

**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.*

Title: Charting participation: Encouraging, assessing, and rewarding student participation

Abstract:

As your courses become more experiential, your students become more diverse, and your classrooms are more likely to be virtual, are you using the same methods to encourage, assess, and reward student participation? Do you struggle with how to more objectively measure something that has historically been inherently subjective? This engaging, interactive session explores some of the common issues and challenges that we as educators experience with student participation. Following this, the panelists will share various methods and strategies that we have implemented in our classes to encourage, assess, and reward participation.

Key Words: Participation, Grading, Assessment

1. 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.*

An important part of most student grades in Management courses is class participation. As a method for measuring student performance, it has been reported that over 94% of Management courses include a formal participation grade (Mello, 2010). As to the degree it determines a student’s actual grade, a study of MBA Management courses reported that on average nearly 15% of a student’s final grade is based on class participation (Brown, Charlier, Rynes, & Hosmanek, 2013). Despite its ubiquitous nature there continues to be debate on its pros and cons, with many simply accepting it as a necessary evil (Mello, 2010).

At the same time, the nature of the class “room” experience continues to evolve. One on-going trend is that instructors seek to make the learning environment more active and experiential with an increased focus on students working in groups. In addition, technology continues to change, creating both more tools and challenges for engaging students. For example, a recent innovation has been the introduction of clickers into the classroom. Clickers allow students to anonymously answer a question with the goal of generating a discussion around student responses. While student satisfaction with clickers is reported to be high (Latham & Hall, 2014), it is not always clear that they significantly improve learning (Morse, Ruggieri, & Whelan-Berry, 2010).

Another aspect of instructional technology is that it has spurred us to re-examine basic terms and concepts. In today’s world, what does classroom participation mean when there is no physical room and class is conducted fully online? While the simple answer may be student posts, or the time a student spends online this is a fundamental change from what participation traditionally has been. Computer mediated participation creates a record of participation, which in the past had typically been ephemeral. Does the more permanent nature of this participation require a commensurate change from subjective to objective assessment?

While technology may highlight the need to re-examine how we assess and encourage class participation, it is an issue that should be considered by all instructors. For example, is there a way to overcome what some consider to be the inherent nature of participation grades or should we embrace the subjectivity? Are there alternative methods for defining and assessing participation that encourage and reward students who by inclination, be it personality or culture, are less inclined to engage in traditional participation? Finally, should we consider eliminating participation as a formal component of a student’s grade?

The specific learning objectives are that at the end of the session, participants will be able to:

* Confidently try new techniques to encourage student participation
* Use new methods to assess student participation
* Implement new ways of rewarding student participation

1. 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.*

Total time requested: 90 minutes allocated as follows.

Introduction and brief overview: 5 minutes

Small group breakout: 30 minutes

Participants will be divided into groups and asked to do two things. First, they will develop a common definition of class participation. Second, they will develop a list of problems and concerns they experience with how to encourage and assess student participation.

Large group discussion: 40 minutes

The panelists will lead a discussion that addresses the issues that were raised by each group. As part of this discussion, the panelists will provide methods and strategies that they have used to encourage, assess, and reward student participation. Participants will be encouraged to ask questions and provide input regarding how to adopt and implement these methods and strategies.

Sample methods and strategies include:

1. Grade modifiers
2. Peer assessment
3. Guerilla assignments
4. Index card method
5. Question generation
6. Incorporating objective criteria
7. Group/team assessment

Debriefing and conclusion: 15 minutes

1. Application to Conference theme:

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

The classroom is an evolving space and there are three changing currents that are impacting student participation. First, there is the pedagogical push to increase the level of active and experiential learning. This current increases the importance and reliance on student participation. Second, as educators we need to be responsive to our students. Demographic changes, be they cultural, racial, or generational, can impact when and how students choose to participate. Finally, changing technology, from the use of clickers in a traditional classroom to online classes where all participation is electronic, creates new challenges and opportunities for student participation. As educators, we need to fight against the pull/current of doing things as we always have and look for new ways to encourage, assess, and reward student participation.

1. 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?*

None of the panelists have previously presented on the proposed topic. As such, this session will be a unique contribution to OBTC.

References

Brown, K.G., Charlier, S.D., Rynes, S.L., & Hosmanek, A. (2013). What do we teach in organizational behavior? An analysis of MBA syllabi. *Journal of Management Education, 37(4),* 447-471.

Latham, A., & Hill, N. S. (2014). Preference for anonymous classroom participation: Linking student characteristics and reactions to electronic response systems. *Journal of Management Education, 38*(2), 192-215.

Mello, J. (2010). The good, the bad, and the controversial: The practicalities and pitfalls of the grading of class participation. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal, 14(1),*77-97.

Morse, J., Ruggieri, M., & Whelan-Berry, K. (2010). Clicking our way to class discussion. *American Journal of Business Education, 3*(3), 99-108