|  |
| --- |
| **Submission Template for the**  **2018 MOBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators** |

1. **Title of Proposal:**

|  |
| --- |
| Rethinking the T-Group as Pedagogy |

1. **Abstract:**

|  |
| --- |
| *Please include a brief session description (not to exceed 100 words).If your proposal is accepted, this description will be printed in the conference program.*  **ABSTRACT**  As we reflect on our teaching and it's potential for transformational learning, we can rediscover and adapt a powerful but underused technology, the T-Group. Adapting the T-Group to the modern college environment is a great way to express commonly held OB values including; an appreciation for experiential learning and personal involvement, self-disclosure, using the self as an instrument of change, transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and individual, interpersonal and group skill building. In this session I will share my experience in starting a new T-Group course, “Managing Human Dynamics” and offer support and encouragement to others contemplating starting their own course. Those who have used T-Groups in their own teaching will also be asked to share their own experiences. |

1. **Keywords:**

|  |
| --- |
| *Use three or four keywords to describe your session.*  T-Group, Teaching, Experiential Learning, Active Learning |

1. **Format**

Activity or exercise

x Discussion roundtable (60 minute only)

General discussion session

1. **Time Requested:**

30 Minutes

x 60 Minutes (*Roundtables must select 60 minutes*)

90 Minutes

1. **Planning Details:**

|  |
| --- |
| *Does your session have any special requirements for space or materials?*  no |

1. **Learning Objectives or Goals for the Session:**

|  |
| --- |
| *What are 2-4 specific learning outcomes that participants will get from your session?*  Participants will explore the possibility of incorporating a t-group in a course.  Participants will imagine a hybrid t-group experience tailored to the needs of their students and setting.  Participants will support each other in being thinking partners for how a t-group might work for them. |
|  |

1. **Management or Teaching Topics:**

|  |
| --- |
| *Describe what management and/or teaching topics are relevant to your session, and why Please include theoretical, disciplinary, or theoretical foundations that will help reviewers understand how your ideas fit within the broader field of management.*  When I was an Undergraduate student at the University of Michigan I enrolled in a T-Group course and found it to be a life changing experience. I recall getting some tough feedback I really needed to hear and that I might not have been open to otherwise. It also opened my eyes to what has become a lifelong study of people, relationships, groups, facilitation and so much more. So, in some ways that experience, was my entry point into our field.  When my department suggested that we needed some new electives for our management major, I decided to take the plunge and offer a course that included a T-Group. I had led T-Groups in other settings including the preconference at OBTC but had never taken responsibility for offering my own group as a faculty member. In talking to colleagues and students about it, I decided that the traditional weekend formula would not be a good fit for my setting. Athletic, performance and extracurricular commitments were roadblocks for my undergraduates in signing up for a weekend experience. To fit my campus culture, I decided to use the format of an evening 3 hour session per week for the T-group, plus a 75 minute seminar in which I would teach theory and do some analysis of what was happening in the group.  My course design borrowed from the Stanford model and several other syllabi that colleagues sent to me, and included the use of a weekly learning journal. Colleagues at OTBC were instrumental in helping me to consider all this (especially David Bradford), and I had yet another experience of the power of our teaching society and its importance in my professional life. I decided to have the journal due the morning of the day of the T-Group, which would allow me a chance to read it and respond online prior to the evening group. This turned out to be a key component in this hybrid T-Group course as it led to my having a supportive and challenging ongoing one-on-one dialogue with each student as a backdrop to their group experience. It also meant that each student would come into the evening session with an agenda of some sorts which would be reported on in the next week’s journal writing. These 3 elements: the group, the journal dialogue and the theory classes proved to be a very potent combination in the first iteration of the course. They each enhanced the other in an upward spiral of learning.  After my first experience in teaching the course, I have anecdotal emphasis that far surpassed my hopes for the course. Almost every student said that the course was one of the best and most useful that they had ever taken. Students also reported trying out new behaviors outside the group and getting positive results and encouragement. And the sophistication of their writing improved dramatically in their weekly journals. Their abilities to understand and talk theory also improved exponentially. I was observing maturation and development before my eyes.  At last year’s OBTC, a group of us had arranged an informal discussion for people looking to do T-Groups in their course work and I found it to be extremely helpful in thinking through my own dilemmas about what became, “Managing Human Dynamics”. Several people at the discussion remarked that this should really be an MOBTC session. In this roundtable discussion I’d like to make this happen and to fuel the fire to bring a rich part of the heritage of our field into the present and future. |
|  |

1. **Session Description and Plan:**

|  |
| --- |
| *What will you actually do in this session? What activities will you facilitate, how long will they take, and how will participants be involved? 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. Include a timeline for your session.*  We will have a discussion about T-Groups, and how they are currently being used in various formats and courses. We will take the time to answer questions, explore unique college settings and programs and think about implementation of T-Groups. I will also present some dilemmas that emerged in my own course and discuss why they occurred and potential solutions. |
|  |

1. **For Activities and Exercises:**

|  |
| --- |
| *N/A* |

1. **Implications for Teaching or for Teachers:**

|  |
| --- |
| *What is the contribution of your session?*  This session encourages the possibility of bringing T-Groups into mainstream management education. It also has implication for having Teachers expand their sense of possibility and potential depth of their work and to imagine a more intensely developmental role with their students. |

1. **Application to Conference theme:**

How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme?

This presentation explores a pedagogy that is an important part of the heritage of our field and brings it into our present-day challenges in offering meaningful and impactful education to our students.

I some times joke that I do T-groups because I am pragmatic and have a bottom line orientation! Beyond the irony, this is actually true in that I’ve come to question the utility of teaching courses in which students have to be coaxed to do their work and in which they question the applicability to their lives and ultimate success. In my first experience teaching, “Managing Human Dynamics”, the students universally commented on an important relevance of the course to their lives and toward overcoming long standing obstacles that they know are in the way of their potential success. They also developed tangible interpersonal skills, and simultaneously built confidence and humility. The level of reading without my coaxing was also considerably higher than expected. Students wanted to be part of the intellectual conversations that took place on the theory oriented classes. They also appreciated getting a timely, personal and thoughtful response to their journal writing and this caused them to take it seriously.

|  |
| --- |
|  |