

Submission for the 2017 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators

1) Title, Abstract & Keywords

Title: Integrative Team Teaching: Going against the tide at the U.S. Naval War College

Abstract: This session describes an integrative approach to team teaching driven by role-definition based on Kolb's experiential learning model; an approach that differs from our institution's co-facilitation paradigm. Leveraging our respective expertise, one instructor enables Concrete Experience (CE) and Abstract Conceptualization (AC); while the other enables Reflective Observation (RO) and Active Experimentation (AE). Together, we synergistically ensure the connective thread for each learning element throughout every class lesson in order to achieve higher levels of student learning and development. Conference participants interested in team teaching will have the opportunity to consider how they might apply this approach in their teaching collaborations.

Keywords: team teaching, student learning, collaboration

2) Teaching Implications:

Team teaching is a core form of course instruction at the U.S. Naval War College; a highly selective graduate school for military officers and their civilian counterparts. Team teaching at the War College generally takes the form of co-facilitators – often a military officer and a civilian academic – delivering specified content based on department-developed learning objectives that leverage the respective expertise of each facilitator (cf. Goetz, 2000; Wenger & Hornyak, 1999). This typically results in a “division of labor” where each team member presents his/her assigned lesson, either on separate days or during specific times allotted in a single class session. This “tag-team” approach offers some advantages for the student learner by exposing them to different perspectives and teaching styles (Goetz, 2000; Wadkins, Wozniak, & Miller, 2004).

Differently, in teaching our *Critical Thinking for Adaptive Leaders* course, we further capitalize upon the co-facilitation model by integrating the pairing of civilian academic knowledge with military expertise into the overarching learning model for students. Specifically, the civilian academic utilizes the Harvard Case Method and perspective-taking assignments to provide students Concrete Experiences (CE) and enable Abstract Conceptualization (AC); while the military professor challenges students to consider that learning in the context of their professional experiences (Reflective Observation) and try out new conceptions to the application of their future leadership roles (Active Experimentation). Notably, students remain “blind” to our approach until a midway point in the course where we share “the method to the

madness” in the execution of our course. Subsequently, students become more self-focused on each of the learning components; thereby enhancing their own self-learning.

While others have recognized the value of teaching collaboration with professors and practitioners as a way to align theory with practice (e.g., Higgins & Litzenberg, 2015), we believe we extend the value of such co-partnering with a learner-centered philosophy that deliberately attunes theory and practice to specific aspects of the Kolb Experiential Learning Model. Integrating the Kolb model in the design of the course allows students to engage and experience critical thinking cognitively and tangibly (Brookfield, 2015). We have found that this approach strengthens the bridge between theory and practice, especially for experienced adult learners.

References

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3) Session Description and Plan:

Activity	Time allotted
First, we will: (1) describe how what began as “ <i>you do this, and I’ll do that</i> ” evolved into a much more deliberate approach to engendering learning; and (2) share some student feedback that speaks to the effectiveness of the method	10 Min
Second, we will: (1) describe the specific methodology we use to plan each class session, given our respective learning model roles; and (2) describe and demonstrate how we go about “ <i>pulling the thread</i> ” throughout each class, tapping into each other’s offerings in order to bridge the learning for the students.	15 Min
Third, we will: (1) engage participants in directed reflection of their existing co-facilitated course (or proposed course) with an exercise to graphically map alignment of their team teaching with the Kolb model; (2) allow at least 2 individuals to share their observations; (3) discuss possible avenues to fill any gaps; and (4) conclude with a round of “take aways” or “ahas”, to include a few insights on going against the tide in teaching methods.	35 Min

4) Application to Conference theme: *Navigating the Changing Currents*

The existing paradigm for team teaching at the Naval War College ascribes to content-driven instructional division and collaboration. Our method is learner-driven collaboration grounded in pedagogical and andragogical theory and practice. Our integrative approach to team teaching utilizing Kolb’s Experiential Learning Model has required us to navigate change in going against institutional norms. In this session we will share our experiences and insights in effecting change and emboldening others to pursue other instructional methods.

5) Unique Contribution to OBTC:

This proposal has not been presented elsewhere and is not currently under review.