

**Management and Organizational Behavior Teaching Society (MOBTS)
48th Annual Conference (Virtual)
Tradition Meets Technology: Finding Ways Forward**

Title: Learning-centered Teaching: A Candid Discussion with Senior Faculty

Abstract: (100-word maximum)

This panel will explore learning-centered course design that systematically and explicitly aligns the three core elements—learning outcomes, activities, and assessments—described by David Whetten (2007) in *Principles of Effective Course Design: What I Wish I Had Known About Learning-centered Teaching 30 Years Ago*. Senior faculty from a variety of institutions (e.g., R1, public, and private) will discuss their approaches to, and experiences with, learning-centered course design. Panelists will engage in action-oriented dialog with attendees and offer pragmatic and time-tested practices for course design that heightens student engagement and increases student learning.

Three Keywords: active learning, learning outcomes, learning assessment

Time Requested: 90 minutes

Session Type: Symposia / Panel sessions

Resource Needs: Zoom (or similar) with screen sharing and chat functions

Introduction

Panelists, who are senior faculty from a variety of institutions (e.g., R1, public, and private), will engage in action-oriented dialog and offer pragmatic, time-tested practices for designing learning-centered courses that heighten student engagement and increase student learning. Their discussion will focus on three core elements of learning-centered course design: learning outcomes, learning activities, and learning assessment. Attendees will engage in discussion with panelists to gain a variety of perspectives and practical tools for developing their own learning-centered courses.

Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications

Teaching does not always result in learning (Whetten, 2007) but shifting away from a teaching focus and towards a learning focus (Barr & Tagg, 1995) offers opportunities to both improve student engagement and increase learning. In *Principles of Effective Course Design: What I Wish I Had Known About Learning-centered Teaching 30 Years Ago*, David Whetten (2007) shares his own transformation from a teaching-focused to a learning-focused professor and outlines core principles for learner-centered teaching. Whetten, the 2021 *Journal of Management Education* Lasting Impact Award recipient and a management professor for 30 years, emphasizes the importance of striving to systematically and continuously align the three core elements of learner-centered teaching in one's course design: explicit, high-level learning objectives; valid developmental student learning assessments; and course activities that foster active, engaged

learning. Experienced management faculty will share how they have applied these learning-centered course design principles and dialog with attendees about how to implement them in their unique courses.

Symposia / Panel Overview

Through the perspective of Whetten's (2007) core principles of learning-centered course design and organized around a community of practice model (Wenger, 1998), panelists will share their histories, describe how they approach course design, reveal ideas for developing learning outcomes, assessments and activities, and offer candid advice to attendees during a 40-minute discussion between panelists and attendees.

Session Description (Proposed format for a 90-minute session)

- 1) **Session Plan and Introductions** (5 minutes): *Moderator will provide a short introduction of each panelist*
- 2) **Overview of Whetten's Manuscript** (10 minutes): *Highlights of best practices for learning-centered course design will be shared*
- 3) **Panel Discussion** (30 minutes): *Panelists will discuss their approach to course design and offer advice.*
 - a) What are the two most important lessons that you have learned about student-centered teaching?
 - b) What innovative course activities have you implemented to foster active, engaged learning?
 - c) How do you know if your courses "work"?
 - d) How do you have structure, yet allow for individual differences?
- 4) **Attendee discussion** (40 minutes): *Attendees will be invited to ask questions. Possible topics may include:*

- a) Textbook selection
- b) Course websites
- c) Assignments
- d) Activities
- e) Assessments
- f) The first class
- g) Student feedback

5) **Summary and Wrap-up** (5 minutes)

Panelist Bios

Debra R. Comer is the Mel Weitz Distinguished Professor in Business in the Department of Management and Entrepreneurship in Hofstra University's Zarb School of Business. She teaches undergraduate and graduate classes, both online and face to face, in Management and Business Ethics. She is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Management Education* and the Book/Film Review Editor of *Research in Ethical Issues in Organizations*.

Matt J. Nowakowski is the Program Director and a Core Associate Professor in the Doctor of Business Administration program at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. He also teaches and serves on dissertation committees in the Doctor of Education in Leadership program. His research is focused on resilience, perseverance, community development and the adaptability of people and economic systems. He has corporate and customer training experience from Nicolet Instruments/Thermo Electron Corporation with international assignments in Japan, Sweden, Finland, and Saudi Arabia.

Tim O. Peterson is Professor of Management in the College of Business at North Dakota State University. He teaches undergraduate classes in the vital competencies needed by all people to be good organizational citizens. He has been the opening act for Stephen

Covey. He has been engaged in Gallup Strengths development since 2001. He is a Certified Strengths Educator and Strengths Coach. He is also a Builder Profile 10 coach. His research interests are leadership, work life competencies, the scholarship of teaching, and the application of information technology to organizational issues.

Jane Schmidt-Wilk is the Dean of Teaching and Learning, and Director of the Center for Management Research at Maharishi International University. She is the former editor of the *Journal of Management Education*. Her publications explore the role of development of consciousness in business and management education. She teaches courses in management and organizational behavior, qualitative research methods, communication skills, teaching, and academic writing. The students of Maharishi International University honored her for teaching excellence with the Teacher Appreciation Award in 2005 and again in 2009.

Jennifer L. Schultz is an Associate Professor at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota in the Doctor of Business Administration program. She was Program Chair-elect (2012-13) Program Chair (2013-14) and President (2014-15) for the Midwest Academy of Management. She serves on the Editorial Review Boards of the *Journal of College Teaching & Learning* and *Organization Management Journal*. She is a Gallup-Certified Strengths Coach.

Moderator Bios

Akin Falade is currently a Doctor of Business Administration student at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. He earned his Master of International Marketing degree from Hult International Business School, Boston, Massachusetts. He has a passion for consulting

entrepreneurs and currently works as a marketing/business consultant. His hobbies include coaching youth soccer and volunteering at a food shelf. He recently started his doctoral education and is interested in researching HR's impact in an organization.

Belinda Gardner is a Doctor of Business Administration candidate at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. She is Adjunct Faculty for the Business Department at North Hennepin Community College and serves as the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Coordinator for an environmental sciences organization. Her current research looks at the factors surrounding the underrepresentation of Black women in S.T.E.M. disciplines.

References

- Barr, R. B., & Tagg, J. (1995, November-December). From teaching to learning: A new paradigm for undergraduate education. *Change*, 27, 13-25.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Whetten, D. A. (2007). Principles of effective course design: What I wish I had known about learning-centered teaching 30 years ago. *Journal of Management Education*, 31, 339-357.