



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

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

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- * All files must be saved in PDF format **
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- *Only one document should be submitted**

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.

Title: *How a General Business course is a key for students in making the transition from being a first year student to developing the skill sets necessary for future successes.*

Abstract: This session presents an overview of **GB215: Human Behavior and Organizations** and the important link that this course provides in the integrated business learning of Bentley University students. More specifically there is a discussion of how it is an important link between the first year experience of students and their preparation for upper level classes and future experiences. A discussion about the personal growth students experience in this class will also be included, with actual quotes from students that will be culled from the final reflection assignment and presented in an anonymous manner.

Key words: **Integrative, team skills, diversity**

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.

This session will bring a contribution by focusing on several of the conference focus areas. These include:

- **Developing effective classroom experiences for our students in the changing academic environment.**
- **Providing unique ideas for utilizing the changing and evolving technology to enhance the learning experience.**

The course description of GB215, in part, talks about *particular attention being given to the issues and dynamics that result from the increasing diversity of the workforce and the global contexts in which people work. Another special emphasis is human behavior in teams, reflecting the central importance of work groups in most organizations. The course introduces students to analytical frameworks for understanding and influencing*

individual, group, inter-group and total organization dynamics. It also increases students' awareness of and competence in dealing with people different from themselves. Additionally, the course description discusses the methods used to accomplish these goals including case studies, team projects, self-reflection instruments, experiential exercises, lectures and readings students develop knowledge and skills for working effectively with a diverse set of people in complex environments, diagnosing managerial problems and developing effective plans for action, taking into account the impact of external stakeholders on internal organizational dynamics.

The course goals are stated as:

- *Students will engage deeply with the key topics in organizational behavior such as understanding multiple levels of analysis (individual, team, organizational).*
- *The effective functioning of teams will receive particular attention.*
- *In addition, diversity as a crucial component of behavior at work will be a central focus, as the course is taught with a “diversity lens.”*

This session presents an overview of the course **GB215: Human Behavior and Organizations**. It will include a discussion of how this course provides an important link in the integrated business learning of Bentley University students. This includes how GB215 has evolved and discusses how the learning objectives of the course are met. More specifically there is a discussion of how it is an important link between the first year experience students have at Bentley and their preparation for their upper level classes and future experiences. For some students this also includes gaining additional real world experiences if they choose to complete a 4th credit option for Service Learning. A discussion about the personal growth students experience in this class will also be included, with actual quotes from students that will be culled from the final reflection assignment and presented in an anonymous manner. Personal experience of the author as a **First Year Student Advisor** for the past three years will also be utilized.

All of the instructors for this class have the freedom to accomplish these goals and learning objectives using a variety of different styles. These are well defined guidelines that have been agreed upon by the faculty that guide everyone in structuring their approach. The faculty teaching this course also meet regularly to discuss how the semester is progressing and how different initiatives are working. There is also an end of year debriefing meeting that helps define any changes that may be put into effect for the following year.

The focus of this session will be to discuss a “blended” approach that the author has taken over this past academic year by taking what has worked best from a variety of different faculty and incorporating them into the sections he has taught. Items included

in this approach which will be discussed in the session are:

- Use of the McGraw Hill Connect LearnSmart system that requires the students to complete a chapter by a deadline prior to the class when it is assigned. This is done for points that accumulate on Blackboard and are part of the overall participation grade.
- Students work in the same team for the entire semester and each team presents two of the chapters to the rest of the class. Everyone receives both team and individual grades for both these “first round” and “second round” of presentations. They first begin by developing a Team Agreement and Team Resume and completing a Team Event.
- A final presentation is based on a Harvard Business Case for which the students have to complete both an individual and team component assignment. The goal is for the students to learn and utilize the team concepts taught in the class and be able to put them in to practice to learn how to positively impact their team and for the team to grow and improve throughout the semester. This final presentation is only team graded to increase the importance of communication and cooperation.
- The individual assignments provide insights and goals to the students at both the individual and team level. This includes the students reviewing the results of their Gallup StrengthsFinder assessment that was completed in their first year. They re-evaluate these results, as well as taking additional assessments, to develop a personal SWOT analysis and goals.
- Team Peer Evaluations and an assignment that they each complete on “making my teammates better” help provide linkage between the individual and team assignments.

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 view the session as a discussion in which I will first provide an overview of what the course is about and how it is structured. Samples of the syllabus and assignments will be available for review. I anticipate this overview lasting for about 10 minutes. Flowing from this I would have a series of discussions about the key components of the class. Depending on the size of the audience I am open to a general discussion of the course and the various components or to create ad hoc groups in which the participants can discuss

each component and develop feedback comments, questions and suggestions. With this format I would rotate among the groups while they are talking after which each group can report out. I would anticipate 3 discussions of 15 minutes each. This would leave time for a 5 minute wrap up using a one hour format. My goal is for there to be a sharing of ideas and opportunities to learn for everyone, especially for me. I see this as a further step to take the faculty discussions that we have at the end of each semester and learn what is being done at other schools with similar courses. The end result for me is to be able build an even bigger and better “blended” course for the future utilizing ideas and suggestions from a larger and more diverse group of faculty.

4) Application to Conference theme:

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

As mentioned earlier I believe that this presentation fits well with two of the conference focus areas:

- Developing effective classroom experiences for our students in the changing academic environment.
- Providing unique ideas for utilizing the changing and evolving technology to enhance the learning experience.

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?

This will be the first time that I am presenting the work in this proposal.