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ROOM A
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SEMINAR

Creating Equitable STEM Classrooms

David Stroupe, PhD

Department of Teacher Education
Michigan State University



Students, particularly from marginalized communities, often denied opportunities to participate and excel in STEM fields. Sadly, such students' academic abilities and life experiences tend to be seen as seen as detriments to their success. More broadly, schools and STEM fields purposefully create a hierarchy of participation using race, culture, language, and economic class to limit marginalized students' possibilities. However, marginalized students bring important experiences, ideas, ways of knowing, and practices that expand the scope, purpose, questions, and values of STEM fields. As a former middle school teacher and current STEM educator, I know that teachers can make a crucial impact on students' lives by disrupting society's narratives about who is allowed to become successful in STEM fields. By enacting purposeful instructional practices and by using powerful learning tools, a great teacher can catalyze students' interest in STEM fields, and can provide opportunities for students to develop identities as STEM leaders who will shape the next generation of research and problem-solving. Too often, however, marginalized students are routinely subjected to underprepared teachers - including teachers at universities. Since students deserve well-prepared instructors to help them thrive, the onus is on us, as teachers, to support all students. I argue that we need to disrupt how teachers think about STEM fields, teaching, and entrenched inequities that privilege certain knowledge and forms of participation. I also propose that as teacher educators, we need to provide learning opportunities and supports for all teachers to build a new vision of their professional responsibilities.



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The seminar is organized by the working group for equal opportunities and inclusion of the Department of Physics and Astronomy together with the UNIBO division of the PLS project