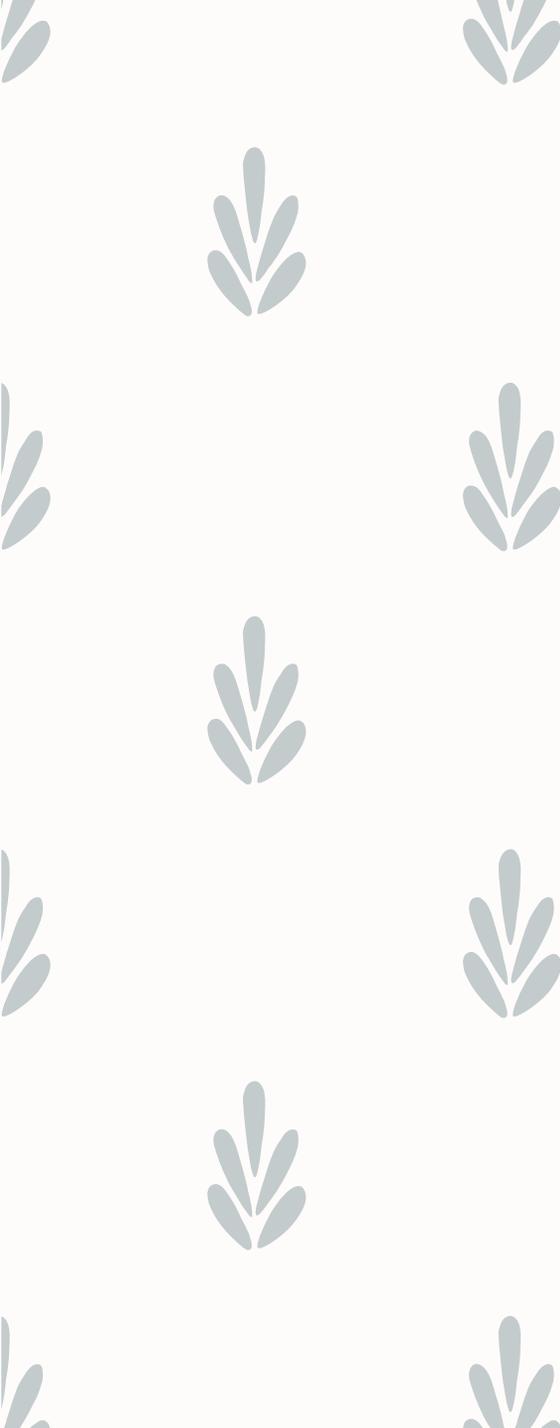
# Tips & Best Practice Ideas for Teaching Small Classes

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CELT – The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching

September 14, 2018

CUW Adjunct Faculty Conference

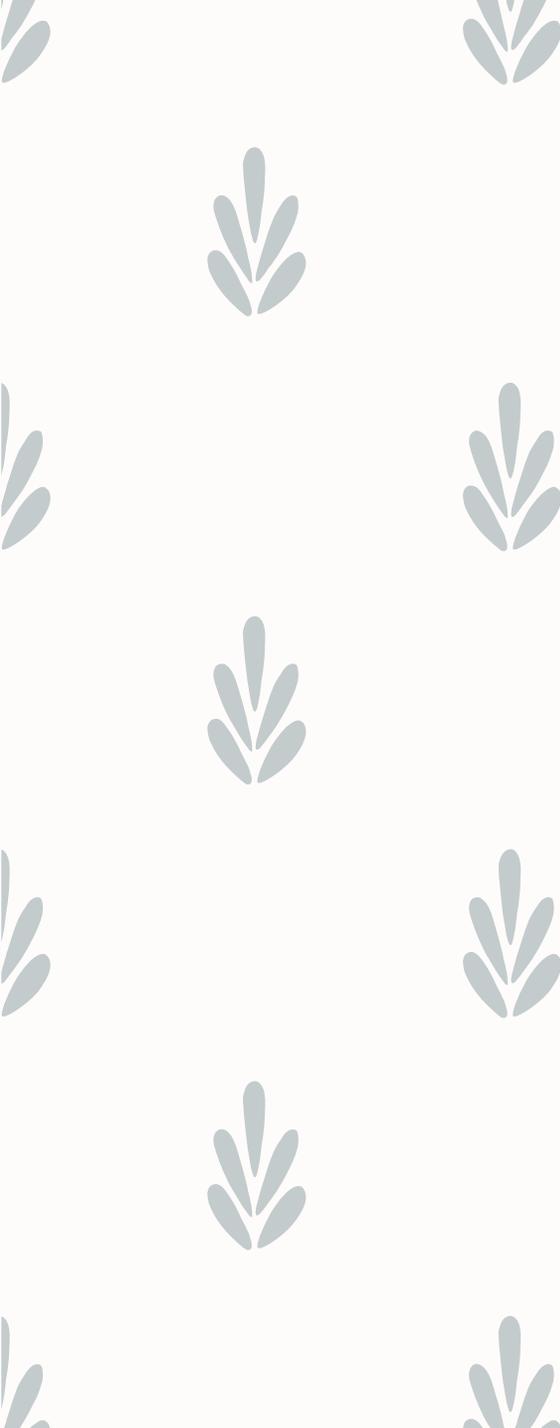


*“The smaller the class, the more individual students determine its success or failure.”*

