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

Submission Template for the
2015 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators

1) **Title of Proposal:**

   10% luck, 20% skill, 70% (letting go of your) concentrated power of will: The
   Good, the bad, and the ugly of using community-based learning in the classroom

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.

Community-based learning (CBL) is a popular OBTC topic. Last fall, however, I had the unique experience of leading and observing the process at three very different universities, with three very different results! If you use service/community-based learning, have thought about it, or have walked away from it, this session is for you! We will openly discuss the opportunities and failures associated with CBL, and the life long learning outcomes for the students, leaders, facilitators, and clients. Our goal is to take away a list of ideas and best practices to help us ALL better utilize this awesome/frustrating/terrifying pedagogy!

3) Keywords:

Use three or four keywords to describe your session.
Community-based learning, service learning, pedagogy

4) Format
___ Activity or exercise
_x_ Discussion roundtable (60 minute only)
___General discussion session

5) Time Requested:
___ 30 Minutes
_x_ 60 Minutes (*Roundtables must select 60 minutes*)
___90 Minutes

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

No

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

1. Insight into community/service-based learning from the student, instructor, and client perspectives
2. A framework for pre-briefing the projects with new instructors, clients and students
3. A framework for de-briefing the projects with new instructors, clients and students
4. A vision of the tribulations and triumphs of using community/service-based learning

8) 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.

There is a respectable amount of research into the practice of using service/community-based learning to effectively teach management education concepts (e.g., Kenworthy & Fornaciari, 2010). However, much of this is focused on the design, implementation and student outcomes of effective CBL. Although I have used CBL extensively in the classroom, this past academic year offered a unique insight into a whole different side of CBL, and it was not good!

The result of this created this OBTC session idea (and is alluded to in the title) about the "other side" of CBL. The stakeholders' expectations and interest in controlling the CBL process makes for a much different experience than those who are willing to see how things play out. For example, one instructor swore to NEVER do service learning again, as did a client. Interestingly, both of these people found the CBL process fraught with frustration, but much of it stemmed from their unwillingness to let go when the project did not move along the path they envisioned. This is a shame because in the end the students did benefit tremendously, as they reflected in their final essays.

It led me to realize that we focus heavily on the students and their outcomes, but there are some steps that can be taken for the instructor and client that might make the path a little less rocky. As a result, more instructors and more clients might be willing to undertake CBL, to the benefit of their students and the community at large.

9) 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.

This is a discussion roundtable invitation session for any OBTC peeps who have used or are thinking about using community-based learning. We often focus on what the student learns during these experiences, but watching CBL at a variety of universities this year it seemed important to discuss how to make this experience better for the instructor and CBL client as well!

The session will start with a brief (10 minute) overview of the three CBL projects from Fall, 2014. They included:

1. African-American cemetery restoration done by a public HBCU senior capstone class=success for students, client, and instructor

2. Community garden food justice project done by a private, predominantly white group of sophomores=success for the client, massive frustration for the students, ambivalence for the instructor

3. Several community food justice projects done by a group of diverse, public university students ranging from sophomores to seniors=frustration for the instructor, frustration and/or ambivalence for several of the clients, ambivalence for the students

Research-based information (e.g., Fairfield, 2010; Kenworthy & Fornaciari, 2010), as well as instructor observations, will be shared to brainstorm on why these projects had such different results, despite similar foundations.

At this point, the floor will open up (40 minutes) for input from the participants about their CBL experiences, and their questions and input on the projects outlined above. We will share points of frustration and contention, as well as victories. Finally, we will solicit and note group feedback on how to best avoid and manage these hindrance stresses that can be attached to CBL situations.

The end game is that new and existing CBL enthusiasts walk away with a list of fresh ideas on how to make CBL the best experience possible for the students AND the clients and instructors!

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

The debriefing will be self-evolving based on participant input.

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

This session will present a look at three CBL projects, run in the same semester, at three

very different universities, and the wide variety of experiences and results. It will also provide a good framework for those who want to use CBL, and a venue for veterans of CBL who want to share and improve upon their experiences, particularly if they were not of the Kumbaya variety.

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

The beauty of community-based learning is that is designed to do exactly what the theme of the conference indicates. However, after using CBL for many years and in many types of classes, this was the first time I did it at two different universities at the same time, and closely observed it at a third. It provided me with a very different perspective on the process from ALL of the involved community members, including instructors, students, and clients.

13) 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 has never been presented before, but with reviewer feedback and session discussion, we hope to turn it into an essay submission for JME.

14) References and/or Additional Materials:

Fairfield, K. D. (2010). Growing up and growing out: Emerging adults learn management through service-learning. Journal of Management Education, 34(1), 113-141. doi:10.1177/1052562909338837

Kenworthy, A. L., & Fornaciari, C. (2010). No more reinventing the service-learning wheel: Presenting a diverse compilation of best practice "how to" articles. Journal of Management Education, 34(1), 3-8. doi:10.1177/1052562909346000

Kenworthy-U'Ren, A. L., & Peterson, T. O. (2005). Service-learning and management education: Introducing the "WE CARE" approach. Academy of Management Learning & Education, 4(3), 272-277.