

Small Group Analysis

What is Small Group Analysis (SGA)?

The Small Group Analysis (SGA) is a method of gathering anonymous feedback from students about what is helping them learn in your course and what might help them to learn more effectively. This service is provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning and is a helpful way to assess students' learning and responses to your teaching mid-semester.

Why Do an SGA?

The feedback students provide about your teaching on their end-of-semester course evaluations can be valuable in helping you improve and refine your teaching. Soliciting mid-semester student feedback has the additional benefit of allowing you to hear your students' concerns while there is still time in the semester to make appropriate changes. An SGA takes this one step further by involving a CTL consultant to help clarify and decipher the sometimes mysterious comments students make on written course evaluations.

How Do SGAs Work?

The SGA has two components: data gathering and consultation.

To gather data from your students, a CTL consultant will visit your class for about twenty minutes, usually at the end of the session. You leave the room, and the anonymous assessment begins, as follows:

- Students are asked to get in small groups. Each group works together to complete a brief questionnaire that asks them to reflect on the following questions: "What aspects of this course and/or the instruction would you identify as most helpful to your learning? How are these aspects helping you to learn in this course?" and "What modifications to this course do you believe would help you to learn more effectively? Why do you believe these changes would improve your learning?"
- The CTL consultant then leads the whole class in a discussion of their responses, asking clarifying questions, identifying areas of consensus and disagreement among the students, and eliciting further feedback as students consider each other's input.

After the SGA, the CTL consultant will compile the feedback into a typed report, assuring student anonymity.

The consultation phase of the SGA occurs at a meeting, where the CTL consultant shares the data gathered with you. Together you will interpret student comments, identify successes and areas for improvement, and plan a course of action to make use of the student feedback as you see fit.

The purpose of this formative service is to assist you in meeting students' needs for increased learning. The SGA results will remain completely confidential—only you and the CTL consultant will see them.

How Do I Schedule an SGA?

In order to give you enough time in the semester to make changes, SGA's are recommended anytime between now and March 24th.

To schedule an SGA, email CTL Program Coordinator, Todd Schroeder at tschroede001@csbsju.edu.