Collaborating across institutions: A symposium to create a teaching community of

Principles of Management instructors

Abstract

Do you teach Principles of Management (PoM)? Are you wondering how other faculty teach their PoM course? Would you like to learn from and collaborate with others to improve your own PoM course? If so, join this symposium! We will first describe our experience in a multi-university, collaborative, online learning community to improve teaching in different modalities (i.e., face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous online). Then, we will organize attendees into breakout rooms by textbook and course topic to share experiences and learn from other instructors. We will conclude with time to create virtual teaching communities for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Introduction

In July 2020, three faculty from different universities created an online teacher learning community focused around Principles of Management. At these institutions, the Principles of Management class is a broad course in terms of course topics (e.g., spanning strategic management, organizational behavior, human resources, international business, and entrepreneurship) and broad in terms of student audience (e.g., a core course requirement for all business majors and minors). The online teacher learning community met weekly during the Fall 2020 semester and provided an opportunity to 1) discuss commonalities between institutions, 2) exchange ideas for improving active learning across different course modalities (i.e., face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous online), 3) adapt existing course materials to use during a global health pandemic (e.g., students spaced 6-feet apart), and 4) develop new course materials. Recognizing the value of this experience, this MOBTS symposium will bring together faculty teaching Principles of Management and lead to new teacher learning communities for the Fall 2021 semester and beyond. We believe that cross-university collaboration model can be a useful tool when planning and developing new and existing courses.

Theoretical Foundation / Teaching Implications

Teacher learning communities consist of a group of instructors that gather due to shared experiences (i.e., teaching) and common topics of interest (e.g., subject matter). There are multiple categories of teacher communities that overlap with each other: an *inquiry community* consists of asking questions and learning to solve problems together, a *professional community* focuses on shared norms, beliefs, and routines of working with colleagues and students, a *community of learners* promotes continued lifelong learning in adults, a *community of practice* in which individuals learn by seeing, sharing, and discussing shared practices, and an *activity*

community in which instructors engage in the joint production of new material (Levine, 2010). These communities are a form of professional development that has proven effective for teachers due to the coherent and sustained nature of a community structure (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). Teachers also benefit from the diversity of ideas and ways of practice, which ultimately can improve both instructor efficiency and effectiveness (Vangrieken et al., 2015). In addition, a review of teacher learning communities found a positive impact on student learning outcomes (Stoll et al., 2006). Overall, teacher learning communities are not very different from the communities of practice that educators provide for students (e.g., Monaghan, 2010; Smith et al., 2019). The main difference is that this community is one that educators are creating for themselves.

Symposia / Panel Overview

This symposium will focus on instructors who teach Principles of Management or Introduction to Management courses. The symposium will begin with the presenters introducing themselves and discussing how they worked together in the Fall 2020 semester by collaborating across institutions via weekly Zoom meetings. The Fall 2020 learning community worked together on transferring, updating, and creating new material to be delivered using a variety of course modalities including face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous online. Through weekly meetings, they were also able to take the best pieces of all three courses and meld them together to create a better experience for students. This also reduced the workload of each member of the learning community by sharing ideas and materials. The presenters will also discuss important outcomes from this teacher learning community, which included an improved understanding of how course material integrated with other business courses, updated and

adapted course materials for various modalities, and an understanding of how experiential learning activities can work in different environments.

Next, session participants will introduce themselves (depending on audience size) and describe the course they teach (e.g., textbook used, course modality, number of students per section, and something they would like to improve about their Principles of Management course). (Note: If the session has a large number of participants, we will instead provide a short Google Form for individuals to provide their information and then split into breakout rooms for introductions). After introductions, the majority of the symposium time will be used for two different small group discussions facilitated via Zoom breakout rooms. Breakout rooms will be categorized in advance and participants will have the opportunity to choose a room that best fits their needs.

The first breakout room will be grouped by textbook so that participants can meet other instructors using the same course textbook and then discuss differences in how they use textbook-provided course material. Sample discussions could include what chapters they cover in the course, structuring the course using quizzes or tests, types of quiz/test questions, and using class activities and videos provided vs. using activities from the *Journal of Management Education*, *Management Teaching Review*, or other sources. There will be a separate breakout room for participants who do not use a textbook or are not currently teaching this course.

The second breakout room will focus on groupings of course topics. Because a Principles of Management course typically covers a wide range of topics and serves as an introduction to the entire management discipline, breakout rooms will combine similar topics (e.g., strategic management, international business, entrepreneurship, human resources, and organizational behavior). In these groups, participants will discuss what course activities they use to facilitate

student learning. Because participants might be interested in multiple breakout rooms, a Google Doc will be live during the breakout sessions. Participants will be able to record what their group discusses in case participants want to connect with other rooms after the session or learn more about course activities.

The symposium will end with a very brief discussion as a large group with participants sharing one thing they learned in the breakout rooms. The remaining time will be spent creating a list of participants (i.e., collecting contact information) interested in being part of a Fall 2021 and/or Spring 2022 Principles of Management teacher learning community.

Session Description (90-minute session)

Time	Format	Topic
10 minutes	Large group	Presenter introductions & discussion of their experience working collaboratively across institutions
10 minutes	Large group / small group intros depending on number of participants	Participant introductions & discussion of their course (breakout rooms into smaller groups if more than 20 participants)
25 minutes	Small group	Small group discussion 1: textbook
25 minutes	Small group	Small group discussion 2: course topic
5 minutes	Large group	Large group discussion
10 minutes	Large group	Logistics – creating online teacher communities for Fall 2021 semester
5 minutes	Large group	Wrap-up

References

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