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

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

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.

Title: Ten Years of Building Simulations

Abstract: This session will describe one faculty member's decade of experience building and teaching three different simulations to teach key concepts in organizational behavior. Participants will have an opportunity to play the latest simulation during the session. The presenter will describe key lessons learned from designing and building these simulations, as well as from teaching via simulation to undergraduates, MBAs, and executive education participants.

Keywords: Simulations, teams, groups

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.

Numerous scholars have argued for the value of simulations as a pedagogical tool for teaching key management concepts, and they have provided evidence of the efficacy of simulations in the classroom (Anderson & Lawton, 2009; Faria, et al., 2009; Vos, 2015). Simulations range from the semester-long business strategy games that have been popular in capstone course for many years to the shorter experiential exercises that can be conducted during a single class period.   Educators have embraced simulations as an active learning tool for teaching a wide variety of topics. Simulations enable students to

fail in a safe and low-risk environment, learn from experience, and apply concepts and frameworks that they have learned.

Simulations can be quite challenging to develop and teach though (Lalonde and Roux-Dufort, 2012).   The presenter in this session has developed three simulations used at business schools around the world, and he has experienced many of these challenges. Drawing on those experiences, the learning objectives for this session:

- Evaluate some of the key steps required to design and build an effective simulation, as well as common challenges experienced in the process.
- Examine the virtues and challenges of teaching through simulations
- Understand how to integrate simulations effectively with other pedagogical techniques
- Learn about one particular new simulation for teaching about design thinking.

P.H. Anderson and L. Lawton. 2009. "Business simulations and cognitive learning: developments, desires and future directions." *Simulation & Gaming.* 40(2): 193‑216.

J. Faria, D. Hutchinson, W.J. Wellington, and S. Gold. 2009. "Developments in business gaming: a review of the past 40 years." *Simulation & Gaming.* 40(4): 464‑487.

C. Lalonde and C. Roux-Dufort. 2012. "Challenges in Teaching Crisis Management Connecting Theories, Skills, and Reflexivity." *Journal of Management Education.* 37(1): 21-50.

L. Vos. 2015. "Simulation games in business and marketing education: How educators assess student learning from simulations." *International Journal of Management Education.* 13(1): 57-74.

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.

In this session, the presenter will describe three simulations designed and built over the past decade.   He will describe the process, examine key challenges, and offer tips for how to build engaging and effective simulations.   Moreover, the presenter will discuss the virtues and challenges of teaching with simulations.   Topics taught with these simulations include team dynamics, decision making, cognitive biases, and design thinking. Participants will have an opportunity to play one new simulation developed by the presenter.

90 minute session:

- Introduction (5 minutes)
- Playing the Simulation (20 minutes)
    - New Venture Exercise: The Food Truck Challenge
- Debriefing the Simulation (20 minutes)
- Inside the Process of Developing a Simulation (15 minutes)
- Virtue and Challenges of Teaching with Simulations (15 minutes)
- Q&A (15 minutes)

For more information on the Food Truck Challenge, you can investigate this link, which provides a description and demo of this simulation:

https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/product/7201-HTM-ENG

Please note that ½ of the participants will need a laptop or tablet in order to play the simulation. Participants will work in pairs on the simulation.

4) Application to Conference theme:
How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of *Navigating the Changing Currents*?

Management education continues to change rapidly.   Educators are experimenting with new pedagogies. Students demand more active learning experiences. Accreditation bodies have questioned the retention of key knowledge through some traditional teaching practices and called for innovation in the classroom.   Some pedagogical approaches such as simulations hold much promise, but they do not come without challenges.   It can very difficult to design an effective simulation. Moreover, when teaching a new simulation for the first time, the burden on the instructor can be overwhelming. Typically, simulations require a great deal of preparation on the part of the instructor. In addition, it can be very difficult to anticipate how the students will behave during the simulation. That makes preparing the debrief session very taxing.

Students also need to be prepared for the changing work environment and the many challenges that they will face in their careers. They need to be able to fail in a safe and low risk manner and to learn from those experiences, before they enter the workforce. Simulations provide them a mechanism for doing so.

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?

Many years ago, I presented the first simulation that I created in 2007. Since that time, I have not presented on simulations at OBTC or any other conference. This presentation offers an opportunity to reflect on a decade of work in this area and to share lessons learned.

Appendix: Excerpt from Teaching Note for New Venture Exercise: The Food Truck Challenge

Synopsis

This online exercise provides students an opportunity to play the role of an entrepreneur in the city of Boomtown. Students work either as individuals or as teams, and they must determine the ideal combination of product and location to maximize revenue for their business. They have three choices with regard to product: ice cream, frozen yogurt, or smoothies. Students must decide where to locate their food truck, choosing from among six locations in Boomtown. As the exercise begins, they have an opportunity to review some basic market research including information about the city and its residents, as well as about past trends with regard to the consumption of these products. Then the students face a choice. They can open their food truck right away, purchase additional market research instead, or begin by operating a small pushcart. During each round, students can modify their choice. Students have five weeks to operate their business, and they aspire to generate the most revenue during that period of time. The exercise ranks them against others in the class throughout the five-week period.

Purpose

This case has three purposes. First and most importantly, students have an opportunity to see the value of rapid prototyping in a changing environment. They learn that analysis and research work well as a means of predicting future trends in stable environments. However, prototyping trumps analysis when operating in dynamic

environments. In these situations, the past does not predict the future accurately. Thus, entrepreneurs must adopt a "test and learn" approach of experimentation and prototyping. By taking action, entrepreneurs gather critical feedback from users, and they learn how to refine their business model.

Second, students learn about the challenging tradeoffs that entrepreneurs face as they launch their businesses. Should we continue to conduct research or launch a product into the marketplace despite uncertainty about customer demand? Should we scale up quickly or put our toe in the water first? Should we continue testing or move forward with our business? They learn that these decisions do not come easily, and each option comes with costs and benefits. Weighing the merits of additional research or further testing in a dynamic environment can be quite challenging.

Finally, students have an opportunity to practice making key decisions that entrepreneurs must make, as well as adapting their choices given market feedback.   In this exercise, students grapple with common entrepreneurial decisions such as product selection, location, and the extent to which they should pursue additional market research before taking action. Students do not simply read about how entrepreneurs behaved in a certain situation, but instead, they have an opportunity to learn by doing.

<u>Course Fit and Position</u>

The exercise may be used in courses in entrepreneurship, design thinking, innovation, and new product development. Instructors will find it appropriate for students at all levels – undergraduate, MBA, and executive education.