Episode 140: James Lang

# KL: Katie Linder

# JL: James Lang

# KL: You’re listening to “Research in Action”: episode one hundred and forty.

# [intro music]

# Segment 1:

# KL: Welcome to “Research in Action,” a weekly podcast about topics and issues related to research in higher education featuring experts across a range of disciplines. I’m your host, Dr. Katie Linder, research director at Oregon State University Ecampus, a national leader in online education. Along with every episode, we post show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode, a full transcript, and an instructor guide for incorporating the episode into your courses. Visit our website at ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast to find all of these resources.

On this episode, I’m joined by Dr. James M. Lang, a Professor of English and the Director of the D’Amour Center for Teaching Excellence at Assumption College in Worcester, MA.  He is the author of five books, the most recent of which are Small Teaching: Everyday Lessons from the Science of Learning (Jossey-Bass, 2016), Cheating Lessons: Learning from Academic Dishonesty (Harvard University Press, 2013), and On Course: A Week-by-Week Guide to Your First Semester of College Teaching (Harvard UP, 2008).  Lang writes a monthly column on teaching and learning for The Chronicle of Higher Education; his work has been appearing in the Chronicle since 1999.  His book reviews and public scholarship on higher education have appeared in a wide variety of newspapers and magazines, including the Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune, and Time.  He edits a new series of books on teaching and learning in higher education for West Virginia University Press.  He has conducted workshops on teaching for faculty at more than a hundred colleges or universities in the US and abroad, and consulted for the United Nations on the development of teaching materials for college faculty.  In September of 2016 he received a Fulbright Specialist grant to work with three universities in Colombia on the creation of a MOOC on teaching and learning in STEM education.  He has a BA in English and Philosophy from the University of Notre Dame, an MA in English from St. Louis University, and a Ph.D. in English from Northwestern University.

Thanks so much for joining me on the show today, Jim.

**JL:** You bet.

**KL:** So I am pretty excited to talk with you about this editing a book series job that you have. Um I would love to hear a little bit more about the book series and how you came to be in that role of a book series editor.

**JL:** Yeah. It’s kind of interesting actually. So a few years ago, Derek Krissoff, who was at the University of Nebraska at that time, just reached out to me and asked me sort of in an “advicey” type way whether or not I thought there was room for a series of books on teaching and learning in higher education from a university press like Nebraska. And he didn’t say anything about this – you know, it wasn’t sort of an invitation for me to do anything, but I did see kind of an opportunity there, uh so I said, “Yes. I think there definitely is room for such a series.” Especially one that had books that had a specific focus on being very well written, because as much as I love research being written on higher education, I don’t think the writing is always as accessible to the people outside of the field as it could or should be. So I said “Yes. I think there is room for such a series, and if you’re starting one I would be interested in being a part of that, or are you looking for someone to kind of organize and direct such a series?” And so, you know, I’m still not sure – I should ask him at some point – whether his intention was to sort of – whether that was his introductory to ask me to do it or whether I kind of thrust that upon him, but eventually we agreed to do the series together. But then before even we had – a first book came out, Derek moved to West Virginia University Press to become the director there. And so I had the choice at that time to either stay with Nebraska or have the series ship to someone else at that press or to follow Derek to West Virginia University – University of West Virginia Press. And he had been the one with the idea and he was very attentive to the series, to all of the kind of things that we had to discuss, to reaching out to potential authors – he seemed such an energetic and sort of visionary person that I decided to follow him. So the series moved over to West Virginia University Press, and our first book came out in 2016, we now have five titles in the series and there are like anywhere between five to ten more that are in the pipeline in some form or another, but there will be at least two more coming within the next six months or so, and it’s easily going to stretch to a dozen or more books within the next year or two.

**KL:** That is very exciting. So for people who don’t really know what a book series editor does, can you talk a little bit about what’s involved in that role?

