OBTC

Teaching Conference for Management Educators

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

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

1) Title, Abstract & Keywords

Title: "Two birds, one web-enabled device"**:** Saving faculty time and engaging students through technology.

Abstract: With over 70% of universities offering online/distance education courses, faculty face additional complexities when adapting existing materials to fit new learning environments/technologies. Adopting teaching techniques that engage/appeal to tech-savvy students is also a growing challenge for management educators. This session embraces this changing landscape by demonstrating and providing resources on tech-based teaching techniques/ technologies that can (1) be adopted in both face-to-face and virtual formats, (2) save faculty time, and (3) enhance student engagement; we close by discussing specific tech-based techniques/technologies that participants can implement in their own courses and workshop ways to address the challenges/barriers that come with adoption/implementation.

Note: if possible, it would be highly useful for attendees to bring web-enabled devices (laptops, tablets, smartphones etc.) to the proposed session.

Keywords: technology, engagement, time-management, online

2) Teaching Implications:

Background
While technology can engage students in the learning process (Chen, Lambert, & Guidry, 2010; Means et al., 1992), faculty primarily use technology to streamline their everyday tasks (Newman & Scurry, 2015). For example, uploading readings and syllabi, and using email to answer questions and share course-related information outside of the classroom. Although some faculty do adopt "zero-tolerance" policies towards technology, viewing it as both a distraction and source of behavioral/engagement problems (Galagan, 2010), more often hesitations around adopting new technologies stems from concerns related to (1) the necessary time investments, and (2) a lack of familiarity with different technologies, their interfaces, and their functional application in pedagogy.

These concerns are also warranted. Changing ones' teaching practices requires time (Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007), and technological know-how is often independent from both content and pedagogical knowledge (Rienties & Townsend, 2012).

Irrespective of these barriers, as the majority of higher education institutions continue to see online education as critical to their long-term strategy (Allen & Seaman, 2014) an increasing number of faculty are being asked to adapt in-person course content for online platforms and virtual consumption. Students themselves are also more frequently expecting to see the technology-driven formats they are most familiar with (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) used in the classroom (Rienties, Brouwer, Lygo-Baker, 2013). Moreover, as organizations rely more heavily on emerging technologies to facilitate coordination and cooperation between employees, the skills and knowledge management students gain through exposure to different types of technologies, within the classroom and through online education, are increasingly relevant and a boon to their future career success.

Adopting Tech-Based Techniques
There is no denying that implementing new technologies and adapting in-person content for online consumption requires time. However, the potential benefits gained by integrating new tech-based techniques, particularly those that are transferrable across in-person and online formats, save faculty time, and encourage student engagement, can far outweigh the initial time burdens associated with the adoption of new technologies.

Types of Adoptions:
One fairly obvious adoption is using existing learning management systems (LMS) more effectively. With regards to in-person courses, using LMS technology to administer quizzes/exams outside of class frees in-class time and eliminates the need for formatting paper tests and creating multiple versions. Grading time is also reduced through automatic scoring/gradebook entry functions, and logistics are streamlined when virtually transferring items/assessments between courses and across semesters. This single adoption can drastically reduce time demands, proactively prepare course content for future online course sections, and increase the amount of in-class time available for teaching course content and facilitating students' engagement with course material.

While existing LMS functions are easily accessible to most faculty, and provide a number of immediate advantages, there a great deal of other, less well-known technology-based adoptions that bring unique value to both in-person and online formats.

For example:

1. Anonymous and asynchronous Q&A platforms can encourage students to ask more questions, facilitate both peer-to-peer support and student teaching, and reduce the number of questions directed at faculty both in online and in-person courses.

