Writing an Effective Annual Conference Educational Session Proposal
Overview

- Generating a Topic
- Determining Your Learning Outcomes
- Writing a Description & Outline
- Understanding the proposal application
- Connecting to the Mission & Core Values of NODA
- Tips & Tricks for Developing a Conference Program Proposal
- Examples
- Contact Us with Questions
Generating a Topic...

**Questions to ask yourself**

- What are the hot topics on which you can facilitate a dialogue?

- What are the OTR needs of sub-set populations of your students?

- What is an emerging/promising practice from your campus that you can share with your colleagues?
Generating a Topic...

Consider your audience

- Explore the intersection of the NODA Networks
- Consider what information, new trend, or topic may be of interest to members of your networks
- Reach out to your network chairs for ideas
Determining Your Learning Outcomes

• As a result of attending your educational session, what do you want your audience members to:
  – Know?
  – Comprehend?
  – Apply?
  – Analyze?
  – Synthesize?
  – Evaluate?
• Keep it simple → 2-3 learning outcomes
• Don’t overcomplicate each individual learning outcome
Determining Your Learning Outcomes

- Use Bloom’s Taxonomy verbs to formulate your outcome
Determining Your Learning Outcomes

- Ensure that your learning outcomes can be met during your session & include how it will happen

*Example:* These learning outcomes will be met through formative assessment strategies and classroom assessment techniques throughout the session as well as a summative reflection assessment at the conclusion of the program.
Writing Your Description & Outline


I. Introductions, Overview & Learning Outcomes (5 minutes)

II. What? (5 minutes) – Participants will be introduced to key elements of a literature review of (TOPIC). Key highlights will include the following:
   1. Highlight your key resources, definitions, etc. using APA in-text citations

III. So What? (10 minutes) – Given the recent research on (TOPIC), presenters will connect (TOPIC) to recent trends:
   1. Connect to CAS Standards, NODA core values, college students today, your campus (a statement of the problem, etc.)

IV. Now What? (20 minutes) – Participants will be introduced the specific program of your institution.
   1. Give the details of the program, sustainability of program, learning outcomes, assessment data, results, etc.

V. Lessons Learned Along the Way (5 minutes) – Participants will be introduced to key lessons learned along the way from the presenters including, but not limited to, the following:
   1. List your key lessons you learned throughout this journey.

VI. Closing/Q&A/Reflection (5 minutes) – Participants will complete a closing formative assessment reflection question answering the following question:
   1. List a reflection question that directly answers one of your Learning Outcomes
   2. Example: What is 1 strategy you can utilize to support the retention of international graduate students?
Connection to 2020 Conference Theme

• 2020 marks many monumental and historic moments in our nation and around the world. It will be more important than ever for us to be grounded and centered as we champion the work of OTR. At the 2020 annual conference we are welcoming you to help yourself and others find focus, define clarity, and shape a vision of the future through meaningful sessions.
Starting the Proposal Application

• Select what you want to be considered for:
  – Pre-Conference Workshop (4 hours)
  – Extended Session (90 minutes)
  – General Session (50 minutes)

• You may select more than one however the session will only be approved for one.
  – Example: You select both extended session & general session.
    If it is not accepted for an extended session it still has the opportunity to be considered for a general session.
Starting the Proposal Application

• Select a Presentation Type
  – Educational Sessions: structured presentation that may required some participation from the audience
    • Room will be set up lecture-style with seats facing toward the presenter
  – Roundtable: presenter leads the discussion by sharing some content and moderates the discussion in a less formal and more interactive format
    • Room will be set up with tables allowing for an atmosphere more conducive to conversation
Making Sense of the Rest of the Proposal

• Clearly connect to the mission of NODA.
  – The mission of NODA is to provide education, leadership and professional development in the fields of college student orientation, transition and retention.

• Clearly connect to at least 1 core value of NODA.
  – We are an inclusive community of practitioners and scholars; building, fostering and sharing an environment that promotes connections of people and ideas for peer-to-peer learning.
  – We value learning and innovation through the research, acquisition, formation and dissemination of scholarly knowledge, and the sharing of new and emerging best practices.
  – We value diversity of ideas, institutions, and individuals. We practice integrity and model ethical behavior through adherence to professional standards.
  – We take pride in the history and future of our services, programs, and resources.
  – We practice leadership; providing opportunities for professional growth and development both on institutional campuses and within the Association.
Making Sense of the Rest of the Proposal

• Add Assessment or Outcome Data
  – Provide evidence to distinguish it as an emerging/promising/best practice
  – Include appropriate Assessment, Evaluation, and/or Research data to support this reference
    – No need to include all AER data figures – reference the actual assessment done, key findings, etc.

• Topic may not lend itself to inclusion of AER data.
  – Clearly state this.
  – **Example:** This session relies less on assessment & outcome data as it instead focuses on an emerging research area of student affairs and OTR at rural-serving institutions that is still significantly lacking in the literature.
Making Sense of the Rest of the Proposal

• Connection to Theory, Research, or Best Practices in OTR
  – Think of real-life projects in which you participated, a paper you wrote, or a book, class, article or a blog post that inspired you to learn more about the topic.
    • How are these practices and theories (or both!) connected to your presentation topic?
    • How can a particular theory or theories be applied in a program you are describing?
  – Cite authors and theoretical frameworks in APA style
    • Use citations when specifically answering these questions, but also throughout the outline when referencing information pulled from your sources.
Making Sense of the Rest of the Proposal

• Incorporation of Core Competencies
  – Option to Select One or More of the 12 NODA Core Competencies
  – For Each, Determine a Level in Which Your Content Falls into:
    • Introductory
    • Intermediate
    • Advanced
  – From There, Address How Attendees will be Developed in Each Competency Identified
Making Sense of the Rest of the Proposal