**JL:** Yep.In my particular case, the first thing I do is kind of both receive proposals. So people tend to write to me first, and I’m not sure if this is the way that it always works, but because I know a lot of people in the teaching and learning in higher education community, people will come to me and say you know, “I have an idea for a book” or you know, “I have a proposal that I’ve been putting together, would you be willing to take a look?” So I’m sort of the first stop in terms of people trying to get a book published in the series, and at that point I, you know, make a quick initial judgement to share with Derek, we talk about it, and decide whether we kind of want to go further with the idea. If so, we generally ask people for like a one to two page overview, so again then he and I look at that together, and we make a decision about whether or not we want to go forward from there. At which point if we do, we ask people for a proposal, and the proposal’s like a sample chapter, an outline, an overview and an author biography – it’s a little bit more of an extensive thing. And from there, we make the decision about whether or not we want the book to go in the series. Now the other thing that I do – so that’s what happens if people come to us, but I also go out to people. Um I f I know someone has written like a great article about something that’s intriguing and I see a gap there in the literature, or someone that has, you know – to be honest, someone that has a really strong following in higher education, Uh I will reach out to that person and say, “Look, I edit this series, we’re looking for books. I saw you wrote a great article, I see you got, you know, a strong following on Twitter, or you’re very visible in this space – um you know, do you have a book in you? Would you be willing to try to write something for our series?” This is how I connected with Kevin Gannon, who’s writing a book based on a manifesto he wrote on his blog called Radical Hope, and Kevin’s a very visible person in higher – in this community and I thought the manifesto was great, and I just thought, you know, we could use a book like this. A book that’ just sort of a positive, affirming message about why we do what we do, and how we can have a great impact on our students in higher education more generally. And so that was the case where I reached out to him. And so it really – it kind of happens both ways. It even happens at places like conferences where I might, you know, we go to the main conference for people who work in teaching and learning in higher education – The POD Conference. And a couple of times when Derek and I have been here together we’ve had authors come up to us, we set up meetings in advance with our authors, so all that stuff – so that’s all of the kind of acquisitions part of it. And then I’ve gathered that I’m a little bit more active in this second phase than other series editors are, um just from conversations with Derek, but I also like to read the book completely and give feedback on it as well. Um so generally I wait to do that until after the two reviews have come in for the outside reviewers. Uh I’ll read those reviews, and then I read the manuscript, and I give my feedback as well on kind of, “Here’s what I really think you really need to take care of.” Um so it’s a lot of work, but I do enjoy it! I have to say I – maybe his is just the sort of age, sort of career stage that I’m at, but I take a lot more satisfaction than I would have ten years ago in helping other writers get published, um and that’s become a really important part of my career and kind of identity at this point.

**KL:** Well thank you so much for sharing kind of the different stages of this. It sounds like it’s pretty heavy on the acquisition side, but you are definitely helping on the developmental side too of nurturing the books after they are in. Now that you have five books out of this series and you’re kind of working on that pipeline, to what degree are you helping to promote the books after they come out?

**JL:** Yeah. Well one of the things that, I mean, I’ve learned from being an author, is that the main promotor of any book is the author. Um so and, you know, I’ve – I’ve had countless conversations with authors where they tell me, you know, or they complain about the fact that the press isn’t doing enough to promote their books. And what I’ve kind of learned from these conversations, which have been with authors from dozens of different presses, is that no press does as much as any author would like them to do for their book, unless you’re, John Grisham or something, uh or Stephen King. Pretty much everything falls on the author. So what I’ve been trying to do is work with the authors to help them figure out the best ways that they can promote their work, so it’s kind of more like that mentoring, then it is me going out and sort of promoting the book on my own. I kind of really feel like this is something that authors have to take ownership of. Um and so you know, we’ll – we have, you know – one of the things that we did for example is we put together a page of the press’s website about our authors and their availability for speaking, because getting speaking engagements, going to places where faculty are doing book clubs about our books – that’s a really big part of promoting these books. So you know, I feel like our role here is really more about helping authors understand the best ways to promote their books as opposed to me just promoting the books for them.

**KL:** So I’m curious Jim, if there have been any maybe unanticipated challenges that you’ve faced as being a book series editor, given that is kind of a newer role for you. Was there anything that’s come up that has been kind of surprising or challenging or you?