2. Virtual platforms can facilitate/simplify peer-review of student work, from weekly assignments to larger-scale projects, and be effectively across both in-person and online course formats. Using these platforms for peer-review can also cut down on faculty grading time, while also providing opportunities for students to engage with and learn from their peers in meaningful ways.
3. Online pre-assessment surveys can be easily created, distributed, and accessed through multiple platforms. They can gather valuable data, for example, on students' current knowledge and understanding, course-relevant experiences, prior enrollment in related courses, expectations, goals, etc. This data can be used to decrease prep-time by removing repetitive information, help faculty to focus on key areas, and structure course in ways which better align with student needs.
4. Online office-hours can be accessed from diverse locations, attended by large numbers of students, and held during strategic times (e.g., 30-60 minutes of office hours the night before an exam vs. an inbox inundated by last-minute student questions). A single faculty response can simultaneously address a question that multiple students have, and digital transcripts can be saved, searched by keyword, and shared at later times (e.g., transcript from pre-exam office hours can become F.A.Q. resources for later semesters).
5. Social networking sites, such as twitter, can be adopted and easily implemented by faculty to facilitate the sharing of course-related content, and encourage students to interact with their peers and relevant content in more personally-meaningful ways. Moreover, these types of platforms can support ongoing discussions both after in-person classes have ended, and overtime within online course formats.
6. Team collaboration tools can automate the creation of student teams and reduce faculty workload. Others can provide interactive platforms that facilitate communication, coordination, task-allocation, and file-sharing between teammates; thereby increasing student ownership over project management and decreasing time faculty spend addressing concerns around the logistics of coordinating/collaborating with teammates.
7. Lecture-capturing can allow students to access/review class content in ways that fit their unique needs, for example, after absences and prior to exams. Lecture-capturing also creates additional, foundational materials for use in both online courses and in-person, flipped-classrooms.

The list goes on.

Learning Objectives

Given the diversity of available technologies, and their utility in both in-person and online course formats, the central purpose of the proposed session is to familiarize session attendees with a wide variety of tech-based teaching techniques, to demonstrate how different technologies can be adopted and effectively implemented

across both in-person and online course formats, and facilitate discussion around the adoption/implementation of different technologies in attendees' courses.

Therefore, the specific learning objectives for this session are to:

1) Familiarize session attendees with a variety of tech-based techniques that:
   a. Can be used in, and easily transferred between, both in-person and online management courses.
   b. Can help to save faculty time.
   c. Can encourage greater student engagement.
2) Encourage idea generation around ways to adopt transferable, tech-based techniques by:
   a. Providing hands-on demonstrations and exemplars that highlight the utility of specific technologies within management courses; both for saving time and encouraging greater student engagement with course content.
   b. Offering supplementary resources/materials that attendees can take with them to support future adoptions within their own institutions/courses.
3) Better prepare session attendees for future adoption(s) by:
   a. Facilitating a "round-table" discussion regarding how participants envision using and drawing benefits from additional tech-based techniques/technologies in their own courses.
   b. Workshopping potential solutions that address the challenges and barriers attendees have faced, or foresee facing, when using technology in their courses and/or transferring tech-based techniques across in-person and online course formats.

Relevant Management and/or Teaching Topics:

In the proposed session, we plan to focus on tech-based teaching strategies that support/facilitate information sharing, assessment, and students' engagement with course materials. As such, we foresee the strategies and technologies discussed in this session being widely applicable across a variety of management courses/teaching topics. Including, but not limited to courses on:

- Intro to/Principles of Management
- Organizational Behavior
- Human Resources
- Organizational Staffing
- Training and Development
- Diversity in the Workplace
- Globalization/International Management
- Leadership
- Entrepreneurship
- Business Communication

- Business Ethics

While we believe session content to be applicable across many management courses/teaching topics, specific exemplars that we plan to discuss have been used by the authors in Intro to Management, Business Communication, and Creativity and Innovation courses.

Theoretical/Disciplinary Foundations

The proposed session is very applied in its focus on tech-based techniques and associated technologies, and their ability to save faculty time and streamline the conversion of in-class content to online platforms.

At the same time, we do also draw from student engagement research and experiential learning theory to support our suggesting that these techniques and their associated technologies can also help to encourage greater engagement with course material and thereby a deeper emersion in the learning process as a whole.

