

**TLAC Conference Grant Program**  
*Application for Grant: 1 March, 2017*

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**Conference:** 44th Annual OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators, June 11-17, 2017, Providence College, Providence, RI

**Presentations** (all have been accepted):

**Stark, G.** (2017, June) "To XC or Not to XC: Let's Start a Barfight Over this Question". To be presented at *2017 Organizational Behavior Teaching Conference*.

Arroyo, C., Gower, K., **Stark, G.** (2017, June) "The Pink Elephant in the Classroom: Pedagogical Techniques to Tackle Controversial Topics". To be presented at *2017 Organizational Behavior Teaching Conference*.

Edelson, S., Allen, S., Arroyo, C., Lo, K., Nelson, T., **Stark, G.**, Stratton, M. (2017, June) "Gather around the garbage fire! Learning from experiential activities gone awry". To be presented at *2017 Organizational Behavior Teaching Conference*.

**Curriculum Vita:** sent as separate attachment

**Purposes:**

Please consider this an application for the TLAC Conference Grant for Winter 2017. I plan to use the grant to attend the June 2017 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators in Providence, Rhode Island. There are four purposes for this grant request.

First, attendance at the conference, the world's premier management education conference, makes me more effective in the classroom.

Second, presenting my work at the conference and engaging with others with a passion for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SOTL) will allow me to advance my own SOTL and to find new opportunities for my SOTL.

Third, I have accepted the opportunity to be NMU's Center for Teaching & Learning Scholar for 2017-2019. Attending the conference with this mindset, I will be looking not only for philosophies and methods to apply in my own classrooms, but those that I can share in my position as CTL Scholar. Further, I will engage with conference attendees, in determining strategies for promoting teaching and SOTL at NMU.

Fourth, I am attending the conference as a member of the Board of Directors for Organizational Behavior Teaching Society. This administrative capacity has some parallels with my upcoming administrative duties as CTL Scholar and so I will be looking at those duties with the new lens of CTL Scholar.

**Expenses:**

The expected expenses can be broken down as follows:

Airfare (estimated)	\$500
Registration (actual; conference lodging & meals are included in registration)	\$650
Ground Transportation, tips, meals while traveling, other (estimated)	<u>\$200</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1350</b>

**Criteria (summary):**

- I am an AAUP teaching faculty member, specifically a tenured Associate Professor, on full time, continuing, active status.
- As mentioned above and as will be detailed below, I am eager to continually improve my teaching and present research in an academic setting. This conference provides a perfect venue to help faculty members seeking ideas for immediate improvement of their teaching, for senior faculty members seeking ideas for updating or remodeling some aspect of their pedagogy and for all teachers to re-energize their passion for teaching
- I would look forward to sharing conference information with the NMU community, both in my capacity as CTL Scholar and in presentations. I have presented my work at several TLAC/CTL events in the past.
- I am involved in three different presentations that have been accepted at the conference.

**Other:**

I have a strong history of innovation in teaching and in SOTL. I have two SOTL publications and several SOTL presentations at international conferences and on NMU's campus (including TLAC/CTL sponsored events). My many innovations in teaching include group exams, techniques for forming random groups, and several experiential exercises for such topics as measurement validity, motivation theories, group performance, negotiation, and cognitive dissonance. The germ of much of this innovation comes from my "home" conference, the conference this grant proposal is meant to fund -- OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators.

OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators is the world's premier conference and is dedicated to innovation and excellence in teaching. The conference addresses a wide variety of teaching issues and methods, provides pedagogical training, and presents educational research. A typical session might be the one I presented a few years ago titled "A group exam beats going over the exam!" where I used experiential learning to demonstrate my use of team exams and the benefits therein. That presentation was eventually turned into a publication in the Journal of management Education (< 15% acceptance rate) and was lauded by the outgoing editor as one of the five articles that personally influenced her most in her six-year editorship.