**JL:** Yeah the reviewers. Like dealing with reviewers is a huge challenge, I mean, it’s a challenge at every step of the process. It’s a challenge to get people to review books first of all, because you know, this is one of the sort of thankless jobs of higher education is being willing to serve as a reviewer for somebody’s manuscript, and you know, you might get a small stipend for that, but it’s not really –breaking it down, you’re probably getting minimum wage to do that kind of work. And so it is a real challenge finding people who are willing to review books, review manuscripts. So that’s, you know – we’re struggling with this in several cases right now. So I don’t have a good solution for this, I still don’t have a real good understanding of how to, you know, make sure that we can always get reviewers, that’s the first thing. Secondly is getting them back in a timely manner. That’s a challenge. So we often have – we even had a case of a reviewer who just never returned the review. And you know, there’s nothing you can do about it – um you know, the people are doing this as a kind of service to the profession and if they ultimately drop out, there’s no stick to hold over their heads for that. And then the third thing is dealing with the, you know, dealing with reviews, and kind of helping authors understand how best to take the review to - to improve their work based on it. You know I always try to say to people, “Look. When I get my reviews back –“I’ve written, you know – I’ve written six books now. When I get my reviews back, my first response is always, “Those idiots don’ know what they’re talking about, and everything they have to say about my perfect book is completely, you know, ridiculous.” And then after a few days I start to look at it and I think, “Okay. Wait. I see these points here.” And then I start to make changes, and in the end I realize that I was helped by the review process. So – I tend to be like, you know, initially angry, where some authors tend to – are depressed, they’re just like, “Aw I can’t believe all of the work I have to do. I thought this book was done and I had it ready to go.” So kind of the helping people manage both the emotional and the practical side of getting their reviews back, um how are they going to make changes, how much of the review did they really have to make changes as a result of, how to respond to the press and – you know. That’s all very complicated, so that has been something I just didn’t know anything about, and has been a challenge kind of all the way through.

**KL:** And what has been your favorite thing about being a book series editor so far?

**JL:**  I love helping authors get their first book out! I mean that’s fabulous for me. Even – that’s the best part, is when a new author who might never had thought to write a book or who sort of has these tentative hopes that maybe one day they’ll write a book, and I’ve made a significant difference in the person’s career, by helping them get their book out, and that’s – there’s no better feeling than that. You know, the first author, Sarah Cavanagh, of our book series, um she – her book uh was the first book for us, it was the first book for her, it did really well – it was one of the press’s top selling books the year it came out. And now Sarah is just about to turn in her manuscript for her new book, which is coming out from like a major trade publisher, and I think it’s going to launch her into a new sort of stratosphere for being a successful author and writer. And so I would – you know, I’m just glad to have been able to play a role in helping her launch that trajectory, and I hope that kind of thing happens for all of our authors.

**KL:** Well a couple of the authors that you’ve mentioned, Kevin Gannon and Sarah have come on the show, so we will definitely link to their episodes in the show notes. Long time listeners will definitely recognize those names, but for folks who haven’t listened to those episodes yet, feel free to check those out. We’re going to take a brief break. When we come back, we’re going to hear a little more from Jim about how he’s working on his own books, back in a minute.

# Segment 2:

**KL:** Jim, I know that you are currently working on your next book, and I know this because I follow you on Twitter and you like to post about writing progress, which is always very motivational. I’m wondering if you could tell us just a little bit about this next book that you’re working on now.

**JL:** Yep, the current book I’m writing is called *Teaching Distracted Minds*, and it kind of looks at this question that has been, you know, discussed in all different types of ways in the popular press, and also amongst many faculty, which is the extent to which all of our sort of devices and our new technologies, and our obsession with our phones and all of that stuff is having an impact on the way students learn, and whether we should be changing [*indiscernible*] teach, and changing the educational system as a whole as a result of the rise of and sort of you know – omnipresence of our digital devices. So um I am kind of taking a moderate position on this, but I do want to say there are differences in terms of what a classroom should look like now as opposed to what it looked like 20 or 30 years ago. But at the same time, I do want to make the case that this idea of our distractible minds is one that goes back to as long as we have been writing about our minds. It goes back to ancient texts, biblical texts, the Bible. So you can see people complain about the distractibility of their minds or two thousand years, so that part of it really isn’t new, but the intensity – um the intensity of the distractions that are available to us does make a difference. And so that – what the difference should look like is kind of what I want to tackle. But ultimately for me, this book is kind of similar to the book that I did about cheating, and I like to think of this as sort of problem based approaches to improving education. So if we look at where the problems are, like what are the issues that faculty are really struggling with? Um I think those are entry points for thinking about how to make education more effective. So if we look at why students cheat for example, we can get some good information about how the kind of course design and classroom practices that we use are really – don’t fit very well actually with what we know about human learning, and the same I think is true for distraction. If we look at the reasons how and why students get distracted. You can see from that, when we reflect back on what we’re doing, some of what we’re doing doesn’t really again fit too well with what we know about learning, and especially doesn’t fit very well with what we know about learning in the 21st century. Both with the newest research that’s available to us, but also in terms of the kinds of technologies that we have available to us for teaching and learning. So I kind of want to look at that both as how we need to sort of help manage the classroom, manage our learning uh in the face of all of these distractions that are available to us, but also how can a better understanding of attention and distraction help us leverage the technologies that we have to make the most effective use of them? And the goal for this book, as with my last book, Small Teaching, is to kind of provide faculty with both background research so they understand the issues, but then also pretty practical take a ways that they can use in designing their classes, engaging in classroom practice, or engaging with students.

