



**OBTC 2017 at Providence College
June 14th – 17th, 2017**

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

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Submission Template for the 2017 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators

1) Title, Abstract & Keywords

In your abstract, please include a brief session description (not to exceed 100 words), and three to four keywords. If your proposal is accepted, this description will be printed in the conference program.

To XC or Not to XC: Let's Start a Barfight Over this Question

Few topics in teaching provoke more passionate discussion than the use of extra credit (XC). Some adamantly oppose XC while others use it abundantly. One set of authors (Norcross, Horrocks, & Stevenson, 1989, p. 199) likened the debate to a barfight! This session will use that passion to uncover the philosophies behind both sides of the debate. Further, we will examine methods of offering XC. Finally, we'll see which methods work to allay XC objections and how XC methods fit into XC philosophies in general. Whether this session turns into a barfight at Jim's Place is another question!

Key Words: extra credit, teaching philosophy

2) 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.

“Should one desire to start a barfight in a community tavern, the topics of politics, religion, and maternal heritage are likely precipitants. If one wishes to start a verbal brawl in a university faculty club, the desirability of extra credit is incendiary material” (Norcross, Horrocks, & Stevenson, 1989, p. 199). And, so the research shows. For example, later research by Norcross (Norcross, Dooley, & Stevenson, 1993) present evidence suggesting there is “no middle ground” in the use and justification of extra credit (XC). Specifically, an instructor's attitude toward XC rather than circumstances of the students predicted their use of XC. Research suggests ethical issues and difference in philosophies contribute to tensions over XC. For example Hill, Paladino, & Eison (1993) note that some instructors believe that XC encourages lax student behavior while others believe that XC offers students additional opportunities to learn. As further examples, Magna Online Seminars (2011) notes that some believe that XC reduces student anxiety and motivates students to learn while others believe XC lowers academic standards and creates more work for instructors. Love, Love, & Northcraft (2010) use a punctuated-equilibrium model to suggest that students are justified in making efforts towards XC late in a course.

One *objective* of this session is to help participants (and the presenter!) think through their reasons/justifications/philosophies for using or not using extra credit (XC) and for us all to learn of some additional reasons on both sides of the issue.

As noted above, previous published material on XC has large touched on *reasons* (philosophies) for/against XC (cf. Norcross, et al., 1989; Norcross, et al., 1993). Other published material has proposed *guidelines* for offering XC (cf. Catapano, n.d.). Some literature has examined *methods* of XC but not in a systematic way (cf. Hill, et al., 1993; Lei, 2013; Snowden, 2014). None has tied reasons, guidelines, and methods all together.

I approach the issue of XC as not necessarily being a case of either/or. That is, in the spirit of integrative bargaining, and similar to Weimer (2011, July, 2011, August), I treat XC decisions not as positions but rather as a means of meeting the objectives (interests) of the instructor. Weimer (2011, August) notes that "... very little... unpacks, organizes, or explores premises on which these extra credit strategies rest...". To that end, *a further objective* of this session is to uncover or unpack varying methods and guidelines for offering XC *and* to explore how those methods and guidelines can fit with the objectives or premises of the instructor. There has been little effort to tie XC philosophies with XC methods.

The *contribution* of our (the presenter and participants) effort in this session then is a more comprehensive look at XC methods and a start at tying those methods to XC philosophies.

This application of this session is *not limited to any specific Management topic nor, for that matter, any academic topic*. However, I plan take advantage of the fact that most session participants have an understanding of an integrative approach to problem-solving (as covered in most course discussions of conflict and negotiation).

Will this effort be incendiary? Will a barfight erupt over this topic at Jim's Place? With all respect to Norcross, et al. (1989), who noted the incendiary nature of this topic, I hope to capture the passion around this topic and peacefully direct the fight toward solutions that satisfy each participant's philosophies. What happens at Jim's Place is out of my hands!

3) 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.

I visualize this as a 60-minute discussion framed around a few basic questions. I will steer the conversation to cover all of these topics and will make efforts to have those topics follow the timeline suggested below.

Introduction of facilitator & topic	3 minutes
Discussion - Why offer XC?	7 minutes
Discussion - Why <u>not</u> offer XC?	7 minutes
Presentation of methods/variations of XC	5 minutes
Discussion - Other methods/variations of XC?	13 minutes
Discussion – Tying methods/variations to reasons for/objections to XC	20 minutes
Wrap up or slack time	5 minutes

4) Application to Conference theme:

How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of *Navigating the Changing Currents*?

The pressures our students face are *changing*. These pressures create *currents* that affect us as instructors. We must *navigate* those *currents*.

Specifically, dwindling job opportunities and the increasing cost of a college education result in students with a more instrumental mind-set -- “how can I get a high grade?”. In addition, high college costs are forcing more students to find part-time or even full-time employment during school to finance their education, leaving fewer hours for the hard work and studying demanded by college curriculums. Even well-meaning students may find that they are not reaching their goals and this creates a *current* of demand for extra credit. Instructors must *navigate* or think through different philosophies surrounding extra credit and perhaps find methods of offering extra credit that fit their philosophies.

5) 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?

I have not presented the work in this proposal before nor is it under review somewhere else.

6) References

Catapano, J. (n.d.). The Laws of Extra Credit. Retrieved January 13, 2017, from <http://www.teachhub.com/laws-extra-credit>

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Love, E. G., Love, D. W., & Northcraft, G. B. (2010). Is the end in sight? Student regulation of in-class and extra-credit effort in response to performance feedback. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 9(1), 81-97.

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