Every year at OBTC I learn new ways to teach Management topics (including cases, experiential exercises, and assignments) and topics/methods/philosophies relevant to all fields of study. At OBTC I engage in self-evaluation and gain insight into my and others' teaching philosophies, and gain greater understanding of the mindset of students. I get up to date with educational research,

including understanding how and why students learn. Quite simply, there is a smorgasbord of great sessions at OBTC and what I learn depends on what sessions I attend. In this 3.5 day conference there are typically more than 100 sessions to choose from.

I am particularly looking forward to this year's OBTC conference as I will be involved in two especially collaborative and interactive sessions. Both hold promise for insights into teaching beyond Management. One involves broaching sensitive topics in the classroom. It seems in a polarized nation that almost any "fact" has the potential to be controversial, but even if we stick with "traditionally" sensitive topics, such as racism, sexism, or unethical behavior, we find that those are covered in plenty of classes, including mine. I will present how I deal with such topics and I very much look forward to interaction with my co-authors in learning more about how they do. They come at the topic from a far different place than I do. I use my "privilege" as a white, cis-gendered heterosexual male to influence students while relating to them my sensitivities as the father of a transgender child. I am honored to work with my co-authors, a gay female and a Puerto-Rican female, who come at the topic from "the trenches" presenting their first-hand experiences.

The other collaborative session deals with failed classroom exercises. While my co-authors and I will discuss failed Management exercises, those experiences are certainly relatable to all disciplines. It serves as a reminder that to grow as teachers and scholars we must try new things and that we sometimes fail and must learn from those failures. In my role as CTL Scholar I look forward to spreading the idea of innovation in the classroom and supporting our faculty through the growing pains that can come from innovation.

I will be presenting a third session as solo author. This session is also very relevant to all disciplines. Few topics in teaching provoke more passionate discussion than the use of extra credit (XC). This session will use that passion to uncover the philosophies behind both sides of the debate. As a group, session participants and I will examine methods of offering XC. We'll see which methods work to allay XC objections and how XC methods fit into XC philosophies in general.

### **Report of Previous Activities:**

I have received a TLAC Conference Grant (of \$500) on one other occasion. That grant funded my attendance at OBTC in June 2008 where I presented two sessions.

One was a very interactive session that generated great discussion. Micheal Stratton and I presented "PowerPoint in Management Education: The Antithesis of Entrepreneurial Teaching?" As a group we discussed what it is about PowerPoint -- philosophically and pedagogically (not technically) -- that brings such varied reactions from students, users, and avoiders of the technology. This was not a session on "how to do PowerPoint better". Rather, we dug deeper into the pedagogical basis for using the technology, and examined (among other things) what learning styles, teaching styles, and types of classes (e.g., quantitative, liberal arts) work best with PowerPoint. We presented qualitative and quantitative data to supplement the discussion. What we and the group came away with was a more nuanced view of PowerPoint. Those of us who tend to reflexively avoid it recognized appropriate uses and those who automatically use it recognized some of its drawbacks, ways to improve their use of it, and were emboldened to abandon it altogether in some instances.

The other session was co-authored with NMU's Judy Puncochar (who was unable to attend). We presented "Strong & Wrong: Implications of Overestimation of Student Learning". Students and faculty show a tendency to overestimate student knowledge and to place too much confidence in their misestimations of student learning. We discussed the influence of this phenomenon on educational processes and how educators might be implicated in producing wrongly confident individuals. For instance, this phenomenon in students may manifest itself in failure to pursue new knowledge. In instructors it may manifest itself in inadequate instruction time. For the discipline of management, the phenomenon has implications for the group, conflict negotiation, and decision-making processes (for instance, what happens when one consistently over-estimates one's ability?). From session attendees I picked up ideas for how to gently and safely point out students' overconfidence using, for instance, Socratic Questioning, creating a safe learning environment, and creating cognitive dissonance.

I would welcome the opportunity to present material from either or both sessions at any NMU event.

I attended many other sessions at the 2008 OBTC conference including one which gave me the germ of the idea of a fun and interactive way to create random groups (which I presented at a later OBTC).