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– Anonymous faculty member on  
chronical.com chatroom

*~ Do you agree or disagree? Why?*

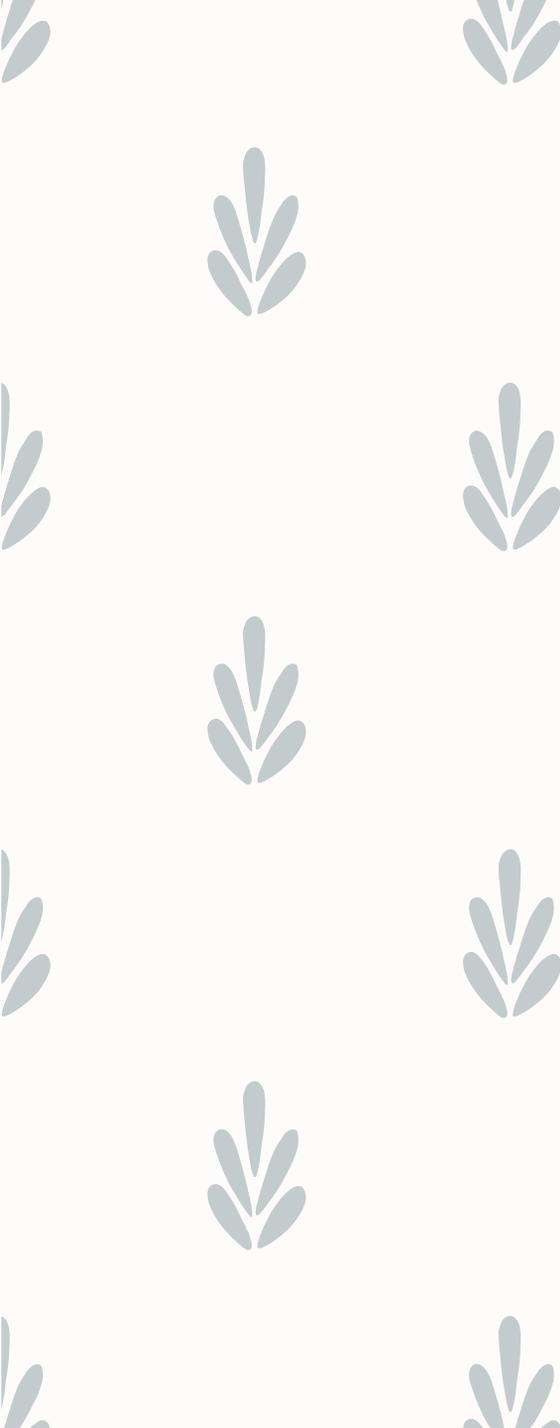


# So... if that is true, how can we as instructors guide students toward success in a small class?

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- Build relationships – teacher-student and student-student
  - Ice-breaker
  - Use of names (85% of students surveyed feel this is important)
  - Co-creating classroom ground rules
- Foster a sense of student responsibility
  - “Cold-calling” (tell students in advance)
  - Assign various aspects of the content for students to present (chapter of a reading, bring in a related article, etc.)

*Other ideas? What has worked for you? What hasn't worked?*



# More Ideas...

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- A whole-class project
  - Part of class participation? Other strategies or ideas?
- Be conversational – deliver your content as a conversation with the small group, not lecture
  - Include problem solving, brainstorming, drawing/sketching, short writing/journaling
- Build in feedback opportunities
  - Instructor – Student
  - Student - Student

# The Physical Classroom Environment

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- Sit in a circle or around a table – same level
- Consider printing out anything usually projected and look at together – takes you as the instructor “off stage”
- Make space & spread out – plan time for students to get away from each other; the extra room space is an advantage!
  - Individual “check-in” time with instructor when working on projects
  - “Jigsaw” a reading: assign each student a section to read alone, come back together and report on
  - Set up “stations”: different activities around the room

# References and Resources

- <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/TeachingAndLearningResources/LearningEnvironments/smallclass.php>
- <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/lets/toolkit/teaching/smallgroup>
- <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/learning-hub/view/small-group-teaching-methods-and-techniques>
- <https://www.iup.edu/teachingexcellence/teaching-resources/classroom-assessment-techniques/improving-learning-in-small-classes/>
- <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/importance-learning-students-names/>
- Bell, C., Paterson, J., & Warman, S. (2014). Tips for small group teaching. *In Practice*, 36(6), 307. doi:http://dx.doi.org.cuw.ezproxy.switchinc.org/10.1136/inp.g3379
- Gavriel, J. (2015). Teaching tips for small-group facilitation. *Education For Primary Care: An Official Publication Of The Association Of Course Organisers, National Association Of GP Tutors, World Organisation Of Family Doctors*, 26(2), 102-104.

# Thank you!

Catherine (Kate) Robertson, Instructional Designer

[catherine.robertson@cuw.edu](mailto:catherine.robertson@cuw.edu), 262-243-2082

Susan Gallanis, Instructional Development Specialist

[susan.gallanis@cuw.edu](mailto:susan.gallanis@cuw.edu), 262-243-2007

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<https://www.cuw.edu/celt>