



**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**

Submission Template for the 2015 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators

1) Title of Proposal:

This is teaching, who the f*** said anything about freedom of speech? Profanity in the classroom: a discussion of best practices, setting expectations and a myriad of exceptions.

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.

Anecdotal and media evidence suggests that profanity in the (18+) classroom is a contentious issue. But what counts as profanity and when does the need to create and maintain a safe and civil learning environment become censorship? How do we manage the conflicting needs of our learning community stakeholders while still waving the flag for academic freedom? This session is intended as a guided discussion for participants to share their own experiences in this area and come away with some new ideas and perspectives.

3) Keywords:

Use three or four keywords to describe your session.

Profanity, language, censorship, learning.

4) Format

- Activity or exercise
- Discussion roundtable (60 minute only)
- General discussion session

5) Time Requested:

- 30 Minutes
- 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. An increased awareness of how others view the use of profanity and when (if ever) it is deemed acceptable in the classroom, whether as an indicator of culture or climate or as a teaching tool.
2. An understanding of how some of the key influencing factors (type of institution, type of student (e.g. GR or UG) culture, subject matter, size of class) might impact our practice in the classroom and the learning communities we are trying to establish and maintain.

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.

The literature is broadly focused on incidences of perceived faculty misconduct and subsequent disciplinary action as a result of student or parent complaint and there seems to be very little evidence of best practice or guidelines in this area. To say that the use of profanity in the classroom is entirely inappropriate in all circumstances, given that we are dealing with an adult population is not helpful to those who are trying to create an engaging learning space and does not address concerns over restrictions on words and language - and therefore ideas - that can or cannot be used in the modern classroom. Furthermore, as we prepare our students for the world of work it is important that they are able to use their judgment in how their use of language is likely to be perceived. It is suggested that this should be a skill to develop rather than a list of words and phrases to avoid.

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.

The discussion will begin with the presenter's own reflections and experiences in this area as well as some evidence (anecdotal and media based) that this is an area of concern for those teaching today (10 minutes). We will set some parameters on the discussion (e.g. adult (18+) learners only) and then open up to the participants, framing the conversation around some key questions (50 minutes):

- What is acceptable/unacceptable to you in your classroom? Why?
- Can you recall incidences from your own experience where the use of profanity has engaged the class or enriched the learning experience?
- As educators, is it our responsibility to police, or even set standards?
- If you are quoting someone else are you still being profane?
- What are the key influences on what happens in your classroom?

- How do you go about creating a learning environment for your students that is both safe *and* free?

10) For Activities and Exercises:

Attach any materials needed to run the activity and debriefing questions. Evidence for effectiveness may also be included.

n/a

11) Implications for Teaching or for Teachers:

What is the contribution of your session?

To begin a conversation with those who also have a concern for the protection of academic freedom and expression while recognizing the need to serve a diverse population with disparate views, expectations and standards.

12) Application to Conference theme:

How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of Learning in Community?

Our classrooms represent our learning communities on a day-to-day basis but it is important not to underestimate the influence of our wider communities (departments, schools, colleges, region and professional affiliations) on what, who and how we teach. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that what we do in the classroom is likely to impact those broader communities in a variety of ways. We establish norms in our classrooms but where language is concerned we may face a trade-off between absolute freedom and what is considered 'appropriate'. By addressing this topic within the OBTS community, it is hoped we can all take something back to our own learning communities.

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?

No.

14) References and/or Additional Materials:

Fossey, R. (2006) University Oversight of Professors' Teaching Activities: A Professor's Academic Freedom Does not Mean Freedom From Institutional Regulation, *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, vol. 19, Issue: 3-4, pp. 159-173.

Jaschik, S. (2010) He Won't Censor Himself, Inside Higher Ed, Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/12/16/hawaii_professor_quits_over_swearing

Swinney, L., Elder, B., Seaton, L. (2010) Incivility In The Accounting Classroom, *American Journal of Business Education*, vol. 3, no.5, pp. 1-16.