OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators

OBTC 2015 at University of La Verne
June 17th – 20th, 2015

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

* Remove all identifying properties from this document *
* All files must be saved in PDF format *
Please include ALL supplementary text at the end of this document
Only one document should be submitted

1) Title of Proposal:

What is this thing called politics?: Using film and television to teach political game theory

2) Abstract:

Please include a brief session description (not to exceed 100 words).If your proposal is accepted, this description will be printed in the conference program.

While some management concepts can be vague, abstract, and hard to grasp by students with limited real-world experience, film and television are platforms that can illustrate these concepts unlike anything else while also encouraging a deeper learning and understanding of the topic. In this session, attendees will participate in a fun learning technique that uses film and television media to introduce students to political games described by Mintzberg (1983, 1985).

Keywords:

Use three or four keywords to describe your session.

Organizational Theory
Film and Television
An approach to teaching

3) Format
  X Activity or exercise
  __ Discussion roundtable (60 minute only)
  __ General discussion session

4) Time Requested:
  __ 30 Minutes
  X 60 Minutes (*Roundtables must select 60 minutes*)
  __ 90 Minutes

5) Planning Details:
Does your session have any special requirements for space or materials?

Projector & Screen

6) Learning Objectives or Goals for the Session:
What are 2-4 specific learning outcomes that participants will get from your session?

1. Attendees will compile a list of scenes from films and/or television shows that illustrate organizational political games as described by Mintzberg (1983, 1985).
2. Attendees will receive a list of student identified film and television shows that illustrate organizational political games as described by Mintzberg (1983, 1985).
3. Attendees will receive tips and information on how to conduct this learning activity.

7) Management or Teaching Topics:

Describe what management and/or teaching topics are relevant to your session, and why Please include theoretical, disciplinary, or theoretical foundations that will help reviewers understand how your ideas fit within the broader field of management.

Management concepts, especially those that are very theoretical, can be hard to teach for two reasons. One, students who have no prior work experience would have difficulty understanding the concepts (Ambrosini, Billsberry, & Collier, 2008). Two, teaching of some management concepts and theories using traditional instructional methods can be perceived as boring to the current generation of students and not motivating enough to keep their attention (Carneiro, 2004; Mallinger & Rossy, 2003).

Film and television media are platforms that have several benefits and advantages over other media to address the above problems in the classroom. One, it is a unique medium that can present examples better than verbal descriptions (Erickson, Peters, & Strommer, 2006, p. 95). Two, it can be particularly useful in management education instruction to illustrate concepts to those students who are inexperienced (Champoux, 1999). Essentially, the outcome is that it creates an experience by illustrating a concept 'in action' (Stadler, 1990), and this would allow students to "think about complex business issues from following and understanding that movie" (Roth, 2001, p. 24). Three, utilizing films in class can provide a common language and shared experience between the instructor and students to facilitate class engagement and discussions (Ambrosini, Billsberry, & Collier, 2008; Carpenter, Stevenson, & Carson, 2008). Four, since the current generation of students prefer this type of media since they have grown up with it, enjoy it, and are most familiar with it (Tyler, Anderson, & Tyler, 2009), this platform can increase the desire and motivation of students in the classroom.

When using film and television media to illustrate management concepts, film and television clips can be selected by either the instructor or the students. While instructor selected clips is the most common method, it is suggested that students develop a greater and deeper understanding of the management concept if they are permitted to search and find movie clips to illustrate a management concept (Tyler, Anderson, & Tyler, 2007). By utilizing film and television scenes that students are familiar with, more learning and understanding can occur since the instructor is building upon the student's existing knowledge and perceptions rather than teaching concepts in isolation (Bain, 2004; National Research Council, 2000).

A management topic of great concern is organizational politics. Fortune (2012) argues that higher education should adequately prepare and educate students on political skill within organizations *before* they graduate. Given the difficulty of teaching this topic, and the fact that most students may not have direct experience in this area, this proposal adopts the position of using student-identified film and television clips to help students establish declarative knowledge concerning organizational politics.

8) Session Description and Plan:

What will you actually do in this session? What activities will you facilitate, how long will they take, and how will participants be involved? Reviewers will be evaluating how well the time request matches the activities you'd like to do, and the extent you can reasonably accomplish the session's goals. Reviewers will also be looking for how you are engaging the participants in the session. Include a timeline for your session.

1. **5 minutes:** **Introduction: Exercise -** ***What game is being played?***
   a. Field diagrams of various sports will be shown on the screen, and attendees will be asked to guess which game is being played. The purpose is to use this as a backdrop to illustrate that based on attendees prior experience with the sport, they were quickly able to identify the game being played and the game's objective just by looking at the illustration of the field diagram. This will be used as an analogy to explain the importance of determining ways to illustrate organizational politics so that students with no prior experience in this area can establish declarative knowledge on the subject.