Student Engagement and Technology

Student engagement has been defined as both the time and energy students invest in interacting and communicating with others through academically-meaningful activities (Kuh, 2001). Personally meaningful activities are also thought to motivate students to engage more deeply with course material and encourage greater learnings (Kearsley & Schneiderman, 1999). Technology, by facilitating interaction through peer-to-peer and peer-to-instructor communications, discussion boards, and other relevant platforms, and by increasing access to course materials and supplementary resources, is thought to encourage both greater engagement and self-directed learning (White & Robertson, 2015; Williams, Karousou, & Mackness, 2011).

For example, when technology is used in conjunction with effective pedagogical approaches and strategies it has been found to increase students' motivation (Means & Olson, 1995), their involvement in the learning process (Chen, Lambert, & Guidry, 2010), and both their engagement with material and their overall level of achievement (Fonseca, Martí, Redondo, Navarro, & Sanchez, 2014).

Moreover, these relationships have also been found when technology is used in innovative and novel ways (Wishart & Blease, 1999). Taking conventional technologies, for example, which students frequently use in their daily lives (e.g., smart phones, mobile applications), and then applying them within an academic setting (e.g., *by participating in polling, sharing course-relevant information via tweeting, posting photos that capture/relate to course learnings, or completing assessments associated to current activates*) can help to increasing the

meaningfulness of these activities; therefore also facilitating greater student engagement. In fact, empirical findings such as those described above are in large part responsible for calls in higher education requesting that faculty and instructors respond to and accommodate the "technologically-driven" and multi-sensory learning styles of younger generations (Prensky, 2001).

Experiential Learning
The notions described above also deeply tied in Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning, whereby knowledge is thought to be created through transformative experiences. Or, stated differently, learning which occurs as an outcome of *experience*, or a learning "event", is thought to inherently require more direct and active engagement on the part of the student (Clark, Threeton, & Ewing, 2010). This direct engagement, in turn, is thought to facilitate greater involvement in the learning process as a whole, for example, reflective observation, abstract experimentation, and active experimentation.

Within the context of the current session proposal, we suggest that adopting tech-based teaching techniques and technologies for the purpose of pedagogy, particularly those that are frequently used by student populations, will also help to encourage more active engagement with course content and materials, facilitating more positive learning experiences, and addressing student expectations regarding the use of technology in higher education.

3) Session Description and Plan

In the proposed session, our overarching aim is to highlight how tech-based teaching techniques/associated technologies can be used and transferred between both in-person and online course formats, while helping to saving faculty time and increasing student engagement. As such, we plan to focus on topics and activities that (1) will familiarize session attendees with a different tech-based teaching techniques/technologies and their associated benefits, and (2) encourage idea generation around the adoption and implement tech-based teaching techniques/technologies in attendees' own courses.

Specifically, we plan to start the session by having participants actively engage with different technologies. For example:

- Asking participants to access *Piazza*, an asynchronous and anonymous online Q&A platform, to post questions about implementing/using tech-based techniques and technologies in management courses (*which can later be used to spur initial workshopping discussions*).

- Asking participants to follow a "mini-link" to a one-question, online survey where they can provide brief written responses about how they have/currently use technology in their teaching, similar to the use of a pre- (*and then using this data to quickly generate a visual chart, or "Wordle", that emphasizes words based on the frequency of their use, as noted in Figure 1*).

Figure 1. Application of Pre-Testing/ Student Feedback

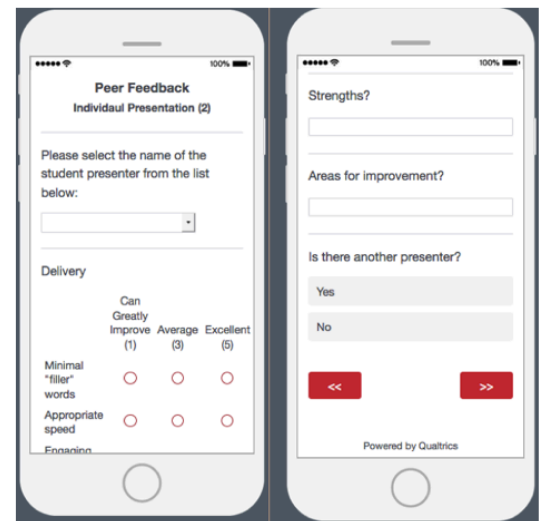We then plan to break the remaining session time into three blocks:

