

Who better to mentor great teaching than master teachers, and renowned teachers of teachers, Regan A. R. Gurung and Elizabeth Yost Hammer? For anyone seeking to take their teaching to the next level—whether babes-in-the-woods teaching assistants, pretenure faculty, or later-career teachers seeking revitalization—Gurung and Hammer offer a gold mine of evidence-based, experienced-honed wisdom delivered in pleasurable prose.

—**DAVID MYERS, PhD**, HOPE COLLEGE, HOLLAND, MI

Teach Like a Champ is an essential resource for college teachers of all levels. There are evidence-based hints for more effective teaching, prompts for thoughtful reflection, and light-hearted fun to bring it all together. You can be *that teacher* whose students remember you for your great teaching while also having a sane and healthy personal life. You will love this book!

—**DIANE F. HALPERN, PhD**, WINNER OF NUMEROUS TEACHING AWARDS AND
PAST PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Whether you're new to teaching or a seasoned pro, you'll learn from this inspiring and practical book. Gurung and Hammer synthesize decades of research to help us make wise choices in our teaching. Your students—and you—will benefit from reading this book.

—**PETER FELTEN, PhD**, CENTER FOR ENGAGED LEARNING, ELON UNIVERSITY,
ELON, NC; AND COAUTHOR OF *RELATIONSHIP-RICH EDUCATION: HOW
HUMAN CONNECTIONS DRIVE SUCCESS IN COLLEGE*

Gurung and Hammer have created a pitch-perfect guide in *Teach Like a Champ* to assist educators in navigating both traditional and emerging challenges in the psychology classroom. Their book is informative, stimulating, and charming. Their shared insights provide an inspiring framework for psychology teachers to reflect on what they do well and where they can improve, regardless of how long they have been teaching.

—**JANE S. HALONEN, PhD**, PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA,
PENSACOLA

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PREFACE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TEACH LIKE A CHAMP?

Teaching is not an impromptu act. Effective teachers pour energy into their course design and delivery, building relationships with their students, and helping their students achieve educational goals. Let's be honest—over the past few years, it has become more difficult to be a teacher. More teachers are quitting and moving on to other occupations. How does one feed a passion for teaching and students while safeguarding oneself from burnout? The answer lies in not only having a good sense of what effective teaching is but also knowing how to be efficient and take care of yourself.

Education is currently an embattled profession. College and university teachers have found that their classroom teaching has come under greater scrutiny in the face of drops in enrollment, and national increases in stress and mental health issues mean students often need more attention than before. As a result, there has been an uptick in publications on self-care and dealing with stress in academia. This focus on burnout ironically parallels an increase in efforts to better evaluate teaching and learning. This book aims to provide teachers with ways to cope with both issues.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

We wrote *Teach Like a Champ* to provide you with guidance, hope, and inspiration. These are tough times, and while higher education and educational environments in general will probably have better times, there will also be more challenges ahead. Consequently, this book covers a lot of terrain. One way to cope is to see life as a game (we tend to envision North American football, a common interest your authors share) in which you engage in the challenge of competition with yourself and work to accomplish your goals. Playfully evoking the ethos of training for a sport, we focus on what makes for champion (i.e., Super Bowl–winning) teachers. Like athletes who need to know the fundamental skills of the game and then practice, practice, practice, we acknowledge that we need to know both what to do to teach well and how to do it, while simultaneously sustaining our psyches, hearts, and souls. That is, we need to always enjoy the game.

We are going to give it to you straight and would like to invite you into a conversation with us. In fact, we wrote this book imagining we had the good fortune to sit across from you over coffee (Regan) or tea (Elizabeth) to chat about teaching. We built this book thinking about the years of discussions we have had with instructors from multiple disciples and from all over the United States and world. We have visited multiple campuses, in multiple states, and have facilitated conversations with individuals, dyads, small groups, and entire departments and colleges. Together, we have done workshops for teachers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and between the two of us we have presented in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, India, Colombia, and other countries. As faculty developers, we have heard nearly every take on teaching and learning, and nearly every challenge faced by educators. We have also accumulated a number of hacks to teaching challenges in response to our many conversations.

There are many ways to teach well and build and maintain rapport with students, but some are more time-consuming than

others. Relying heavily on peer-reviewed research to derive evidence-informed strategies, we capitalize on our experiences from more than 50 years in the classroom and 20 years as leaders of centers for teaching and learning. Peppered with pragmatic ways to foster quality teaching, the book also provides practical hacks to productivity with a goal to maintain good mental and physical health.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT HERE?