2. **5 minutes:** **Brief overview/summary of Political Games (Mintzberg, 1983, 1985)**

3. **20 minutes:** **Exercise –** ***Illustrating Political Games using Film and Television***
   a. 10 minutes: Give attendees the definition of 1-3 different political games. Each individual attendee will be tasked with identifying at least one specific film/tv scene that illustrates the political game (individual work)
   b. 5 minutes: Attendees will be put in groups to share their examples with their peers (group work).
   c. 5 minutes: Each group shares their results to all session attendees.

4. **15 minutes:** **Illustrating the "Alliance Building" political game - Video Clip Examples and Discussion**
   a. 5 minutes: Play Instructor Selected Clip (from the movie "The Dark Knight")
   b. 3 minutes: Play Student Selected Clip (from the movie "The Proposal")
   c. *7 minutes: Discussion question: How was the Alliance-Building game illustrated in both clips?*

5. **15 minutes:** **Closing Discussion and Q/A**
   a. 5 minutes: Provide handout of the Student selected Film/TV clips for all political games. *Discussion question: Are there any similarities/differences between the student-identified list and the list*

compiled by us during this session?
   b. <u>5 minutes</u>: Tips and information on conducting this activity
   c. <u>5 minutes</u>: Q&A Session

9) For Activities and Exercises:
Attach any materials needed to run the activity and debriefing questions. Evidence for effectiveness may also be included.

See Attachment 1: Individual Worksheet

10) Implications for Teaching or for Teachers:
What is the contribution of your session?

The primary implication for teaching or for teachers is to bring to light the possibility of using film and television media to improve management education. There is a generation gap between students and teachers which can be a deterrent to student engagement and learning. Film and television media is a platform that can bridge the generation gap while also providing a common platform for shared understanding and knowledge construction on management concepts.

11) Application to Conference theme:
How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of Learning in Community?

This session fits with three areas or themes in the call for proposals. First, this session is themed around active learning in which students are tasked with finding meaningful connections to the course material they are studying. Second, this session is also themed around teachers and instructors finding meaning and connecting their knowledge and experiences with course material. Third, the use of film is assisting with the goal or theme of deepening student learning.

12) Unique Contribution to OBTC:
Have you presented the work in this proposal before? If so, how will it be different? Is this proposal under current review somewhere else? If so, please explain. How will your proposal be different for the OBTC conference?

This would be the first time this work has been presented, and it is not under review

anywhere else.

13) References and/or Additional Materials:

REFERENCES

Ambrosini, V, Billsberry, J., and Collier, N. (2008). Teaching soft issues in strategic management with films: Arguments and suggestions. *International Journal of Management Education, 8, 1,* 63-72.

Bain, K. (2004). *What the best college teachers do.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Carneiro, A. (2004). Teaching management and management educators: Some considerations. *Management Decision, 42, 3/4,* 430-438.

Carpenter, J., Stevenson, B., and Carson, E. (2008). Creating a shared experience: Using movies in nursing education. *Nurse Educator, 33, 3,* 103-104.

Champoux, J. E. (1999). Film as a teaching resource. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 8, 2,* 206-217.

Erickson, B. L, Peters, C. B., and Strommer, D. W. (2006). *Teaching first-year college students.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Fortune, T. (2012). Should higher education curriculum develop political acumen among students? *Higher Education Research & Development, 31, 4,* 611-613.

Mallinger, M. and Rossy, G. (2003). Film as a lens for teaching culture: Balancing concepts, ambiguity, and paradox. *Journal of Management Education, 27, 5,* 608-624.

Mintzberg, H. (1983). *Power in and around organizations.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall

Mintzberg, H. (1985). The organization as political arena. *Journal of Management Studies, 22, 2,* 133-154.

National Research Council (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school.* Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Roth, L. (2001). Introducing students to "The Big Picture". *Journal of Management Education, 25, 1,* 21-31.

Stadler, H. A. (1990). Film as experience: Phenomenological concepts in cinema and television studies. *Quarterly Review of Film and Video, 12, 3,* 37-50.

Tyler, C. L., Anderson, M. H., and Tyler, J. M. (2009). Giving students new eyes: The benefits of having students find media clips to illustrate management concepts. *Journal of Management Education, 33, 4,* 444-461.

OBTC 2015
INDIVIDUAL WORKSHEET

Read the three Political Games descriptions below. For each Political Game, write down at least 1 movie or TV show where the Political Game is illustrated. Be as specific as possible about the scene from the movie/TV show.

Sponsorship game: "…played to build power base, in this case by using superiors; individual attaches self to someone with more status, professing loyalty in return for power…." (Mintzberg, 1985, p. 137).

Alliance-building game: "played among peers—often line managers, sometimes experts—who negotiate implicit contracts of support for each other in order to advance selves in the organization…" (Mintzberg, 1985, p. 137)**.**

Expertise game: "non-sanctioned use of expertise to build power base, either by flaunting it or by feigning it; true experts play be exploiting technical skills and knowledge, emphasizing its uniqueness, criticality, and irreplaceability…also by seeking to keep it from being rationalized, notably by keeping knowledge to selves…; non-experts play by attempting to have their work viewed as expert, ideally to have it declared professional so they alone can control it…" (Mintzberg, 1985, p. 137).