**KL:** So Jim, I’m always really interested in how authors, especially authors who’ve written multiple books choose their next books, because there are probably many things that you could have chosen to write about, um and many things that you’re exposed to in your role directing a center for teaching excellence. Um how did you choose this particular book? You mentioned kind of this idea of problem solving, but were there other kind of competing ideas for you that you had to narrow down?

**JL:** Yeah. There’s about – I have about ten books I start for every one that I write, so this was definitely one that kind of got winnowed out from many other possibilities. Um I have, you know, more half or partially finished books on my laptop than I could care to count. So what tends to happen for me is I throw a lot of ideas kind of on one – you know, into folders and files on my computer, and I’ll start books, and you know, it just I sort of the process of realizing which is the one that sort of keeps being – um I keep being uncertain about, which is the one that like continues to vex me or that I could continue to see people being um - uh problems that people can’t figure – can’t quite figure out how to solve. And that includes me as well, because I’ve been, you know, like everyone else trying to think about the best way to deal with when students are – have their devices out and class, and are distracted, or you know, sneaking looks at their phone, or taking a look at new technologies that I am able to bring into the classroom, and seeing they’re both positive and negative effects, and this has just been sort of an ongoing question for me in my own teachings. So what I use for, for me, is to help figure out what I think and to ty to figure out, you know, it’s a way of solving this problem for myself, but as I do that, I try to identify things that would be useful for other people as well. So, you know, I have a pretty good idea of what I want to say in the book, but I’m still going to discover a lot of it as I’m writing. Um so the book is not due for another year or so, and over the course of that year, I know I’m going to discover lots of, you know, new and interesting things that I still don’t know about yet, and that to me is what’s great about writing books – is you use them to kind of figure out what you think to solve problems that have arisen in your own experience or that you see lots of other people wrestling with. And there really isn’t any other problem in higher education that I see more people wrestling with right now than this one. Um how are we – you know, how should we be changing what we do in the face of everything that is available to us and our students today? And I see no one else trusting with their problem that’s related to classroom pedagogy. There are other bigger issues in higher education, but in terms of classroom pedagogy, this is what I see people most struggling with.

**KL:** So you had mentioned you have another year or so to work on this book, um but we know that year is going to go by probably too fast in terms of the time that you have to devote. I’m curious if you have strategies for fitting in book writing into a busy schedule. I always appreciate when I see your Tweet saying, “I squeezed in an hour here. I squeezed in an hour there!” What is your strategy for kind of plugging along with this over the next year to make sure you’re going to hit your deadline?

**JL:** Yeah there’s kind of two things that have been helpful to me. Um the first one is the one you just named, the squeeze in an hour strategy. I learned long ago that I’m just not going to have – unless I’m on sabbatical, and two of my books have been written while I was on sabbatical so that was a different story, but three of them, you know, were not, and this one will not be written while I’m on sabbatical. So the strategy just is to look for those kind of small windows. And because I have five kids – they’re older now, the youngest ones are 14, who are twins – um I never had long uninterrupted stretches of time. Um so even when I was on my first sabbatical, the twins were at home with me, so you know, I would have to maybe get a few hours of babysitting a few days a week to write, but that was a luxury. And I just don’t have that luxury because of school, and you know, all of the other kinds of stuff we have to do. Even though they don’t need constant babysitting, they still seem to be needing to be driven around all of the time. So I just have to kind of force myself to squeeze it in, and what I generally find is like I’ll think about an issue – I’ll think, “Okay. This is the next thing I want to write about” and then a day or two will go by and it’s just kind of percolating in my mind, so when I finally do sit down, um it comes out pretty quickly. And so I can bang out a thousand words in an hour, if I’ve been thinking about something over the course of a day or two. So I just kind of look for those moments to squeeze in as often as possible. That’s the first thing, but the second thing is – so by the way, one of the things – Rebecca Schuman, who writes for the Chronicle and has written a lot of great things, had this piece recently about, you know, not getting up at 4:00 AM to do your writing for two hours every day. That was unrealistic and didn’t work for her, and I’m the same way. I can’t do that kind of thing – like I’m just not very good at creating a set schedule and um sticking to it in terms of my writing. Um I don’t wait for inspiration, but I have to look for the rare times when it opens up. The second thing though is writers group. Writer’s group has been incredibly helpful to me, because it’s just like a deadline thing. You know, every two, or three, or four weeks you have to get your stuff ready for writer’s group, and then once you have writers group you – you know, get your feedback processed, and then you move on to the next thing. So Sarah Cavanagh and I with one other person were in a writers group, in which she was writing *The Spark of Learning* and I was writing *Small Teaching*, and I’m convinced that those books are so much better from having been in that writers group, and so we have been doing writers groups with her current book. We’re going to be doing it starting with Distracted Minds – with my book in a few weeks. Just setting that regular deadline, getting feedback from people who are invested in your project and who can kind of have a long term view of it as it develops, that has been incredibly helpful to me, but it’s been something that’s new just for me since Small Teaching.