There are great books out there; indeed, we will recommend many of them. Our book is distinctive by underscoring what makes teaching champs unique: They are effective, efficient, and passionate, and they maintain their personal well-being. This book will help readers achieve all these goals. We are all about balance and prioritization. Yes, you will hear our very human and caring voices, but you also get advice built on the bedrock of science. Similar to the book *Study Like a Champ* (Gurung & Dunlosky, 2023), this book weaves practical suggestions in with what science has suggested are the better practices in teaching.

We also made sure to discuss how teaching is contextual, an element often ignored by books espousing universal “best” practices, as if there are techniques that will work for everyone, everywhere. We recognize that teaching large classes in research-focused universities is very different from teaching small classes in teaching-focused colleges. We also recognize that teachers from historically minoritized groups have a different experience in the classroom than White men, and this book will be up-front about the challenges that demographic factors introduce. Throughout the chapters, we share personal experiences from non-White and female perspectives to discuss difficult topics such as getting poor evaluations, being asked to do too much, and dealing with difficult student interactions.

This book is intended for instructors at any level and graduate students who care about teaching. Whether at a research institution,

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a teaching-intensive institution, a small liberal arts college, a minority-serving institution, a community college, or a high school, student learning matters. And, to be blunt, it is what we are paid to do. This book's pragmatic approach can also help prepare you for promotion, tenure, or merit reviews (for instructors) and for marketing yourself to get a job (for graduate students).

Other strong books for teachers on the market tend to be very academic, very anecdotal, very philosophical, or very technical, or they focus on a singular topic (such as inclusivity, artificial intelligence, or online teaching). There are books that provide evidence-based tips for teaching but without a narrative, or books almost completely full of personal stories and interviews but lacking practical advice. In recent years, a number of self-help books have been published on dealing with instructor burnout. Given the focus on mental health, such books often don't discuss direct pedagogical strategies. Although all these books make important contributions to our understanding of teaching and learning, in this book, we challenged ourselves to balance coverage of pedagogical effectiveness with coverage of maintaining personal well-being.

We provide you with a straightforward presentation of core areas for pedagogical effectiveness, coupled with evidence-informed strategies to be efficient as well. It's hard to find the time to keep up with all that is written about teaching and learning, so we did the work for you. We sifted and winnowed through what is out there to provide a pedagogical overview of sorts—key topics that all educators should be aware of and fundamental skills to teach effectively. We also made sure to balance discussion of content and skills and not to forget about all else that makes us human—our personal lives, friends, families, football, and our health and well-being.

While the skills and knowledge we talk about are essential for all instructors, we believe they are particularly useful for new instructors, especially graduate students. New instructors and early-career

faculty have a lot to balance, and starting good habits from the very beginning can be powerful. If you are a graduate student, then much of the advice in this book will make you a strong contender for jobs with a teaching component (most of them) and an excellent contender for jobs at teaching-focused institutions. If you are pretenure and are already challenged by fitting in research, teaching, and service, take heart in knowing about the effective use of assessment and student evaluations, the ways to measure teaching, and the concise foci for effective teaching—all discussed in this book—which can reduce the stress of preparing for tenure. If you are posttenure or mid- or late career, the material that follows can energize you and, perhaps in some cases, reignite your passion. The rich world of elements that constitute effective teaching provide many new avenues to grow. There are so many components of effectiveness that you may not have known about or not had time to cultivate. We hope this book will serve as your guide and your inspiration.

HOW IS THIS BOOK STRUCTURED?

In the chapters ahead, we review what we believe is the canon for teaching—the most authoritative list of books on how to teach. In Chapter 1, we start with basic philosophical questions: Why do you teach? What excites you about teaching? And are good teachers born or made? Once you understand your motivation for teaching, this will inform the decisions you make about teaching. Furthermore, this clarity will help you better maintain your enthusiasm and passion for teaching, especially during challenging times when the workload can be overwhelming. Fortunately, it is possible to improve your teaching; there is an abundance of literature, conferences, workshops, centers for teaching and learning, and other resources to help you up your teaching game. So don't worry if you don't consider yourself a natural teacher. The most important things are to remember your

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motivation for teaching and maintain a willingness to learn about teaching.

