OBTC

Teaching Conference for Management Educators

OBTC 2016 at Walsh University
June 8th – 11th, 2016

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

1)

Title
Introduction to Research using a "Learning in Parallel" Experiential Design

Abstract

Graduate management education in research is usually done in lectures where individual activities reinforce and evaluate learning. This activity presents an alternative "learning in parallel" CAO to introduce research in large (20 to 50+ student) classes.

The activity guides students through an Observing – Reflecting – Planning – Acting cycle from Putzel's "XB" with experiences ranging from planning to presenting research, including surveys, grounded theory, phenomenology, quasi-experimental design, critical postmodern analyses, and coding. Outputs include presentations, papers, and a play about the experience.

This activity can engage students in research for one day or several weeks of ten 30 to 45 minute sessions.

Keywords
Experience based learning, research education, student centered learning

2) Format
　　_X_ Activity or exercise
　　___ Roundtable discussion (60 minute only)
　　___ General discussion session

2a) For activities and exercises only, is yours best suited for
　　_X_ A traditional classroom
　　___ An online class
　　___ Either

2b) For activities and exercises only, is yours best suited for
___ Undergraduate students
_X_ Graduate students
___ Either

3) Time Requested:
___ 30 Minutes
_X_ 60 Minutes (*Roundtables must select 60 minutes*)
___ 90 Minutes

4) Planning Details:
Each room contains a white board with markers, computer (PC) with DVD capability and computer projector. Does your session require any other equipment?

I would like the ability to rearrange tables into an X, with space to seat all participants at the tables.

5) Teaching Implications:
What is the contribution of your session to management pedagogy/andragogy? Specifically, please include your learning objectives, and describe what management and/or teaching topics are relevant to your session, and why. Also, include theoretical, disciplinary, or theoretical foundations that will help reviewers understand how your ideas fit within the broader field of management.

For this session, my learning objectives are:
   A. To understand how to introduce a multifaceted topic to a large number of students in a brief time span.
   B. To understand key components of a "learning in parallel" experiential design.
   C. To be able to adapt a model "learning in parallel" experiential course to their own topic or context.

For the Introduction to Research, my objectives are:
   A. To reduce "research anxiety" among adult learners by placing them in a mutually supportive environment where it is safe to fail.
   B. To expose adult learners (who may only have thought of research as "doing surveys") to a large number of research approaches in a brief time span.
   C. To manage and engage 50+ adult learners for an 8+ hour day by myself.

Graduate management education in Research Methods is usually done in a traditional lecture setting; with individual activities (such as developing a research question) done as homework to reinforce and evaluate learning.   This can result in largely individual efforts that may make students feel alone and unsupported. Several alternatives have been developed, including a reflective case study approach loosely based on action research methodology (Barraket, 2005) and activity-based independent learning (Benson & Blackmon, 2003).

This submission explores an alternative "classroom as research organization" approach (Cohen, 1975) that introduces students to the variety and component activities of research (from initial research question through writing and presentation). This activity presents a "learning in parallel" experiential design that provides a relatively brief (8 – 10 hours) but broad introduction to large (from 20 to 50+ member) groups using differentiated roles with mutual coaching relationships.

Though designed to introduce research, this approach can be modified to introduce many management subjects containing a diverse set of roles and specialized knowledge, such as entrepreneurship, organizational behavior, etc. The activity guides students individually through an Observing – Reflecting – Planning – Acting process based on Putzel's (2007) "XB" and includes experience with planning and doing research as well as writing and presentation of the results. Among other methods, it includes an introduction to surveys, grounded theory development, phenomenology, quasi-experimental design, critical postmodern analyses, and coding qualitative data. Outputs include presentations, papers, and a play describing the experience. The activity allows a single instructor to engage students in research for an entire day, but can be delivered in ten 30 to 45 minute sessions over the course of several weeks.

Student reactions to this experience were very positive. Besides broadening perspectives on research methods as only "doing surveys", engaging with and completing more than eight quick studies as a group helped reduce fear of the ambiguity of research. The play describing their experience was a charming presentation of "The Three Little Research Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf of Ambiguity", where the little pigs learned to embrace ambiguity and researched happily forever after.

Barraket, J. (2005), Teaching Research Method Using a Student-centred Approach Critical Reflections on Practice, *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice*, 2 (2), available at http://jutlp.uow.edu.au/2005_v02_i02/pdf/barraket_004.pdf
Benson, A. & Blackman, D. (2003) 'Can research methods ever be interesting?', Active Learning in Higher Education 4 (1): 39-55.

Cohen, A. (1975). Beyond simulation: Treating the classroom as an organization. *The Teaching of Organizational Behavior Journal,* 1: 3.

Putzel, R. (2007) XB: New-Paradigm Management Of The Classroom As A Complex Organization, *Journal of Business and Leadership: Research, Practice, and Teaching,* 3 (1), 136-143

6) Session Description and Plan:

What will you actually do in this session? If appropriate, please include a timeline estimating the activities will you facilitate: how long will they take, and how will participants be involved? Please remember that 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.

00:00 – 00:10 – Introduce participants to the Research Methods Parallel Learning Experience.
00:10 – 00:15 – Choose positions and seats in the learning cycle
00:15 – 00:45 – Engage in abbreviated "Stages 1- 3" (of 10) activities
00:45 – 01:00 – Debrief and discuss variations / riffs on the approach

Please see the image of the activity spreadsheet for the entire exercise at the end of this submission.

7) Application to Conference theme:

How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of *United in Service*?

While engaging in this learning exercise, students must rely on one another to provide the handoff of information, papers, and other products. The process is highly orchestrated and a single missed step can have repercussions down the line. As a result, students become aware of the need to work together and meet commitments, and there is a strong communal incentive to complete tasks so that the system will work for everyone.

8) 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 not been presented before and is not under review elsewhere

Research Focus Area	Group	Main Responsibilities	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6	Stage 7	Stage 8	Stage 9	Stage 10	Debrief
Observing	Individual												
Observing	Group												
Observing	Organisation												
Reflecting	Personal												
Reflecting	Positivist												
Reflecting	Social Constructionism												
Planning	Research												
Planning	Writing												
Planning	CEO (Classroom Organisation)												
Acting	Effectiveness												
Acting	Communication												
Acting	Project Management												