1. **Survey of tech-based teaching techniques related to information sharing, assessment, and students' engagement with course material**

   Using the data participants provided during the session introduction as a transition point, we plan to provide a brief survey of a variety of tech-based techniques that can be adopted across both in-person and online course formats. We will focus on highlighting ways these techniques can be used to save faculty time and/or encourage student engagement. We hope this will help participants to begin thinking about ways tech-based techniques can be used in their own courses to save them time and encourage greater student engagement (Figure 2 provides a reference point for this).

Figure 3. Example of Real-Time Peer Assessment

Gathering peer-feedback data on students' oral presentations using a web-enabled devise.

2. **In-person demonstrations of specific technology.**

Next we plan to demonstrate the application of different technologies, again highlight ways that different options can help to save time and target student engagement. While doing so, we also plan share exemplars that highlighting the use different technologies in management courses (Figures 3 provides an example of this). During this portion of the session, we plan to focus on 1-2 technologies that are associated with information sharing, assessment, and engaging with course materials. We also plan on actively engaging participants by encouraging them interact with the technologies we are demonstrating from a student-focused perspective.

Figure 2. Ways to use technology for information sharing, assessment, and engagement with material in both in-person and online courses.
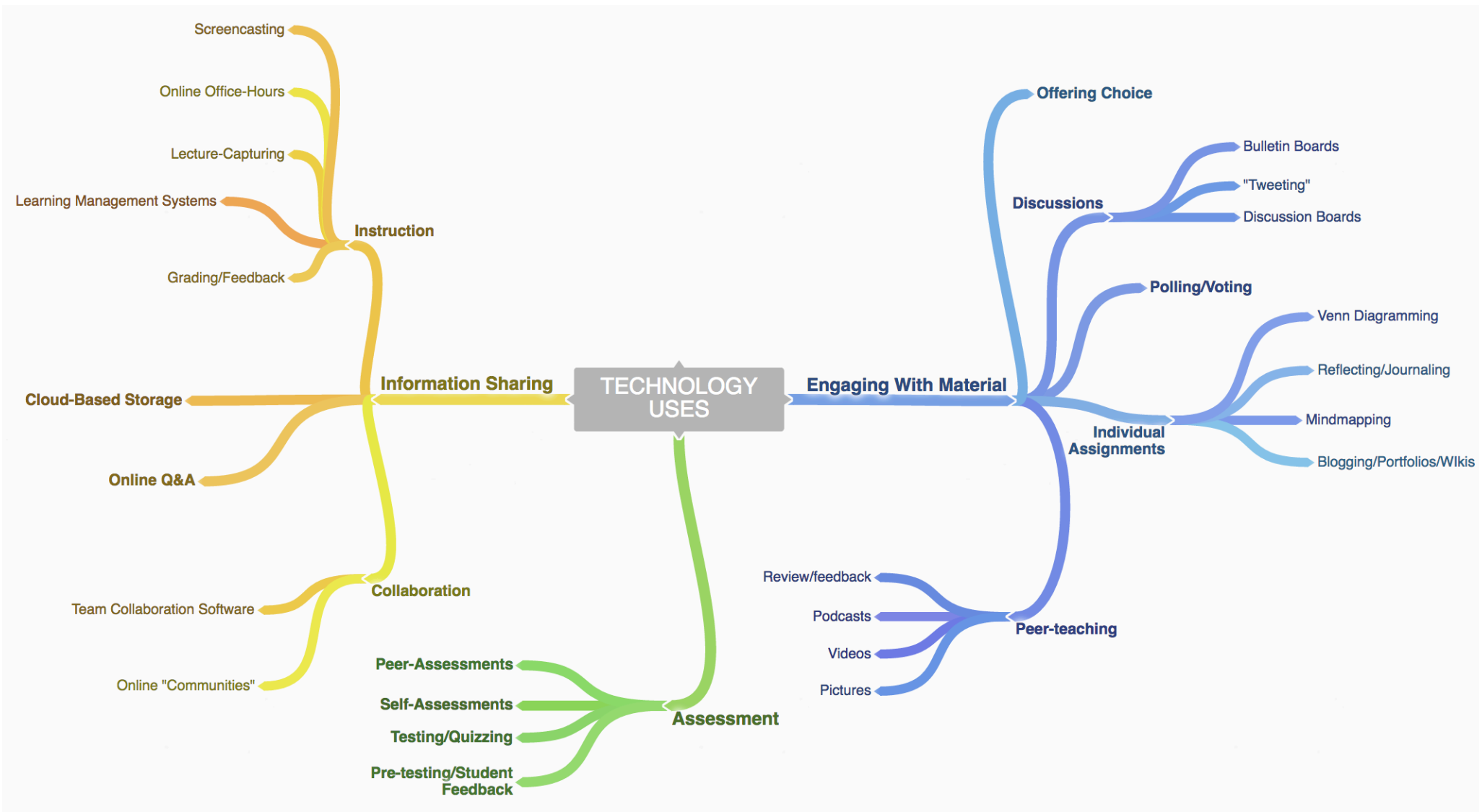
3. Workshopping