The next three chapters represent the core of the book. In Chapter 2, we describe the fundamentals of good teaching. We cover some core areas of teaching such as course design, assessment, instructional methods, inclusive teaching, and technology. In Chapter 3, we help you answer a critical question: How do you know if you are effective? We discuss different definitions of great teaching, give you all you need to know about student evaluations of teaching, and tempt you to use peer observations and teaching portfolios. In Chapter 4, we move from effectiveness to efficiency because we want you to maintain your sanity and be as content as possible while you aim to be the best teacher possible. We share techniques to help you cope with heavy teaching loads, managing many students, and grading with minimal outburst. For each of these challenges, we directly address ways that artificial intelligence can be used ethically and effectively.

In the final chapter, we explore ways to maintain your teaching champ status in the long run by avoiding burnout. We focus on ways to maintain your passion while balancing work and personal life. We end with ways to help you not sweat the small stuff and remind you that many hassles teachers encounter are, indeed, the small stuff.

There are recurring features throughout the book, dividing the content into digestible portions:

- After a general introduction, each chapter begins with a self-assessment. These short questionnaires will get you in the mindset to absorb the content and discussions in the following pages. Pause and give yourself undistracted time to complete each set of questions. Reflect on your score using the scoring guides and keys provided.
- The chapters then review research on select topics. Each section begins with a general introduction to the topic, including

any necessary definitions, followed by a What the Research Says section, which summarizes the most pertinent empirical research, and Recommendations, which provides practical applications of the research.

- After we have summarized the research and provided practical tips, each chapter concludes with a Huddle Up section, where we review the chapter's key themes. In North American football, a huddle is when players gather around together before a play and get instructions on what the next move or play is going to be. Our huddles end the chapters to get you ready to make your play in the classroom.
- Each chapter also includes a Go for the Extra Point section at the end, in which we provide key readings related to the material in that chapter or, as we like to call them, good reads to get into the weeds.

If the chapters in this book and the Go for the Extra Point readings listed at the end of each chapter do not satiate your thirst for teaching-related knowledge, Appendix A provides an annotated bibliography so you can build your teaching library, and Appendix B provides a curated list of teaching playbooks; each set a concise but comprehensive list of readings. These sets of our top ten picks of critical reads are organized by categories such as inclusive teaching, graduate students, learning science, and coping and well-being. As any football player will tell you, knowing your playbook well is important to being a champ, but you also need to get the fundamentals down. The five chapters together do just that. Each chapter provides both a perfect starting place for someone who has never taught before, but also some new ideas for the avid reader of pedagogical prose.

Why all the sports imagery? As die-hard Green Bay Packers and New Orleans Saints fans (two U.S. National Football League teams), we decided to use sports as a fun analogy. This leads to our first tip

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for teaching (a bonus in the preface): Find ways to make what you do enjoyable, and you will want to do it longer!

BEFORE WE DIVE IN

We both have a number of people to thank.

From Regan: It has been an absolute joy to work with Elizabeth, who is the perfect foil to my sometimes too data-driven approach to pedagogy. I can remember the day she sat next to me on the bus in Daytona for the AP® (advanced placement) Psychology reading and convinced me to start a Psi Chi chapter at my university. We have had many adventures since. I want to give a special shout-out to the Society for Teaching of Psychology (American Psychological Association [APA], Division 2) friends and colleagues who have supported me over the years and to Neil Lutsky at Carleton College who invited me into that world. I have particularly benefited from my center for teaching and learning friends, especially the Village People (Elizabeth again, Leslie Alvaraz, Chris Hakala, Jordan Troisi, and Lindsay Masland) and Aeron Haynie. I am indebted to Alix Gitelman, Kathy Becker-Blease, and Oregon State University for allowing me to steer the center for teaching and learning there. I learned a lot from working with center staff members Brooke O'Brien, Cub Kahn, Funmi Amobi, and Cheridy Aduviri—you will see much of their solid work reflected in Chapters 2 and 3. I am thankful they were all mostly open to humoring the many wild ideas I had (D.A.M.I.T!). I still appreciate my wonderful colleagues at the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay, especially Georjeanna Wilson-Doenges, Kris Vespia, Ryan Martin, Kate Burns, and David Voelker, for being my sounding boards while I was there. I have had long discussions about teaching (and a lot of BBQ) with Eric Landrum and Steven Chew, and around the country with Drew Christopher and Aaron Richmond. In particular, my thoughts and passion for teaching introduction to psychology

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