**KL:** So I’m sure we have listeners whose ears are kind of perking up with this writers group that you’re describing. Can you talk a little bit about the logistics of that? Like how frequently are you meeting, how many pages are you sharing, are you giving questions for specific feedback that you’re looking for? Can you give us a little sense of the shaping of that?

**JL:** Yep. There’s three of us in the writers group. Sarah and I are mostly writing about, you know, our education work, and then we have a third person in the group who’s another colleague of mine on campus who mostly writes memoir based stuff. Um we don’t have like a completely rigid schedule, it tends – we tend to meet every two to four weeks. We look at our calendars at each writes group, and then kind of pick the next date, and then we all agree to kind of share – and then we’ll say like, “This is when we need to have this stuff by” and sometimes that’s even 24 hours before the group. Um but it’s – you know. We try to give ourselves a little bit more time than that, so we’ll set a date, we’ll set a time when everyone’s pages need to be sent around, and we generally limit ourselves to I would say about five thousand words. If someone is, you know, crushing toward a deadline, like Sarah was at the end of this last book, it will sometimes be more than that. But we limit ourselves to what would be about a book chapter for me, which is about five thousand words. And you can – almost always we will but in our cover email, like “Here’s what this is–“- “from this section of the book, here are the things that I am concerned about, here’s the stuff that I would especially like feedback on…” And then, you know, as the reader you kind of, you know, take that email and then you just kind of read it through carefully, and we all tend to make comments on hard drafts, and then we get together at a coffee shop and we just go through each one by one. And we kind of just go through it page by page giving sort of first [*indiscernible*] comment, and then going through each of our edits page by page while the writer sits there, and just sort of takes notes, and asks questions. Um it’s really – it’s an amazing thing. It’s been an amazing productivity tool, but also an amazing tool to make our books so much better than they would have otherwise been.

**KL:** Very cool. Um we’re going to take another brief break, when we come back we’ll hear a little bit more from Jim. Back in a moment.

# Segment 3:

**KL:** Jim, you’ve devoted a lot of your writing and research career to working on subjects related to teaching. I know you have an administrative role working in a center for teaching excellence, I’m wondering if you’re also still in the classroom, and how your classroom engagement interacts with some of the work in your writing.

**JL:** Yep. I still do teach and I don’t think I would ever be able to stop teaching. I have a –. Since I direct our teaching center here, I teach less than I would – I used to, but I still teach one or two classes per semester, and I teach in the subject that I got my Ph.D. in, which is post-war British literature, so I’m teaching a seminar right now on 21st century British literature and culture. And I love it! I, you know – I still find the topic of my discipline fascinating. I don’t do kind of research and publishing in that subject anymore, but I still keep up with it very much as a reader, and love kind of guiding my students through the questions that I found fascinating when I first encountered them as a graduate student, and that I still find fascinating today. So um yeah. So that is really important to me actually, because I wouldn’t have known for example the extent to which problems like cheating or distraction, um how prominent they were if they weren’t occurring in my own classroom. Um one of the things that I’ve noticed that some folks who, you know, started off with writing about teaching, and then kind of shifted into these administrative roles, and as they shift out of the classroom, um that sometimes the recommendations that they make about how to improve education feel to me like they’re a little – they’re divorced from the realities that we encounter in the classroom on an everyday basis. Um so you know, just being reminded of what kind of – what it’s like to walk into a classroom, face 20 students, try to convince them that what you’re doing is important, help them become better writers, better thinkers. The kind of everyday challenges of that, to me are really important and to keep in view as I’m writing about teaching. They also give me good ideas for what to, you know, think and write about teaching. And I think the other thing that’s important, for me, is in term of writing about teaching, is that - you know, they show me that – even like the best, most well researched practices don’t always work. And so like you have to be continuously attentive to the different context that you’re in. so, you know, a really well researched learning principle, one that we know works in the laboratory and has been demonstrated in experiments, still because of your particular class, and your geographical location at that time of the day with these particular students; it might not work. Um and so it’s kind of humbling and a good reminder to me that you always have to pay attention to con… [*audio cut out*] You have to be aware to the extent to which faculty have to still interpret, you know, recommendations and research on teaching. You can’t just apply things, because you read an article about how convincing it was, and that’s both the challenge and the joy of teaching. It’s a challenge because it means you’re always going to have to be thinking and paying attention to context, but the joy of it is it makes teaching a creative process. You have to take what you learned and heard from other people, and you have to think creatively about how to apply that to your particular situation, and to me the creative process is a really joyful one, it’s a really satisfying one, so I really like that aspect of it.