Finally, we plan to form discussion groups and facilitate conversations around ways session attendees envision using tech-based teaching techniques and associated technologies to save time and support student engagement in their own courses, and workshop potential solutions for addressing the challenges/barriers associated with adopting and using these technologies in online and in-person courses.

To facilitate these conversations, we also plan to distribute additional materials/resources that (1) describe a variety of technologies that can be used for information sharing, assessment, and engagement with course materials, (2) associated ways to access these technologies (i.e. specific platforms, websites, etc.), and (3) brief descriptions highlighting ways these technologies can be used to save time and encourage greater student engagement with course materials.

On the following page we have included a table that summarizes our proposed layout and associated time estimates for a 60-minute session:

PHASE	SUMMARY	PURPOSE	ESTIMATED TIME
OPENING	Introduction of session purpose and participants' initial engagement with different technologies	*Gauge participants' experiences with technology in teaching, and facilitate the provide the first active demonstration of specific technologies.*	**5 – 7 minutes**
SURVEY OF TECH-BASED TEACHING TECHNIQUES	Brief overview of ways technology can be applied for information sharing, assessment, and engagement with course materials	*Encourage initial thinking around the many ways technology can save time and facilitate student engagement.*	**6 – 8 minutes**
TECHNOLOGY DEMOS	Demonstrate the application of specific technologies	*Introduce participants to different technologies, highlight their use in in-person/online formats, how they can save time, and encourage student engagement; and provide hand-on experiences related to how students can use/interact with different technologies.*	**13 – 15 minutes**
WORKSHOPPING	Facilitate discussions around the use of technology in participants' courses and workshopping solutions to challenges/barriers	*Provide participants an opportunity to brainstorm the application of technology in their courses with the hope of further supporting future adoptions.*	**20 – 25 minutes**
CONCLUSION	Summary of key learnings, the sharing of contact information, and final comments.		**5 minutes**

4) Application to Conference theme:

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

We believe the proposed session speaks to the theme of Navigating the Changing Currents by addressing current trends, both with regards to the growing presence of online education and student expectations around the use of technology in higher education. Specifically, this session aims to provide attendees with knowledge and resources that can assist them in adoption and implementation different technologies to save time and encourage student engagement within a variety of management courses.

5) Unique Contribution to OBTC:

We attest to never having presented this or similar proposals, nor the ideas included anywhere else before. The proposal is also not under review anywhere else. Thank you for your time in reviewing this application, and for considering our proposal for inclusion in OBTC's 2017 conference.

References:

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