• Incorporation of Conference Theme
  – Option to Select One or More of the Conference Focus Areas
  – For Each, Determine Which Your Content will focus most:
    • Focus: advancing the work of equity, diversity, and inclusion
    • Vision: practical strategies & actionable research that assists in executing work
    • Clarity: issues that hinder or help gain clarity with mental health and overall wellbeing
  – Not aligning with a conference focus area will NOT limit chance of being selected.
Other Considerations Before Beginning

• Presenter Information. If you are working with a group of presenters decide who the primary contact will be. You will need basic contact info for all presenters.
• Disclosing Potential Conflicts for Placement – Region & Network Meetings, etc.
• Selecting Orientation, Transition, Retention, or Professional Development Option
• Network or Committee Endorsement
Other Considerations Before Beginning

• Limit Presentation Title to 60 characters
• Limit Abstracts to 500 characters
• Time frames in session outline are REQUIRED
• Be thoughtful about primary intended audience
• Allow more time! Create your proposal in a word document in advance so you don’t get timed out when filling out form online
Tip & Tricks for Conference Proposals

1. Your program, event, service, or intervention IS a “best” practice. You are the expert in sharing it with others!

2. Keep your learning outcomes simple. Don’t put too much in one outcome.

3. Connect with colleagues at other institutions or within the Network on a program proposal. Chances are, others are interested in a similar idea, and diverse presenter backgrounds could appeal to more people making your proposal stronger

   Hint: NODA Connect is a great way to make connections.

4. Clearly articulate how your proposal is grounded in the mission & core values of NODA
Tips & Tricks for Conference Proposals

5. Explore the intersection of the NODA Networks as a starting point for topics
6. Consider catchy titles that are relevant to your topic
7. Don’t feel obligated to use the conference theme in your session title
8. Utilize APA in-text and reference citations throughout your proposal.
9. Include timing in your program description/outline. This ensures that you have enough (but not too much) content to get through in your allotted timeframe
Introduction (5 mins): The presentation will start with an introductions & my current position

Goals & Background (5 mins): I will share my goals for the session and ask for people to share what they hope to takeaway

Overview of the training process (5 mins): I will give some background on the training process at both institutions I have worked. The following information will be included:
- What I inherited as I entered each positions, type, and length of training
- Position types
- Number of staff members
- Additional training I was did

Designing your Training Curriculum (15 mins):
- Setting goals
- Reading & research process – the course I taught was based on the Social Change Model of Leadership (Leadership for a Better World; Komives, et al., 2009)
- Evaluating current training sessions
- The “beg, borrow, and steal” process to gather new ideas
- Organizing desired training sessions & designing ideal schedule

Executing your training (10mins):
- Creating agendas
- Incorporating staff
- Assessment
- Planning for the future

Reflection (10mins):
- What has worked well for you already?
- What are you looking to change in your program?
- What theories and frameworks do you already use or want to start using?
- What will you need to do in your first month back on campus to get this process started (think who you need to speak to and what you need to learn)?

Add time expectations for each section in the outline

Include citations throughout

Note: Outline is abbreviated for example purposes only – more supporting details were included in the original

Incorporate time for reflection and actionable items. Be clear on how the topic is relevant to other institutions
Example incorporating **Mission & Core Values**

This presentation connects to the mission of NODA because it provides ideas and information about student staff training, a large portion of many of our jobs in the OTR field, to give professionals and graduate students an opportunity to enhance their existing programs. This presentation also allows for the expansion of theoretical knowledge and provides an opportunity for curriculum and content development in regards to training. The leadership frameworks covered will also touch on how to create inclusive environments that get staff members to reflect on diversity and their ability to be inclusive with their new students.

Review the [mission & core values](#) on NODA’s website to clearly demonstrate how your presentation connects.
Learning Outcome Examples

1. Participants will assess their current opportunities for collaboration and consider how they are meeting their overarching goals for orientation.

2. Participants will develop a framework for considering potential campus partnerships that can enhance their orientation program.

3. Participants will leave with an action plan for involving one campus partner in collaborative conversation about ways that shared goals may be met with the partner’s involvement in orientation.

Use Bloom’s Taxonomy verbs.

Keep it simple, 2-3 learning outcomes is ideal.

Clearly state how you will achieve each learning outcome in the outline.
I taught the two-credit leadership course for two years. I do not have formal assessment data, but I have a lot of informal data that I gathered from observing students during their discussions about certain topics. At the end of my time at that institution, I also worked to create a student staff skills assessment. While we were only able to implement it once before I left, I would love to share some of the items that we created and how we planned to measure growth. For the training I created this past fall semester, students took the SLI as part of the series on the Leadership Challenge. These students will finish their contracts in September and will retake the SLI then. By the time of this conference, I will have results to share about them and their progress.
Some Examples… Connection to theory, research and/or best practice

Session participants will be able to compare two transition programs utilizing Chickering’s psychosocial theory of student identity and distinguish how each of the programs addressed the need to develop first-year students’ interpersonal competence. Specifically the session will address supporting student learning, how to communicate effectively with others, while discovering appropriate social behaviors needed to build and maintain relationships (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

If you reference a theory or research, provide citations in APA style
Questions?
Ask your 2020 Educational Programs & Evaluations Co-Chairs

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Thank you to previous conference committees for your assistance in creating this presentation!
Additional Resources

Present at NODA Guidelines
NODA Core Competencies
Educational Session Rubric
Association Approved Topics
Top 10 Things to Consider Before Beginning your Proposal
Contact NODA

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