**KL:** So one of the things that I think makes your books kind of as a body of work a little bit distinct, is there is such a focus on the practical and helping readers to really think about how to apply what it is you’re talking about in their own classrooms – whether that be your On Course: A Week-by-Week Guide to Your First Semester or your book Small Teaching. I’m wondering, Jim, how do you kind of juggle or think about the relationship between theories and practice when you’re working on these books, and to what degree are you kind of offering that research base, but also really trying to think about the application side of what this is going to look like in the actual classroom?

**JL:** Yeah. I’m definitely obsessed with like the practical part of it. I’m always thinking – anything I read about teaching, I’m thinking about, “Okay. What is it going to look like for me to step into the room, and try to put this in practice, and would I be willing to do that?” I’m very reluctant to recommend things that I haven’t tried myself, which is not to say – it typically doesn’t work in a way where I come up with something, and then you know, find research to support it. I’m not that – I’m not that creative when it comes to teaching. I generally will read about something, say “You know, that seems intriguing. I wonder if that would work” and then I try it out, and I see if it’s something that works. Or, I do have the opportunity to observe a lot of faculty on my campus as a result of my role, and in fact this year I’m on the evaluation committee, so I’m going to be observing lots of classes in the spring. So that – I love to see how things play out in a practical way. And also just the very – so yeah. So I always kind of, I try to find good ideas in the theory and the research, but then I try to road test them myself, or to see how other people have been using them, and try to get very practical, specific examples. And I think that faculty – my experience is that faculty do like to see this. You know, I give a lot of workshops on teaching and learning in higher education on other campuses, and you can just see the room kind of perks up when people – when you start. You know, the theories are interesting, people like to hear about the studies, but when you start to mention the very practical ways that they can do it or you give them a chance to talk to each other, the room really, really perks up as faculty try to think about what they’re going to do in class on Monday. Um so that to me has been – that been a very consistent part of my writing about education. I find this theory fascinating, I love to read studies about learning, but I also really want to think about what’s going to happen in my classroom. And the other side, coming at that from another side is I’m always just like sort of, you know, I want to have a great class. I always want to have a great class, so I’m always looking for things that are going to help me have a great class. And a great class for me is one where the students are like engaged, they’re talking, they’re like interested, or all are trying to solve some interesting problem, or answer some interesting question, or engage in some fascinating task. Everybody’s energized, talking, there’s positive energy in the room, people are laughing and smiling, and all of that kind of stuff. So anything, I’m always looking for things that are going to help me create that kind of classroom, and I can ensure you it doesn’t always happen in my classroom. So I’m always on the lookout for things that are going to help me achieve that.

**KL:** Well, Jim, this has been so interesting to learn a little bit more about your role editing a book series and also your approach to writing books. I want to thank you so much for taking the time to come on the show and share your experiences.

**JL:** You bet. Thanks for the invitation!

**KL:** Thanks also to our listeners for joining us for this week’s episode of “Research in Action.” I’m Katie Linder, and we’ll be back next week with a new episode.

# Show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode, a full transcript, and an instructor guide for incorporating the episode into your courses, can be found at the show’s website at [ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast](http://www.ecampus.oregonstate.edu/podcast).

# There are several ways to connect with the “Research in Action” podcast. Visit the website to post a comment about a specific episode, suggest a future guest, or ask a question that could be featured in a future episode. Email us at riapodcast@oregonstate.edu. You can also offer feedback about “Research in Action,” episodes or share research-related resources, by contacting the Research in Action podcast via Twitter @RIA\_podcast. Finally, you can call the Research in Action voicemail line at 541-737-1111 to ask a question or leave a comment. If you listen to the podcast via iTunes, please consider leaving us a review.

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